

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

AUGUST 10, 2023

A Special Lighthouse

History and Activities:

<https://www.nps.gov/gwmp/learn/historyculture/jonespointlighthouse.htm>
<https://www.fun Fairfaxva.com/visit-jones-point-park-alexandria-va/>
Lighthouse Facts: <https://cheslights.org/jones-point-lighthouse/>



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The Fresnel Lens on top of the Jones Point Lighthouse, which operated from 1856 to 1926.

National Lighthouse Day, August 7.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Lighthouses are not on most Northern Virginians' minds these days, but Aug. 7 was National Lighthouse Day and this area has a special lighthouse, the Jones Point Lighthouse on the Potomac River.

"The Jones Point Lighthouse is one of the last riverine lighthouses in the country and the only one still standing in the Chesapeake Bay area," explains the National

Park Service's website.

On Aug. 7, 1789, the first U.S. Congress passed a bill establishing federal control of lighthouses and Mount Vernon resident, U.S. President George Washington, signed the bill into law.

The lighthouse, built in 1855, is a critical piece of the city of Alexandria's history as one of the largest centers for shipping, manufacturing, and transportation in the nation. It is the last remaining riverine lighthouse in Virginia.

The lighthouse operated from 1856 to 1926 and helped ships navigate the river. It supported the growing economies of Alexandria, Virginia and Washington, D.C., as merchant, passenger, fishing and naval vessels traveled the river



PHOTO BY APRIL EVANS FOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Jones Point Park.

daily.

The lighthouse's beam, powered by a fifth order Fresnel lens, could be seen nine miles away. The light was originally manually operated and powered by oil, changed to gas in 1866, reconverted to oil in 1900 and then in 1919, it got an automated flashing white light of 390-candlepower fueled by acetylene gas.

While iconic lighthouses are typically tall and cylindrical, this one

is a 19-by-38-foot frame, one-and-a-half-story structure with a cylindrical, cast-iron lantern on the roof. Most of the original interior is gone, says the National Register for Historic Places nomination.

The lighthouse had keepers, including families. The four-room building was no doubt crowded for Benjamin Greenwood, the longest-serving keeper, who worked and lived there from 1866 to 1906, at one time with his second wife and

11 of his 14 children.

The Capital's South "Corner"

Nearby is the south cornerstone of the District of Columbia, which some consider to be the nation's oldest federal monument. It was installed in 1791 and replaced in 1794 with the inscription, "The Beginning of the Territory of Columbia."

"The south cornerstone of the
SEE A SPECIAL, PAGE 11



PHOTO BY APRIL EVANS FOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Jones Point Park.



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Jones Point Lighthouse, restored, one of the last riverine lighthouses in the country and the only one still standing in the Chesapeake Bay area.

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Running Strong

Powwow showcases Native American culture.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Hundreds gathered to participate and observe the 2nd Annual Running Strong for American Indian Youth Powwow held Aug. 6 at Waterfront Park.

The colorful extravaganza served to showcase Native American culture through a day-long series of events and activities including intertribal dancers, drum groups, community resources, popup vendors, and information on Native American customs.

“Today is a time for us to celebrate as a collective community of native people,” said Kyle Swann, a member of the Piscataway Conoy tribe and one of the event coordinators. “It is very hard for us to have the space to do something like this. We live in an area where native culture is not prevalent so today is a chance to come together, bring traditions into the modern world and celebrate the future we are building together. Our goal is to continue to be seen, continue to be heard and continue to be considered.”

Running Strong for American Indian Youth is an Alexandria-based nonprofit that traces its beginnings to U.S. Olympic champion Billy Mills, who was born and raised on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation in South Dakota. A member of the Oglala Sioux tribe, Mills won a gold medal in the 10,000-meters at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, a victory considered one of the greatest Olympic upsets.

Mills co-founded the organization with Eugene Krizek with the aim to help Native American people fulfill their basic needs – food, water, and shelter – while also helping their communities gain self-sufficiency and self-esteem.

“Billy and Eugene joined efforts to address needs on the Pine Ridge reservation, specifically to help the Lakota people,” Swann said. “Billy’s dream was to continue to expand and now we are a national nonprofit with



Contestants perform a traditional dance during the Running Strong for American Indian Youth Powwow competition Aug. 6 at Waterfront Park.

programs throughout the whole country.”

Eugene Krizek, father of Del. Paul Krizek of Mount Vernon, died in 2021.

The DC area Powwow brought together Native Americans to have a community space to connect with and celebrate cultures together.

“This Powwow is how we are celebrating coming together,” said Kerry Reed of the Cherokee tribe in North Carolina. “We are no longer fighting among each other because we are different tribes. This Powwow is how we come together.”

Tribes were represented from across the

region and as far away as Michigan.

“Today is about creating space for our native brothers and sisters on the East Coast,” said Running Strong program assistant Mac-ey Michaelson. “Today gives everyone a place to gather and celebrate the culture through traditional dances and other customs.”

Waterfront Park is part of the land and river system of the Potomac and Anacostia rivers surrounding the U.S. Capital. The area is home to the Piscataway, Pamunkey, Nantego, Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Monacan, and Powhatan Tribes.

www.indianyouth.org



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Children prepare for the Running Strong for American Indian Youth Powwow Tiny Tots competition Aug. 6 at Waterfront Park.



Musicians perform traditional drum cadences at the Running Strong for American Indian Youth Powwow Aug. 6 at Waterfront Park.



Mason Richardson prepares to compete in the Running Strong for American Indian Youth Powwow men’s dance category Aug. 6 at Waterfront Park.



Dancers await the results of the Running Strong for American Indian Youth Powwow dance competition Aug. 6 at Waterfront Park.



The Day family of the Ottawa Chippewa community of Peshawbestown, Michigan, enjoy the Running Strong for American Indian Youth Powwow Aug. 6 at Waterfront Park.

Burden of Housing on Family Budgets

BY DEL. VIVIAN WATTS

This historic chart confirms just how severe the burden of housing is on household budgets. It was always an essential, significant expense, but it now takes more than double the chunk out of our budgets that it once did.

The major cause is lack of housing supply driving costs up through the domino effect of competition from higher income buyers/renters inflating the price of all housing but especially the limited stock of affordable housing. Reversing the escalating domino effect on housing affordability is many-faceted. However, it's important to be aware of public policies that can have the result of adding to housing costs. Two current issues center on the Federal Reserve's effort to control inflation and on the push to cut Virginia state taxes rather than fund local schools.

Last summer, the price of gasoline was hovering around \$5 a gallon pushed by world politics. That hit on household budgets faded as has the general impact of inflation which, as of June, has slowed to only 3% compared to its 1981 record-tying high of 9.1% a year ago.

All good, except for the fact that the Fed's effort to control market basket inflation by raising interest rates has a long-term impact on housing affordability. Last year, you could get a long-term fixed rate mortgage at 5% – now you

OPINION/LETTER

There Is No Budget Surplus

Letter to Del. Barry Knight, Chairman, House of Delegates Appropriations Committee; Sen. Janet D. Howell, Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee; Sen. George Baker, Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee is shared with the Connection.

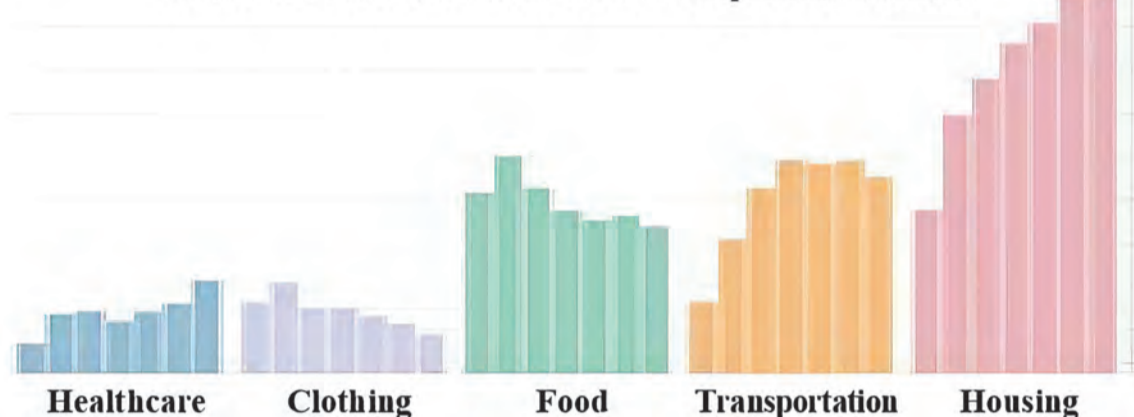
Dear Del. Knight, Sen. Howell, and Sen. Barker:

On behalf of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, I am writing to you with respect to the recently released JLARC report on state funding of the public-school divisions in the Commonwealth. The Commission is a Council of 13 local governments representing more than 2.5 million residents.

As you are aware, the JLARC report surfaces issues that local governments not only in Northern Virginia, but throughout the Commonwealth have raised for decades related to the underfunding of our public-school divisions by the Commonwealth. As you know

75 Years of How Americans Spend Their Money

1941-2014 Bureau of Labor Statistics <https://howmuch.net>



A good chart is worth a thousand words.

must cope with paying 7% over 30 years. Rents are equally impacted due to the business model of routinely re-financing commercial properties to cover the cost of running the property.

The second impact on the cost of housing is how the Virginia General Assembly will resolve cutting state taxes versus addressing under-funded schools. What does state school spending have to do with the cost of housing? The major item in local budgets is funding schools – the major source for local funding is the real estate tax. The major item in the state budget is funding schools – the major source for state funding is the individual income tax. This makes it a

given that a permanent cut in

Virginia's top income tax rate will translate directly into less state funding being available for local schools and the difference will directly impact the local real estate tax rate.

For those who think state school funding can take some paring back based on hearing an often-repeated political declaration that a given year's state budget included the most ever for public schools, the facts tell otherwise. The fact is each year's spending has to cover more students, as well as cover inflation. The fact is our state funding not having adequately covered these factors has resulted in Virginia spending less per student adjusted for inflation than we did in 2008, while other states are now spend-

ing more – on average 8% more.

Equally concerning is Virginia also has fallen behind its own adopted standards of education to support such basics as competitive salaries to attract and hold qualified teachers, smaller class sizes, and essential enhancements not just for students with learning difficulties but for mental health. On July 10, Virginia's non-partisan Joint Legislation Audit and Review Commission released a two-year, detailed study confirming the state's under-funding by as much as \$3.5 billion a year. Not beginning to address this significant shortfall in the state budget and putting more pressure on real estate tax rates and on household housing budgets is not the answer.

the report states, "School divisions in other states receive 14 percent more per student than school divisions in Virginia, on average, after normalizing for differences in cost of labor among states. This equates to about \$1,900 more per student than Virginia." Northern Virginia this past school year had 409,999 full time enrolled students as such that equates to a shortfall in state funding of \$778,998,110 in our region alone. And, as the report highlights, the shortfall in state funding for our public-school divisions burdens all local governments in the Commonwealth.

The report highlights what our local governments have been raising:

1. State SOQ formula yields substantially less funding than actual division spending and benchmarks.

2. Total statewide staffing needs calculated by SOQ formula are less than actual employment levels and workgroup estimates.

3. SOQ formula systematically underestimates division compensation costs.

4. Formula still uses Great Recession-era cost reduction measures.

5. Formula does not adequately account for higher needs students; methodology for at-risk students undercounts students in poverty.

6. Formula does not adequately account for local labor costs.

7. Formula does not adequately account for small divisions' inability to gain economies of scale.

We appreciate the ongoing discussions related to FY24 budget amendments. We would respectfully suggest that with so many unfilled needs there is no budget surplus until such time that

the Commonwealth addresses its commitment to invest in our public-school systems to be able not only to compete with our immediate neighbors, but nationally and internationally.

John Chapman

Chaman, Northern Virginia Regional Commission

A regional council composed of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William counties, the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park, and the towns of Dumfries, Herndon, Leesburg, and Vienna

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A Connection Newspaper



VINTAGE

Am I Wearing the Original Ray Ban Aviators?

Glasses bought at second-hand store may have a history.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Sometimes it takes a little rummaging around to find those certain items that fit the need or are so perfect they turn out to be a once-in-a-lifetime find that turns your life around. A few years ago, I was in a little second-hand shop called Urban Redeux @urbanredeux in the Hollin Hills area of Mount Vernon and there it was, a pair of old sunglasses on a back shelf with no price tag and no label.

They were just sitting there and needed a home so I grabbed them and hit the store owner with the million-dollar question: "How much are these?" The store owner, Willow Wright, was glad to make the sale. She found them in the top drawer of an old dresser and didn't think twice about selling them.

Ten dollars was the price, so the old sunglasses found a new home, and maybe more. Out in the car, I looked them over better. They were aviator-style glasses with wire rims and slightly shaded lenses, and the "arms," had half-circle hooks to go behind the ear. They screamed "antique." I could even picture General Douglas MacArthur



Willow Wright in her antique store, Urban Redeux

The store opened in September 2018 and Wright has seen her share of second-hand treasure hunters come in through the doors. She doesn't take donations out of the blue but had an odd experience once when a man brought in a rocking chair he swore was haunted. Apparently his wife and daughter had seen a little boy rocking in the chair, which seems to be something seen in the script of "American Pickers," but Wright accepted the chair as a donation and turned around and sold it to the next customer that came in the door. After hearing the story, my sunglasses were gaining some notoriety.

Ray Ban started under a different name in the mid 1800s in Rochester, New York and then Arkansas before their headquarters ended up in Milan, Italy where it is now. Back in the early 1900s when two guys – J Bauche and Henry Lomb – opened a glasses shop and discovered a lens technology that put them ahead in the glasses, or the "spec-

wearing these as he landed on the beach in the Philippines.

Oh I had something here, for sure. Could these even be the original pair of Ray Ban aviator glasses? I say yes - That's my story and I'm sticking to it! Urban Redeux has a vibe and the glasses share that vibe.



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/GAZETTE

The original Ray Ban Aviators?

tae" business, as the old timers would say.

Airplanes were just getting off the ground around those times and Col. John McCreeley needed something for the pilots of the early planes to block the sun from all angles so they experimented with the shape of the lens. Hence the first pair of aviator sunglasses were born. World War II came along and getting gold for the wire rims and deer antler material that was needed for other parts of the glasses was tough because of war needs so somehow they worked around that. Plastic wasn't around much then.

Hollywood got involved and fast forward to a sunglasses-wearing James Dean in "Rebel Without a Cause," and then Audrey Hepburn having Breakfast at Tiffany's, or Robert Duvall coming in low out of the rising sun

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in Apocalypse Now. Everybody was wearing them – could my pair have started this whole thing? Maybe, just maybe. After all, with all the reality shows about the rare finds, i.e. the "American Pickers," and "Antique Showcase," it could be possible.

Urban Redeux was hit by the Hollywood vibe too. Collectors periodically come in with military memorabilia of vintage postcards on their list but don't really let on to anything more. Most are "just browsing," Wright said, remembering a visit last summer. "I was able to help a couple of Netflix set designers secure a few pieces for an upcoming movie that was shot on the mall," she added. Good thing I already had the glasses by then.

My pair is old and does have weird material on the frames so this part might fit the original Ray Bans theory. Over the past 100 years, the glasses could've gotten into the top drawer of that dresser back in Rochester, or Arkansas, and as the years passed, someone donated the dresser to someone else who put it in their basement to collect dust for years. Eventually the dresser landed at Urban Redeux, and the glasses finally into my hands. Again, that's my story and I'm sticking to it.

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Fireflies, the Twinkling Critters of the Night

By GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Warm summer night skies often sparkle as fireflies flash and twinkle across the firmament. Called lightning bugs by many people, fireflies, are actually winged beetles. They have an organ in their abdomen that lights up, a process called bioluminescence. There are over 2,000 firefly species in the world, 170 in North America.

Why do they flash their light? According to Marc Branham in a Scientific American article, they may be signaling that they are unpalatable to predators and some are sending mating signals. He wrote, "Several studies have shown that female fireflies choose mates depending upon specific male flash pattern characteristics. Higher male flash rates, as well as increased flash intensity, have been shown to be more attractive to females in two different firefly species."

In another article, Branham wrote, "each species of bioluminescent adult firefly has its own flash fingerprint. Males fly through the air and search for females with a species-specific light display. Some flash only once. Some emit 'flash trains' of up to nine carefully timed pulses. Others fly in specific aerial patterns, briefly dipping before sharply ascending and forming a 'J' of light. A few even shake their abdomens from side to side and appear to be twinkling."

Virginia's state arboretum, Blandy Experimental Farm in Boyce, near Winchester, has one of the largest concentrations of fireflies in the state, a natural summer light show of hundreds of thousands of points of light as the insects flicker through the fields and forests. "This is firefly heaven. I've never seen anything like it," noted Dr. Kyle J. Haynes, a University of Virginia insect population ecologist.



PHOTO BY MATTHEW SHEPHERD/XERCES SOCIETY

Light pollution, loss of habitat and insecticide use are among the reasons fireflies are in decline. Here, part of the night sky is dark enough to show some stars, the rest is skyglow from suburbs. The foreground is brightly lit by LED street lights that are bright enough to cast shadows.

In Trouble

Like many of the world's insects, fireflies are in serious decline. Experts offer multiple reasons, including pesticides, habitat loss and degradation and light pollution.

Before the mid-1800s, most people and wildlife lived under night skies lit only by the moon and the stars. A 2016 global satellite study titled the New World Atlas of Artificial Night Sky Brightness found that "more than 80 percent of the world population lives under light polluted night skies. ... In the United States and Europe, 99 percent of residents live under light polluted skies," wrote Jessica Snyder Sachs in the summer 2023 National Wildlife magazine.

Xerces Society studies conclude that human-made light interferes with fireflies' behavior. Conservation biologist Richard Joyce cited light from streetlights, homes, buildings, cars and parking lots as harming fireflies in a spring 2023 article. He credits research by entomologist Avalon Owens and wrote, "The negative effects include disruptions to navigation, circadian rhythms and recognition of visual cues; increase vulnerability to predation; and desensitized vision."

Native Plants and Dead Leaves

On attracting fireflies to your yard, Plant NoVa Natives head Margaret Fisher wrote recently for the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, "The first step in creating usable habitat is to plant (and preserve) native plants and trees and to remove invasive non-native plants. This is because most plant-eating insects can only eat the plants with which they evolved. Fireflies don't eat plants, though, so how does this apply? The answer lies in the food web concept. Predatory insects such as fireflies, dragonflies, ladybeetles and others eat the critters that eat the native plants."

A critical way to help fireflies is to leave dead leaves in place because many firefly larvae burrow in the ground and under leaves in the winter. In fact, fireflies spend most of

their lives as larvae. Many insects overwinter as eggs, caterpillars, chrysalides or adults in the leaves. Leaves provide cover and a layer of protection. Leaves also "protect and nourish the soil. Perennials poke right up between them in the spring," Fisher wrote.

Lights Out

Because birds and other flying wildlife can collide with lit buildings, several organizations are working to minimize outdoor lighting. Over two dozen cities have adopted night light reduction policies, including New York City which in 2022 started requiring all city-owned and leased buildings to turn off outdoor lights between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. during the spring and fall bird migration, reported Sachs. The Vienna town council is considering a proposed ordinance to reduce some night lighting.

The National Audubon Society offers four tips: Turn off unnecessary outdoor lights at



Fireflies glow in a garden.

STEVE LAYTHROP FLICKR



TERRY PRIEST FLICKR

night; use outdoor motion sensors and timers; keep indoor lighting indoors; and down shield outdoor lights so they don't illuminate areas where they aren't needed.

Advocates also urge people to avoid using pesticides and insecticides, like mosquito sprays. They can kill all the insects the spray reaches, including beneficial pollinators, like butterflies and bees, and insects you love to see, like fireflies.

A scientific coalition called the Firefly Atlas is working to better understand and conserve North America's fireflies and invite observations from the public. The mid-Atlantic is a target region. Visit www.fireflyatlas.org.

PHOTO BY MARGARET FISHER/
PLANTNOVANATIVES.ORG
Common Eastern Firefly at Dyke Marsh

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BULLETIN BOARD

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

MT. VERNON FARMERS MARKET IS OPEN

A mix of new and familiar vendors will be selling local, farm-fresh produce – including strawberries and asparagus – and more at the McCutcheon/Mt. Vernon Farmers Market. From 8 a.m. to noon every Wednesday (through December 20), 21 farmers and local food producers will sell fresh vegetables

and fruits; meats; Chesapeake Bay seafood; breads and pastries; honey, jams and jellies; milk, cheese and eggs; herbs and plants; and more. The market is located at the Sherwood Hall Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane.

This year's vendors are:

Arnest Seafood – crab cakes, scallops, shrimp, rockfish, oysters and more
The Big Brine – Fermented foods, pickles and pickled vegetables
The Fermented Pig- charcuterie and gourmet bacon
Grace's Pastries - cakes, pastries and breads, with a Caribbean touch
Great Harvest Bread - breads and pastries

Honeycomb Heroes – Honey and beeswax-based products
House of Empanadas – variety of empanadas
King Mushrooms – variety of locally grown mushrooms
Layla's Lebanese Restaurant – Lebanese hummus, eggplant dip, garlic sauce and more
Linda Vista Farm - fruits and vegetables, specializing in Asian and Latin produce
Misty Meadow Farm Creamery - milk, ice cream, cheese and eggs
Ochoa Produce - vegetables, herbs and flowers
Pasta Ilgatto – Fresh, handcrafted pasta and sauces

PorkStork – Forest-raised heritage pork products, including bacon and sausages
Salsa Las Glorias - fresh salsas, guacamole and chips
Sharkawi Farm - herbs, spices, teas, plants and flowers
Three Way Farms – vegetables, melons and herbs
Traveling Shepherd Coffee Co. – variety of freshly roasted coffee
Twin Springs Orchard - fruits, vegetables, cheese and more
Valentine's Bakery & Meats - meats and baked goods
WeGrow - Microgreens.
All of the items sold at the market are grown or produced by the vendors and come from within a radius of 125 miles. The McCutcheon/Mt. Vernon market is one of 10 farmers markets run by the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA); for more information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets.

FAMILIES SOUGHT TO HOST INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Families and individuals from the Washington, D.C.-metro region are being sought to become hosts for international students for 12 weeks, a semester, or an academic year. Exchange students represent nearly 80 countries and cultures, including Kenya, Ukraine, Egypt, Turkey, Italy, Germany, Chile, Thailand and more. AFS-USA, a leader in international high school student exchange for 75 years, is focused on providing opportunities for intercultural exchange that can help lead to a more just and peaceful world. Those interested in hosting an AFS Exchange Student are encouraged to contact 1-800-AFS-INFO or visit www.afsusa.org for more information.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10



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Registration for Fort Hunt Little League is open. Spread the word to friends and neighbors that it is time to get ready for some fall baseball.

To register for the fall season, CLICK HERE <https://fhbaseball.leagueapps.com/leagues>

Have questions about the different divisions or what equipment is required or anything else? Please

visit our website to help get some answers: CLICK HERE <https://forhuntsports.org/baseball/parents/>

Looking to be a coach or volunteer for the board, please let us know as we start to plan for the fall season. Be a part of the planning of the league. Join the board and help FHLL thrive.

We look forward to seeing you on the field this fall season.

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www.FoodForNeighbors.org



Food For Neighbors serves more than 5,800 students at 41 middle and high schools in Fairfax, Loudoun and Arlington counties.

ENTERTAINMENT



Take a tour aboard the Tall Ship Providence and Sen. John Warner Maritime Heritage Center in Alexandria's Waterfront Park.

Wednesdays Through Saturdays

Tours Aboard Tall Ship Providence and Sen. John Warner Maritime Heritage Center. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Alexandria's Waterfront Park, 1A Prince Street, Alexandria. Guests of all ages are recruited into the Continental Navy aboard Tall Ship Providence with legendary Captain John Paul Jones. Recruits are assigned jobs on the ship, learn where they will work and live, how to load a cannon, etc... Tours conclude in the Naval History Theatre with a film about the ship. The Heritage center is a floating museum on the Alexandria waterfront. Visit <https://tallshipprovidence.org/>

NOW THRU AUGUST 31

Creative Summer Programs. At Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Creative Summer Programs is a series of workshops exploring the arts. Learn techniques in drawing, mixed media, mosaic, jewelry, watercolor, and more from local artists. Delve into creative exploration solo or with friends. For children and/or adults, free and paid programs are offered. Sign up for what inspires you! Visit the website: DelRayArtisans.org/creative-summer

JULY 25-SEPT. 17

Captured: Plants and Places. 1-4 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens Center, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Step into the world of plants across the region and in still life at a season-spanning photography exhibit July 25 to Sept. 17 at Green Spring Gardens Horticultural Center. The lyrical collection "Captured: Plants and Places" features botanical imagery drawn from the Washington area to Maine, including studio photos, intimate outdoor vignettes and landscape scenes. The photographers' varying visions and styles in color and black-and-white invite viewers to explore the wonder of wild and horticultural lands. An opening reception with the artists is July 30 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Atrium at Green Springs Gardens Horticultural Center.

JULY 27 TO SEPT. 3

Obscura: Tinam Valk Exhibit. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Reception on Sunday, Aug. 13 from 4-6 p.m. Tinam Valk's work explores the ambiguity of subjects such as oceans, rivers, landscapes, sometimes a combination of land and water, and figures or animals depicted within a land and water environment. Photographs, ranging from 60 to 100 years old in combination with sketches and memory and made-up environments, serve as a source for much of this work.

AUG. 4-26

The "Treasures of the DMV" exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features art that celebrates the wonders of DC, Maryland, and Virginia. Come see famous and overlooked regional gems from the perspective of local artists. Opening Reception: Friday, August 4, 7-9pm. Open Thursdays 12-6pm, Fridays 12-9pm, Saturdays & Sundays 12-6pm (Closed on August 27). DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

SATURDAY/AUG. 12

Afternoon Chamber Concert. 2 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Long-time collaborators Anna Matijas Hennessy and Mary-Victoria Voutsas will team up for a concert of Bartok, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, and more to create a program of American meets Bohemian folk.

SATURDAY/AUG. 19

School Supply Giveaway. At two locations: Charles Houston Rec Center, 901 Wythe Street, 10-12 p.m.; and William Ramsey Elementary School, 5700 Sanger Ave., 1-3 p.m. Hilco Redevelopment Partners in partnership with Firefighters & Friends and Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority will host a School Supply Giveaway. Volunteers will be giving away a total of 700-800 backpacks with school supplies for ARHA families.

THURSDAY/AUG. 24

Book Discussion and Signing. 7 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate. First-Ever Book Discussion and Signing with Four Finalist Authors for the Prestigious George Washington Literary Prize. The authors will discuss their important new books related to the founding of America. The event is free; attendees can submit questions and have their books signed. The 2023 George Washington Prize finalists are: Mary Sarah Bilder, Female Genius; Eliza

Harriot and George Washington at the Dawn of the Constitution.

Fred Kaplan, His Masterly Pen: A Biography of Jefferson the Writer

Stacy Schiff, The Revolutionary: Samuel Adams

Maurizio Valsania, First Among Men: George Washington and the Myth of American Masculinity

TUESDAYS, AUGUST 15, 22, 29

Simpson Park Demonstration Garden: Tuesdays@10. 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., Simpson Park Demonstration Garden, 420 E. Monroe Ave., Alexandria. When Mother Nature can't do it all... Simpson gardeners step in to offer a helping hand. Free. Contact mgnv.org for more information.

MOUNT VERNON NIGHTS

Fridays at 7:30 p.m. at Grist Mill Park, 4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria

AUGUST

11 Collaboration featuring Lori Williams (Jazz)

18 Crack The Sky (Rock)

25 Deanna Bogart (Blues, R&B)

FRANCONIA NIGHTS CONCERTS

Wednesday evenings from 7:30-8:30 p.m. At Leonadus K. Plenty Amphitheater, 6601 Telegraph Road, Alexandria.

AUGUST

9 Alexandria Harmonizers (Chorus)

16 The Nighthawks (Blues)

23 Dave Kline Band (World Jazz Fusion)

OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA

WATERFRONT MUSIC SERIES

Free Concerts. Wednesdays from 4-7 p.m. At Old Town Alexandria waterfront. Join in the Waterfront Wednesday Music Series featuring a range of music genres by local musicians. Bring a chair or simply stop by to enjoy some beautiful water-side beats. Free. Weather permitting.

August 9 - Sol Roots

August 16 - Delta Spur

Memorial Benefit Concert

In Memory of Phil Bolin

The family of Phil Bolin would like to invite you to a Memorial Benefit Concert

Saturday, Sept. 9, 2023, 2 p.m.

Aldersgate United Methodist Church

1301 Collingwood Rd, Alexandria, VA 22308

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students.

Purchase tickets below, or at the door.

For assistance purchasing tickets, email development@unitedcommunity.org.

Ticket purchases are non-refundable and support United Community.

<https://www.unitedcommunity.org/concert/>

Featuring:

Mezzo-soprano, Caroline Nielson will sign Broadway hits, spirituals, folk and Italian opera
Pianist, Edward Rothmel

A native of Dallas, Texas, Staff Sgt. Caroline Nielson is a vocalist in the U.S. Army Chorus "Pershing's Own," based in Washington, D.C. Caroline has sung numerous roles for mezzo-soprano in operatic and musical theatre productions, having performed with Finger Lakes Opera, Syracuse Opera, Odyssey Opera, Nashville Opera, and Opera in the Ozarks. She is also an avid interpreter of chamber and choral music, performing with ensembles such as The Thirteen, Washington Master Chorale, and Boston Baroque. A dedicated pedagogue, Caroline has taught voice at the junior high, high school, collegiate, and adult level.

Back-to-School Community Day

Aug. 19, 10am - 2pm

Lorton Community Center

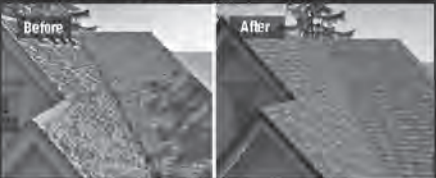
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/back-school-community-day>

Join Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck, Neighborhood and Community Services, Fairfax County Public Library, Fairfax County Public Schools and more for Back to School Community Day. The event will take place at the Lorton Community Center, Library and Park (9520 Richmond Hwy) on Saturday, Aug. 19 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. There will be a moon bounce, face painting, free food, school supply distributions, and more fun activities for students and families to enjoy before the start of the new school year.

A special highlight to this event is the Health & Human Services Fair that will include agencies such as the Fairfax County Health Department, Community Services Board (CSB), Inova Health System, Fairfax County Department of Family Services (DFS) and more. These agencies will share information about the services they provide to students, youth and families. They will also be onsite to assist with obtaining public assistance services such as Medicaid, Medicare, SNAP, etc. and there will be Vision and Hearing Screenings provided by INOVA Lions Care and Dental Screenings provided by Medical Care for Children Partnership. The Fairfax County Health Department will also be on-site providing vaccines and assisting with immunization appointments. We will also be joined by the Lorton Volunteer Fire Department and the Franconia District Police Station.

We hope you'll attend this wonderful event where we will all come together as a community before school starts.

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NEWS

United Community Back to School Drive 2023

This year, United Community has a goal of supplying 900 children with backpacks and school supplies. United Community needs help to ensure local children return to school prepared and equipped.

- How to Help?
- ❖ Make a Donation Online <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/WebLink.aspx?name=E3464&id=151>
 - ❖ Donate Gift Cards, Backpacks and Schools Supplies
Gift Cards: \$25 gift cards from Walmart or Target
New Backpacks: elementary, middle and high school age appropriate; large enough to accommodate pocket folders, notebooks, and pencil boxes; no wheels; no corporate branding
New School Supplies: download the flyer for a complete list of suggested supplies <https://www.unitedcommunity.org/drives/>
Collection extended through 8/31/2023
7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria <https://www.unitedcommunity.org/>

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 8
You can also get involved as an AFS-USA Volunteer. Visit www.afsusa.org/volunteer to get started or learn more about opportunities to make a difference.

FOSTER PARENTS NEEDED
Interested in becoming a foster parent? There is always a need for caring foster parents looking to open their homes to foster youth. Get in touch to learn more. Visit fcsvanow@gmail.com or www.fcsva.org. Or call 703-817-9890.

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

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

Scholarships Awarded to Affordable Housing Residents

The Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) awarded 10 affordable housing residents scholarships for post-secondary education. Recipients were recognized during the FCRHA's meeting on July 20, 2023.

"We are truly inspired by our scholarship awardees. They plan to study teaching, medicine, criminology, IT and other professions. We are hopeful they will consider making a positive impact here in Fairfax County after they complete their studies," said Melissa McKenna, Chairman, Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

Awardees include*:

- Hanaa Azzouzi, Alexandria
- Yolanda Marie Castillo, Alexandria
- Ashlee Forbes, Herndon
- Cherron Johnson, Alexandria
- Israa Al Mashhadani, Burke
- Phuong Anh Quach, Falls Church
- Lerman Abdoulakder Weiss, Centreville

*not all awardees chose to be listed.

About the Scholarships

The Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority established the scholarship program to promote higher learning among individuals and families receiving housing assistance. \$50,000 in scholarships were awarded at \$5,000 per recipient.

Scholarships are designed to promote postsecondary education and technical training for Fairfax County residents who live in affordable housing supported by the FCRHA. Scholarships were awarded based on academic achievements and other factors. To qualify, scholarship awardees must have been a member of a household currently receiving housing assistance through the FCRHA; a resident of Fairfax County for at least six months prior to application deadline; and accepted into an accredited post-secondary education institution. All scholarships are funded with federal dollars.

A Special Lighthouse

FROM PAGE 1

District of Columbia is significant as marking the beginning point of the 1791 survey that carved this unique Federal jurisdiction from the states of Virginia and Maryland ... This is one of the oldest artifacts related to the Nation's Capital," according to the historic designation nomination form. In 1846, the area was retroceded to Virginia.

One site on Alexandria's African American Heritage Trail here honors the surveyor for the nation's capital, Marylander Benjamin Banneker (1731-1805), a writer, inventor and free African American. Banneker used astronomical observations and calculations to establish the "south corner" of the new capital city.

In 1918, a shipyard at Jones Point built naval ships for World War I. The shipyard obscured the lighthouse's beacon light. In 1936, the Army Signal Corps built a classified communication facility on the former shipyard and closed the building to the public.

Pre-Lighthouse

Indigenous people no doubt used the area before European settlement. A National Park Service marker today highlights another historical nugget. In 1654, Margaret Brent of Maryland received a land patent for the area, originally known as Piper's Island. A feisty, independent woman, lawyer and suffragist, she went to the Maryland state legislature and requested not just the right to vote, but the right to two votes, one for herself as a landowner and one as Lord Baltimore's attorney. The American Bar Association has called her "the nation's first woman lawyer."

Part of a National Park

In 1926, the Mount Vernon Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution became the owners of the lighthouse and maintained it as a museum. By the 1950s, the building was in disrepair so to preserve what was left, the DAR transferred the property back to the federal government and in 1964, the 22-acre Jones Point Park opened, a unit of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, today managed by the National Park Service. NPS maintains a one-mile, signed interpretive trail.

Basketball, Bass and Birds

Today, much of the park offers up-close views of the underside of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge as interstate traffic rumbles overhead. Youngsters romp on playgrounds and play basketball, while adults walk dogs, tend community gardens or fish from two piers.

The park is also a favorite bird-watching site where in August and the fall observers might see shorebirds like greater and lesser yellowlegs, solitary and least sandpipers, Caspian and Forster's terns and migrant passerines like black-throated green and black-throated blue warblers and chestnut-sided and magnolia warblers.

History and Activities:

<https://www.nps.gov/gwmp/learn/historyculture/jonespointlighthouse.htm>
<https://www.funinfairfaxva.com/visit-jones-point-park-alexandria-va/>
 Lighthouse Facts: <https://cheslights.org/jones-point-lighthouse/>

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POTOMAC ALMANAC **CENTRE VIEW**

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

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

Please, help save these historical papers.

All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk.

The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

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

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

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

Visit connectionnewspapers.com or <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing>
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Not a Fan of Humidity



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Recently, through no fault of our own, we have been without central air-conditioning on our first floor, non-sleeping space. While we were out of town on vacation, we suffered an unexpected property loss to our home caused by a particularly bad, typical Washington DC summer rain event on Fri., July 14. Since we were on a cruise out to sea, we had no cell service, so it wasn't until we arrived back in port on Sun. July 16 that Dina retrieved a text message from Robert, one of our many super-friendly/helpful neighbors. The message simply texted: "Call me." Which we promptly did once we got settled in the car heading south from New York on I95.

Dina calls Robert, who was also collecting our mail while we were gone. Robert picks up immediately. Dina asks, "What's up? I just got your text." To which Robert responds: "Not horrible. But a tree has hit your house. We had a bad storm here Fri. night. I went inside and checked on the cats (being cared for by another neighbor); they're fine." The tree that fell, not the one you might have expected (he tries to explain which one), crashed onto the back of the house. It broke a window, and it looks like you suffered some water damage inside your house too. I just wanted to let you know before you came home and saw it for yourself."

Dina stammered a "What!" and a "Thank you" before she ended the call. Since she was on the speaker through the car, I heard the entire conversation. After which, we looked at each other and said something like "Yikes!" Over the next four hours or so until we got home, our attitude went from let's wait and see (me) to know what are we going to do (Dina)? Call the insurance company, that much I know.

Being that this would be my first real experience making a home-insurance-policy claim, I proceeded with extreme caution. What little I know of this process came from my years attending continuing education classes required to maintain my Life and Health Insurance License. And what I learned/retained, other than the Property and Casualty (home, car, et. cetera) world is excruciatingly complicated, is that the claim process, communications, timeline and so forth is fraught with misinterpretation, disagreement, and disappointment. To that end, I figured I needed to file a claim as soon as possible, especially since the event had occurred almost two days prior.

Even though it was early afternoon on Sunday, I surmised that since P&C claims don't just happen during the week, I called the company expecting to talk with an actual person. Sure enough, I was able to connect with a claim's specialist. I filled the claim and listened as the process going forward was explained to me. It all sounded reasonable and so we continued our drive home secure in the knowledge that we had fulfilled our initial filing-a-claim responsibilities.

After silence on Mon., on Tues. I called the 800 claims number for a status. Needless to say, the hole in my roof - which I couldn't see since the tree limbs and all were draped across it, was not getting any smaller, and its existence was making me nervous since I was told that there was rain in the forecast for later that day. Moreover, the downstairs central air conditioner was dead as the water from the storm had seeped through the roof into its electrical circuit and tripped the breaker thereby shorting out the circuit and burning out the motor of the air conditioning unit for the downstairs (where we live, mostly) as well as the light switch in the den. (When I saw we had no power, I immediately checked the fuse box and sure enough, a breaker had been tripped. When I flicked it back on, the air handler for the downstairs air conditioner restarted but only for a second and then stopped, never to restart again. Additionally, the den chandelier never came back on as its light switch was on the same circuit and thus was compromised as well.)

The following week has produced record-shattering heat and humidity. It has hardly been the ideal weather conditions to have had two-thirds of your house unair-conditioned. To add insult to perspiration, though we were able on Tuesday to get a water mitigation team to attend to our interior and sop up the moisture still in our house - and check for mold, and then on Wednesday (July 19) have a tree service contracted to remove the tree from atop our house, it wasn't until Sat. July 22 in the morning, nearly a week later, that we actually had an adjuster finally come by the house to "adjust" our claim. As Paul Harvey never said: Now you know the beginning of the story. Good fortnight! (To be continued next week.)

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



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