

THE CONNECTION

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

Sweet Summer Sounds

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Kabir Sharma with his tuba. The Rachel Carson eighth-grader has played piano for nine years, played tuba at camp, and plays 17 instruments total.

Affordable Housing, Practically Nonexistent

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AUGUST 16-22, 2023

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NEWS

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON / THE CONNECTION



Some people experiencing homelessness in Reston camp out. The heat, the rain, and flooded tents add to the poor living conditions. Cornerstones' shelters are maxed out, and nearly all funding for contracted hotel rooms is exhausted.



Cheeks full of yummy and nutritious meals and snacks are part of every school day for the children at Laurel Learning Center, operated by nonprofit Cornerstones in Reston.



A little more is not an uncommon ask.

3rd Wealthiest County in U.S. Fails to Provide Affordable Housing

Cornerstones struggles to put and keep a roof over their heads.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority promotes the Dulles Technology Corridor along the Silver Line of the Washington Metro system as a place where “individuals and families can thrive.” Housing offers “a wealth of amenities.”

The Silver Line runs through a section of Fairfax and Loudoun counties, ranked among the wealthiest counties in the United States for median family income. According to the U.S. Census, Fairfax family median was \$133,974 in 2022. Loudoun ranks first at \$156,821. The hype is not the reality for all who call the area along the Dulles Corridor home.

“Affordable housing is practically nonexistent here,” said Margaret Anne Lara. She is vice president of marketing and communications at the nonprofit Cornerstones in Reston. Cornerstones has worked purposefully since 1970 to strengthen the community and help families living in crisis rebuild their self-sufficiency, resiliency, and hope

The organization is responding to this crisis by attempting to provide short-term emergency assistance, counseling, and programs. “It doesn’t matter if the family lives in Loudoun or in Fairfax. There are families that are struggling to pay their bills,” Lara said. “It is extraordinarily difficult to transition families from a shelter into housing. ... We’re trying desperately to move families from hotels and individuals from the shelter, as are all the shelters across Fairfax County,” Lara said.

“The [food] pantries are tapped out. If I



Margaret Anne Lara, vice president of marketing and communications at the nonprofit Cornerstones in Reston. “Affordable housing is practically nonexistent here.”

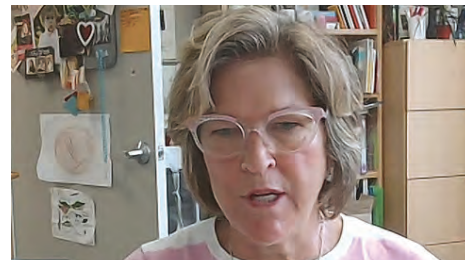


Minnie Orozco is Cornerstones' director of urgent needs and Herndon Resource Center operations. “We will be bombarded with [utility] assistance requests.”

“Affordable housing is practically nonexistent here.”

— Margaret Anne Lara, Cornerstones

need to feed my family, that means money’s coming out of my electricity bill, and I can’t pay my electricity bill. Or it’s coming out of



Courtney Park-Jamborsky, a member of Cornerstone's leadership staff and division director of Laurel Learning Center. “Two families are homeless for the second time. ... It’s a constant trauma.”



Edwina Jackson is the division director of Homeless Services at Cornerstones. She oversees the day-to-day operation of the Embry Rucker Shelter Community Shelter. “We have an overflow at the hotel of 31 families, plus 11 families we serve here and 24 adults.”

my rent payment, and I’m in jeopardy of being evicted. It’s a Bermuda Triangle we’re in right now for so many families,” Lara said.

These same challenges—a lack of utility and housing payment assistance, in-process evictions, and unstable access to food donations — are causing multiple stresses for individuals and families and also for staff at non-profit umbrella organizations around



Cornerstones staff members Edwina Jackson, division director of homeless services, Missy Norquest, and Milton Rodriguez step outside the full-capacity Embry Rucker Community Shelter to discuss statistics.

Northern Virginia.

In two recent interviews, one on Friday, Aug. 4, and one on Monday, Aug. 6, multiple staff members at Cornerstones said resources are stretched to the absolute limit or depleted. Still, requests for assistance mount, stories of heartbreak abound, and it is exhausting.

“I’ve been here 21 years, and while I’m not trying to compare myself to a doctor in a war zone, I feel like it just never ends,” said Courtney Park-Jamborsky, a member of Cornerstone’s leadership staff and division director of Laurel Learning Center. “It’s a constant trauma. Sometimes I wake up at night and feel tense. I say to myself, ‘Well, what is it that’s wrong with me?’ I’m worried about these families. I’m worried about these kids. This is way more stressful than COVID. It’s exhausting.”

The goal is always to place someone in stable housing, Lara said. “It’s that pyramid: if I have stable housing, then I can likely afford to put food on the table. Or we can help them in some financial way or get them gov-

SEE CORNERSTONES, PAGE 12

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LEGO



Herndon High School drum band and dancers led a parade of participants to opening ceremonies



Aria Kim, 6 years old of Centreville, discovers worlds within the LEGO Tree of Imagination

LEGO Discovery Center Opens

Promises entertainment for all ages.

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

A very tall LEGO Giraffe clues the first BIG sign of reaching a new destination for fun in Springfield. On Wednesday, kids by age, and at heart, found their way, by special invitation, to a new place of exploration. The LEGO Discovery Center Washington D.C. officially opened for all in Springfield Town Center on Aug. 14.

The 32,000 square foot family entertainment attraction and store on the mall's lower level boasts several sections. Twelve zones include multiple activities: LEGO block building areas, spaceship build, train ride with space pirates, Washington D.C. as a mini-world, 4D cinema, laser maze, and hero zone sure to help wear out even those with the most energy to burn. All this provided without the hazards of home carpet pedestrian danger.

The grand opening ribbon cutting event festivities included performances by the Herndon High School drum band and dance troupe, a participant parade and welcomes from general manager Theresa Alvich of the LEGO Discovery team and PREIT, the shopping center's owners, who recruited LEGO



An eager crowd of invitees of all ages awaits a first view of the Center

to the area.

Master Builder Andrew Litterst later spoke of the opening, saying "It's just a relief, to summarize it in one word." Litterst won his

position in February, in a brick building competition in the same spot where the podium stands for the opening event. He shared, "Ever since it's been pedal to the metal. I've



Supervisor Lusk interacts outside DUPLO Park with possible future constituent Mya McKenzie, 17 months, now of McLean

been building stuff pretty much all day for the past couple of weeks."

In his opening remarks, District Supervisor, Rodney Lusk, commented on the importance of skills our children can learn through play in activities the Center provides including collaboration, problem solving, and sense of accomplishment, all skills that are needed in the workforce. However, all thoughts of past and future work were forgotten as the confetti popped, the ribbon dropped, and the crowd plunged into the new adventures.

Advance tickets, for sale now with military discounts available, are encouraged for visits to the Center, open from 10 am to 6pm.

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New Hunter Mill Road Bridge Open in Vienna

Drivers on Hunter Mill Road (Route 674) no longer have to yield to oncoming traffic in order to cross Colvin Run, as the new two-lane bridge opened to traffic in both directions last week on Aug. 9.

The new bridge located between the Dulles Toll Road and Baron Cameron Avenue improves traffic flow by replacing the nearly 50-year-old weight-restricted one-lane bridge that required drivers to stop if there was traffic crossing the bridge in the other direction. The bridge also includes a median/splitter island separating the two lanes

to improve safety

The Hunter Mill Road over Colvin Run Bridge Replacement project, which is now complete, also includes improved trail crossing south of the bridge; landscaping in the median/splitter island; abutments for a future trail bridge over Colvin Run. The rest of the trail bridge will be constructed by Fairfax County.

The \$5.2 million project was financed with federal, state (including State of Good Repair funds used for bridges) and county funding.

Fatal Pedestrian Crash in McLean

An 86-year-old woman was pronounced dead following a pedestrian crash in the 1700 block of Kirby Road in McLean on Aug. 11.

Preliminarily, detectives from FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit determined Brigitte Forster, 86 of McLean, was within the crosswalk attempting to cross Kirby Road around 6 a.m. Aug. 11. The driver of a 2009 Toyota Sienna was turning left onto northbound Kirby Road from the parking lot of 1728 Kirby Road. The driver cut the turn short and

entered the southbound lanes striking Forster in the crosswalk. Forster was taken to a nearby hospital where she was pronounced dead. The driver remained at the scene of the crash.

Preliminarily, detectives do not believe speed or alcohol are factors in the crash. Detectives continue to investigate the circumstances surrounding the crash.

Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543.

Investigation of Fatal 3 Car Crash

Detectives from FCPS Crash Reconstruction Unit are investigating a fatal 3-car crash that occurred Aug. 11 at 11:44 a.m. on Arlington Boulevard at Stonehurst Drive in Merrifield in the McLean police district.

Preliminary, detectives determined the driver of a 2015 Toyota Camry attempted to turn left with a flashing yellow arrow from westbound Arlington Boulevard to Stonehurst Drive. The driver of a second vehicle, a 2010 Toyota Prius, traveling eastbound on Arlington Boulevard, struck the Camry in the intersection.

After the initial collision, the Camry struck a third car, a 2023 Mercedes-Benz Eqs300, that was stopped at the intersection.

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Paul Hession, 85, of the Churchill neighborhood, a passenger in the Camry, was taken to an area hospital where he was pronounced dead.

The drivers of the three vehicles were taken to the hospital for injuries not considered life-threatening. Preliminarily, speed and alcohol do not appear to be factors in the crash.

This is the 10th non-pedestrian-related fatal crash in the County to date in 2023.

Detectives would like to speak to anyone who may have information about this case. Those with information are asked to please call the Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543.



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PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION



Agasi Newmart in full regalia practices his Michael Jackson routine in his living room studio on Saturday, Aug. 12. He is a student at Kent Gardens Elementary.

Bach to Michael Jackson (and he's only 8-years-old)

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

Agasi Newmart pulls on his silver glove, adjusts his black fedora and practices sliding backward across his living room studio. A line of silver sequins travels up his black pant legs and his socks sparkle with silver rhinestones. He steps up to the microphone:

"Billy Jean is not my lover....."

People always told me be careful of what you do.

Don't go around breaking young girls' hearts. Yeeeeeeeee"

Agasi is eight years old and has been working on his Michael Jackson routine for many months. He takes dancing lessons online once a week from an instructor in Georgia (not the one in the United States). Agasi says, "He had me start on tiptoes and slide backwards in place over and over and then when I got that, he had me move backwards."

Agasi's voice and piano instructor is his mother, Kristina Newmart, who gives lessons to students every day after school and then works with Agasi at night and on the weekends. Agasi's sister, Eva Newmart who is a 17-year-old student at McLean High School says, "We looked everywhere to

find the details of his costume. We couldn't even find everything in Halloween costume stores." Finally Agasi says they found most of it on Amazon.

Agasi finishes Billy Jean and moves to the piano in the corner where he sits with his feet propped on a small upside down laundry basket because they are too short to reach the floor. "Would you like to hear Bach or jazz? My favorite is Oscar Peterson." Agasi's hands move quickly over the keys as he concentrates on the fast moving rhythm of the jazz artist's composition.

Agasi has just submitted a video to a competition in New York which was a video of his Michael Jackson program and a song sung in Italian. He says he should hear the results mid-September. If he wins one of the first three places he will fly to New York to perform and receive his prize. His mother says Agasi has recently won international online competitions in Russia and Spain with piano submissions of classical, jazz and sonatas.

Agasi starts playing a Bach composition. He hesitates a minute. "Sometimes I forget because I just started it 3 weeks ago." Agasi says he has also written a couple of compositions. He explains the process; "I just start clicking and the music is very nice." His hands move up and down the keyboard in repetitive chords. "I like it so I keep doing it until I get a piece." Kristina says it is com-



Eight-year-old Agasi Newmart practices his favorite Oscar Peterson on a Saturday afternoon.

posed in b flat minor.

Agasi says his next Michael Jackson song will be "The Earth Song." Kristina says it is a little depressing but Eva explains it is the perfect time right now with climate change and the emphasis on the environment. Agasi says, "I don't know; it was just beautiful."

When Agasi isn't practicing and composing he likes doing musical theater and recently appeared in a local Synetic production of "Neverland," based on Peter Pan. Eva says Agasi has also been performing at events she has organized at senior homes. "They are kind of like recitals." And she adds, "They moved the baby grand piano for him when Agasi participated in his school's talent contest at Kent Gardens Elementary."

Kristina said Agasi began singing kid's songs when he was 4. She started working

with him but says, "You know boys are not like girls at that age with their attention span so we stopped for a while. I knew if I did it too early I wasn't going to get good results." But she says he has good musicality and perfect pitch and is very talented. He adds, "And now I play like an adult."

When the family moved to the U.S. from Armenia seven years ago Kristina opened a studio in their home. But then Covid hit and "I thought my dreams were crushed down when I just got started." But she was able to teach successfully online and now has the dream of finding a grant so she can teach kids for free who can't afford to pay for lessons themselves.

And what does Agasi want to do when he grow up?

"A chef I think. I like to cook."



PHOTO COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE DEPT.

Fire Station 17 Capt. Rudy Iturrino (center) receives the Team Performance Award from Fairfax County Fire Chief John Butler (left) and Deputy Chief John Walser (right).

Firefighters Honored

During a ceremony earlier this month, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department celebrated some of the accomplishments and contributions of its members. Among those feted were firefighters from Centreville Fire Station 17, West Centreville Fire Station 38 and Fair Oaks Fire Station 21.

Team Performance Award

Members of Fire Station 17 in Centreville received a Team Performance Award recognizing each member of a team who was key to the success of an initiative, project or nonemergency incident.

In March, Engine 417 and Medic 417 were dispatched for a medical emergency. Upon arrival, they found a patient choking and not breathing. Units began performing the Heimlich maneuver when the patient went into cardiac arrest.

Working as an efficient and effective team, E417 and M417 began resuscitation efforts. Enroute to the hospital, the patient began breathing without support and survived neurologically intact. Honored for their actions were:

SEE FIREFIGHTERS HONORED, PAGE 11



Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Jurisdiction	Fed. Struc. Id.	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
ALBEMARLE	753	687	SHIFFLETTS MILL ROAD	BUCK MOUNTAIN CREEK	7/25/2023
TAZEWELL	18686	806	ROUTE 806	COAL CREEK	7/12/2023

The list above is not a comprehensive list of all structures with weight restrictions in the Commonwealth, but shows only structures that have new or changed weight restrictions within the last 30 days. The list contains only basic structure identification and location information and the date the new or changed weight restriction and signage became effective.

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit <https://www.virginiadot.org> and navigate to Info Center/Trucking Resources. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT's Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730.



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BAND CAMP



From left, young musicians Clara Eom, Aarohi Prajapati, Smera Jasani, Emma Lee and Haven Moon.



Kabir Sharma with his tuba.



Students playing their instruments during a brass sectional.



Young musicians practicing in the camp's Concert Band.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Music Students Make Sweet Summer Sounds

Franklin Middle holds 36th annual Band and Orchestra Camp.

By BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The sweet sounds of music filled the halls of Franklin Middle School during the 36th annual Band and Orchestra Camp. It ran June 22-July 14, and 350 fourth- through rising 10th-graders attended.

"For elementary-school kids, one day of camp is equivalent to a month of music in school," said camp Director Lawrence Walker. "For middle-school kids, their time here is equal to what they'd get in a year of music classes at school."

"That's because for four hours each day band students had two rehearsals, one sectional class – such as woodwinds, brass, percussion, or strings – and one instrument class. Orchestra students had two daily ensemble rehearsals, sectional and instrument classes, plus music theory.

"Sectional classes work on the music that the band or orchestra director is teaching," said Walker. "Instrument classes focus on fundamentals like scales and tone quality and are like master classes of large-group, private lessons."

On the first day of camp, the young musicians auditioned for placement in various levels of band and orchestra, such as beginning, intermediate and advanced. Then on the last day, students displayed what they learned by performing in individual band and orchestra concerts for their family members and campmates.

Walker began this camp, more than three decades ago and has guided it ever since.



Beneath Franklin Middle School's many music trophies, the Concert Band plays.

He retired in 2012 after teaching 30 years in FCPS – 28 of them as Franklin's band director. And since the Lawrence Walker Music Wing there bears his name, it's easy to see why he's still involved in this summer camp for budding musicians.

"It's a wonderful experience," he said. "It's great to see the students grow from the start of camp to the final day and see their skill levels develop. And I have the opportunity of seeing the respect they have for each other as their talents mature. When they return to

school in the fall, they're far ahead of their music peers."

The teachers were a mix of FCPS, Prince William and Loudoun County band and orchestra directors, private music teachers and retired military band members. And Walker



Violinists perform in the orchestra while teacher Molly Sgrecci (in back) listens.

said this summer's camp ran smoothly, as always.

"The kids and parents were terrific," he said. "The students really want to be here. Some have switched from an instrument they already play to learn a new one. But the majority come so they can challenge themselves and become better musicians, and you can hear it in their playing. They develop their skill to play more difficult material, and they just have great attitudes. And if you can conquer the attitude, you can conquer the aptitude."

Clara Eom, a rising sixth-grader at Colin Powell Elementary, has played flute for a year and attended camp for the first time. "The flute has been my dream instrument

since I was little, and I wanted to learn how to play it better," she said. "I learned some new techniques and notes here and made some new friends."

In her second year of playing saxophone, Greenbriar West sixth-grader Smera Jasani was also at camp for the first time. "One of my close friends came here last year and said it was really good, so I thought I'd try it," she explained. "I also wanted to get a head start on the next year in my school band."

"I liked practicing concert pieces in cadet band," said Smera. "And I learned lots of new techniques in tonguing, and music terms like cut time – a half note becomes a quarter note – and ritard, meaning you slow down. I'd recommend this camp to others because it's



Teacher Ben Tufts directs a percussion sectional.

a really good experience and it's fun to be around other people who want to learn."

Aarohi Prajapati, a Greenbriar West fifth-grader, just started playing flute and came to camp because "I heard it gets you ahead on a lot of instruments. The teachers are nice, and I like how quickly you learn. I've enjoyed meeting the other campers, and it's also really fun."

Lees Corner sixth-grader Emma Lee has played trumpet for a year, and her band teacher at school plays it, too, and suggested she attend this camp. "I like the trumpet because you can press down one valve and make 20 different notes," she said. "Camp has been fun, and I've especially enjoyed brass sectionals."

Rachel Carson seventh-grader Anika Menon played trumpet at camp last year, but recently began playing clarinet because "It looked and sounded cool, and my brother played it. I like how you can play so many different high and low notes with all the keys. Clarinet is also easier to carry and has so many more keys than a trumpet that it's really nice to learn about it."

At camp, Anika learned "how to play my

instrument and correct any mistakes. And I liked interacting with the different teachers – who all have different styles of playing their instruments and different perspectives. I'd recommend other students coming here because you can learn so many new things, meet lots of nice teachers and make new friends."

Haven Moon, a Greenbriar West sixth-grader, just started playing the flute and loves it. "The sound is really pretty and it's easy to carry around," she said. "And even though I knew it was going to be hard, I thought it was the right instrument for me. At camp, I learned don't breathe too big when playing because your head will get dizzy. I also learned the right fingering for high and low notes that I didn't know before."

She also enjoyed playing in concert band because, "In school, we learn by instrument families only and don't get to play with a whole band. But here, it's more useful because I can see how my flute sounds with all the band instruments."

In his second year at camp, Kilmer Middle School orchestra teacher Robert Katz taught viola sectionals. "I pull out students

BAND CAMP

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Small girl, large drum: Oak Hill sixth-grader Emma Aitken plays the bass drum.



Franklin Middle eighth-grader Jadiel Orellana Scales playing the xylophone.



Teacher Rebecca Korc listens to Liberty Middle seventh-grader Reilly Macias play his flute.



Leading students in a flute-techniques class is teacher Rebecca Korc (at far right).



Teacher Elliott Godinez (on right) shows percussion students the proper way to hold and use their drumsticks.

Franklin Middle 36th annual Band and Orchestra Camp

FROM PAGE 9

from their orchestra rehearsals and give them more specialized instruction on their instrument,” he explained. “It’s great; all the kids like being here because it’s something extra outside of school, and they’re enthusiastic about learning. And it’s nice to get together with other music teachers from other schools.”

GMU music major Khoa Nguyen taught violin sectionals. “I enjoy being the person giving the kids this lightbulb moment when it finally clicks for them and they understand,” he said. “It shows them they can do this – music doesn’t have to be hard. It comes down to having the right teacher and process, and it makes me happy knowing I’m helping people.”

Ben Tufts, who gives private percussion lessons in Chantilly, has taught percussion sectionals at camp for 15 years now. “There’s

no other camp like it,” he said. “There’s tremendous community support every year, and it’s always an incredible experience. It’s remarkable to see the growth in the students because we cram a year of instruction into 3-1/2 weeks.”

Steve Lovecchio, a music teacher at Waples Mill and London Towne elementaries, has been an FCPS band director for 18 years and is a substitute teacher in clarinet and sax at camp. “All the students are very motivated to get better, and they love their instruments as much as I love my clarinet and sax,” he said. “I teach a methods class on the nuts and bolts of each instrument – its function, mechanics and items specific to it. So kids get the time to ask questions about only those instruments because they’re not in a class with kids playing other instruments.”

Rachel Carson eighth-grader Kabir Sharma played piano for nine years, played tuba at camp and plays 17 instruments total.

“Most people don’t want to play the tuba because they get teased because of the [passing gas] sound it makes,” he said. “But it’s such a beautiful instrument.”

“When a tuba’s played, it’s a full sound that feels like a warm blanket covering you. It’s the lowest foundation sound of the whole band, so when you hear it, it’s exciting. I’ll be playing tuba in the Virginia Winds Academy this fall, and will fulfill my dream of playing bassoon at school.” Kabir hopes to someday become a professional musician.

Sarah Pettyjohn, a Greenbriar West sixth-grader, loves the high-pitched notes her flute makes and enjoys playing the melody in songs. At camp, she said, “The teachers are really kind, and I learned a lot from them.”

Likewise, Rachel Carson seventh-grader Qasim Ghadiali was enthusiastic about his trombone. “You can play 14 notes in each position and move the slides to get a differ-

ent range of notes for each position,” he explained. “At camp, I get to see all my friends and make new ones in my instrument group. I like all the songs we play, and I’d tell beginners to come here because, in school, they don’t teach you how to play your instrument.”

Meanwhile, Franklin Middle seventh-grader Haley Duque has played euphonium – like a smaller tuba – for a year. “I got into concert band here, which I’m super happy about,” she said. “I really love band, and my entire family are musicians. My dad and mom met in marching band, and I’m musical, too.”

“At camp, I learned I can play higher notes than I ever thought and learned how to take care of my instrument and play it well. And being here lets me play it more than I usually would. I’d 100 percent recommend it – you learn so much and the band directors are awesome.”

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❖ Dulles Donor Center, 45745 Nokes Boulevard, #160, Sterling, VA

❖ Woodburn Donor Center, 3289 Woodburn Road, #010, Annandale, VA

Photo ID Required. Please allow one hour for your blood donation.

Firefighters Honored

FROM PAGE 7

Capt. Rudy Iturrino (FS17, Centreville, A-Shift); Lt. Matthew Louzonis (FS17, Centreville, A-Shift); EMS Technician Matthew Arbuckle (FS17, Centreville, A-Shift); Firefighter David Bulaski (FS38, West Centreville, A-Shift); Firefighter Chris Ong-Hay (FS17, Centreville, A-Shift); and Firefighter Brianna Rhoads (FS17, Centreville, A-Shift).

Unit Citations

Members of both Fire Station 17 in Centreville and Fire Station 21 in Fair Oaks received a Unit Citation acknowledging their "superior execution of duties and performance" at the scene of an emergency incident. It was issued for their heroic work during an incident that occurred between August and December 2022.

Recognized were:

Capt. Rudy Iturrino, Lt. Matthew Louzonis, EMS Technician Matthew Arbuckle, Technician Hyun Kang and Firefighter Thomas Williams Jr. from Station 17



FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE DEPT.

From left, Fairfax County Fire Chief John Butler, Fire Station 21 Capt. Brenden Petersburg (receiving the Unit Citation) and Deputy Chief John Walser.

in Centreville; plus Capt. Brenden Petersburg, TROT Technician Louis Botha, and TROT Technician Justin Roach from Station 21 in Fair Oaks, for their response to a house fire during which they rescued an injured person and a dog.

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3 OPTIONS TO ATTEND THIS WORKSHOP

- Thursday, August 24 - 11:00 AM
- Thursday, August 24 - 6:00 PM
- Saturday, August 26 - 10:00 AM

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Cornerstones Struggles to Provide Affordable Housing

FROM PAGE 3

ernment benefits so that they can afford stable housing and put food on the table, and then they can start to get the job skills that they need. So really, it's a very layered effect. But it starts with putting a roof over your head; until you have that, it's the instability that Courtney talks about," Lara said.

Families and individuals evicted from their homes, whether an apartment or a house, are deprived of their basic shelter, which is typically safe, sufficient, and convenient to their jobs and children's schools. Park-Jamborsky said that, up until now, she had never seen multiple families in the Laurel Learning Center program in Reston experience homelessness. And the stresses that parents face affect their children.

"Two families are homeless for the second time. When they're homeless, we start seeing a lot of behavior issues with the kids and anger. Parents are stressed out and have to prioritize their stress for the day," Park-Jamborsky said. Their stress indicator may be food or where they and their children land next. It is not their children's behavior."

Inadequate housing, being too far from jobs and education, and relocation negatively impact those pushed into eviction and homelessness. Cornerstones had funding for a hotel in Herndon to house people experiencing homelessness, but they cannot forever remain there. It is temporary housing, not permanent housing.

Park-Jamborsky told of a single mother in Reston who is now homeless with her two school-age children and a baby. The children attend Laurel Learning Center. Cornerstones recently relocated them from the hotel in Herndon to the Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter in Fairfax, approximately 12 miles away. With no vehicle, the mother Ubers her children to daycare and herself to work to get by. She has been offered a manager position where she is employed but cannot take it. She would have to work weekends, and she does not have childcare.

Minnie Orozco is Cornerstones' director of urgent needs and Herndon Resource Center operations. She predicts that in two weeks, Cornerstones will face large numbers of requests for utility assistance. According to Orozco, Dominion Power suspended disconnect notices for June and July. On Aug. 1, those collection notices started going out again to all those who cannot pay. "So I'm pretty sure that in one or two more weeks, we will be bombarded with assistance requests," Orozco said.

Orozco recalled a recent request from social workers in Fairfax County for utility assistance for a family who owed more than \$3,000 on their electric bill. They have a child with special needs who must be connected to a life-saving machine. Fortunately, the family is on the do-not-disconnect list, but at the same time, they need to find the money to pay that bill.

Edwina Jackson is the division director of Homeless Services at Cornerstones. She oversees the day-to-day operation of the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, which serves singles and families. "We have an overflow at the hotel of 31 families, plus 11 families in 12 ❖ THE CONNECTION ❖ AUGUST 16-22, 2023



Wrap-around services include a food pantry in the building housing the Laurel Learning Center. Vera Tully (left) and Tapia Garcia Alejandro, Cornerstones contractors, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services, stock the shelves.



Cornerstones operates the Laurel Learning Center, which offers comprehensive family services as well as developmental childcare programs for infants through sixth grade.



Region 3: Northern Fairfax County serves the communities of Great Falls, McLean, Oakton, Reston, the Town of Herndon, the Town of Vienna, and Tysons High School Pyramids (whole or partial): Herndon, Langley, Madison, Marshall, McLean, Oakton, and South Lakes.

we serve here and 24 adults."

Jackson explained a recent incident where a mother and her adult son walked from Loudoun County to Fairfax County because aid sources were not available in Loudoun. They had heard Fairfax County could help.

Like migrants crossing the Mexican border looking for a better life, the son and his mother walked four days to get to Fairfax County and the Embry Rucker Shelter in Reston. "Her feet were so swollen. I've never seen anything like it before in my life," Jackson said. The Embry Rucker Shelter had no room, but Jackson offered the mother a mat on the floor. She refused. "She ended up in

PHOTOS BY
MERCIA HOBSON /
THE CONNECTION

the hospital," Jackson said.

Park-Jamborsky shared a dream. That someone, an investor, or a business would supply the funds for Cornerstones to purchase a hotel to house the homeless. "I mean, we're talking millions and millions of dollars."

Support Cornerstones in their mission to "provide services and opportunities to help



A quilt, a small rug, water bottles, food, and black plastic bags are set up at what appears to be someone's outdoor living space located a half block from the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, which is at full capacity. Reston's luxurious condos rise beyond the brush line.

our neighbors develop economic stability, be empowered to provide for their families, and find renewed hope for thriving in our community."

For details to donate supplies or food, see <https://www.cornerstonesva.org/donations/wish-lists/>

To donate funds, go to <https://www.cornerstonesva.org/?form=Donation>

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ENTERTAINMENT



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

JULY AND AUGUST

Pups in the Pavilion. Wednesdays from 5-7:30 p.m. At Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. Reston Town Center Kicks Off "Pups in the Pavilion" this Summer; Pavilion transforms into a leash-free play area during the dog days of summer. Enjoy treats, toys, areas to cool off, pet-friendly giveaways, and more. Visit <https://www.restontowncenter.com/>

JULY 31 – AUGUST 28

FUNDAY MONDAY in the heart of Fairfax City! 10:30-11:15 a.m. Enjoy free family programming that's perfect for the preschool set, but is open to children of all ages! On any given Monday there will be music, movement, storytelling, crafts and more. All performances and programs are held inside Old Town Hall located at 3999 University Drive, in the heart of Fairfax City. Visit: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts> for more information. Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts.

August 21: Miss Mollie's Bubble Party (held outside)
August 28: My Gym

JULY 29 – AUGUST 26

KIDZ KORNER in Old Town Square in Fairfax City! 10:30-11:15 a.m. Join us outside for a morning of Free Family Fun on Saturdays in Old Town Square (near the Splash Pad!) located at 10415 North Street in historic Fairfax City. Visit: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts> for more information. Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Department of Parks and Recreation.

August 19: Superhero Training with Captain America!
August 26: Miss Mollie's Musical Fun

THURSDAYS THRU OCT. 19

Weekly Farmers Markets. Thursdays 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. At The PARC at Tysons, 8508 Leesburg Pike, Tysons. Celebrate Fairfax, a nonprofit organization dedicated to building community in Fairfax County, is excited to announce the launch of

a weekly farmers market at The PARC at Tysons. The market is run by Potomac Farm Market, which has over 20 years of experience connecting communities to local farmers and artisanal food producers. Each week, residents can expect to find seasonal fruits and vegetables, fresh cut flowers, and other locally sourced specialties.

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 AUG. 23

Art Wednesdays. 4 p.m. - 8 p.m. Summer on The Plaza at Tysons Corner Center. Enjoy the rest of summer watching live graffiti art come every Wednesday. The Lorton Workhouse and Live Art International hosts a free event showcasing alternative art concepts for participants. All materials will be provided to engage in a drawing class, take home personalized airbrushed swag and more.

'DRIVE-IN' TO THE STARLIGHT CINEMA

Enjoy an all-new season of family-friendly entertainment at the Starlight Cinema at Trinity Centre, in Centreville, every Saturday evening in August. Come to watch the movies "drive-in" style from your car or bring chairs and blankets to watch from the lawn. As part of the Summer Entertainment Series, the Starlight Cinema brings the community together for wholesome family entertainment with live pre-show entertainment

and feature film after dark. The schedule features:

- Aug. 19: "The Bad Guys" at 8 p.m. (pre-show by Geoff Marsh at 7 p.m.)
 - Aug. 26: "DC League of Super-Pets" at 8 p.m. (pre-show by Marsha and the Positrons at 7 p.m.)
- Grab your picnic and enjoy the free entertainment that your family will remember. Gates open at 6 p.m., so come early to get a good spot. The Starlight Cinema is hosted at Trinity Centre, 5860 Trinity Parkway, in Centreville. For details, visit the Summer Entertainment Series' Starlight Cinema webpage.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 16

Media Exclusive Event. 10 a.m. to noon. At American Center, 1st Floor Conference Room, 8300 Boone Blvd., Tysons Corner. The Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce (NVBCC) will host its Media Exclusive Event to announce its Accelerator Program made possible by the recently awarded Congressionally Directed Spending. Topics to be discussed include: Introduction of NVBCC Leadership NVBCC Economic Evolution Accelerator Program Upcoming 2023 Initiatives & Partnerships Q&A

FRIDAY/AUG. 18

Tae Phoenix Concert. 6 p.m. At Lake Anne Plaza, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. Lake Anne and Washington Plaza Merchant Association (LAWPA) announced the first concert in Virginia by acclaimed artist and singer Tae Phoenix. Tae has worked extensively with Herndon-Reston Indivisible and said she is honored to be making her Virginia debut at Lake Anne Plaza with their support.

SUNDAY/AUG. 20

T-TRAK Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia T-TRAK members will hold a N gauge Model Train Display at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. Admission: museum members,



The Dump for Donations Fundraiser will be held now thru Aug. 19 at 8423 Weller Ave., McLean.

free; adults 13 and over, \$5; children 5-12, \$3; under 4, free. Seniors (65+ and military (active & retired), \$4. Call 703-425-9225.

DUMP FOR DONATIONS FUNDRAISER

Langley High School students Jaime Lee, Alex Haag, Ross-teen Sanaei, Dante Tosado, and Johnny Lee are doing a fundraiser for Fairfax County Children's Services starting now through Saturday, August 19. A dumpster has been rented through Bin There Dump That (also supporting their cause), and they will rent as many dumpsters as needed. You can come by and throw away your junk in the dumpster and then donate any amount you wish to help buy new car seats (must be new) for foster infants and toddlers. The dumpster will be located at 8423 Weller Ave, McLean.

SATURDAY/AUG. 19

Lake Anne Cardboard Boat Regatta. 12 p.m. At Lake Anne Plaza in Reston. Sail or splash -- it's all fun. Register or sponsor Reston Museum's 2023 Lake Anne Cardboard Boat Regatta at <https://www.restonmuseum.org/cardboard-pre-register>. You must register to race; spectating is free and open to the public.

SATURDAY/AUG. 19

Poetry Beneath the Stars. 7:30-9:30 p.m. At Turner Farm Park, 925 Springvale Road, Great Falls. Calling all stargazers. Join up at Turner Farm Park to contemplate the cosmos through poetic form. Attendees will be provided with examples of star-gazing poetry and then given writing prompts to generate poems of their own while staring up at the marvelous Milky Way. This event will include a telescope viewing in the Roll Top Observatory, weather permitting. This workshop is limited to 25 participants. Visit ArtsFairfax.org to register.

SATURDAY/AUG. 19

Summer Concert Series: Genres. 7-9 p.m. At Tysons Corner Center,

The Plaza, McLean. Join the Summer Concert Series featuring Delta Spur with Country & Classic Rock on August 19. Enjoy takeout and cocktails from our restaurants while dancing and singing along to your favorite tunes!

FREE CONCERT SERIES AT BURKE LAKE PARK

Every Wednesday night from June 28th through August 23rd at 7p.m., Supervisor Pat Herry (Springfield District) along with the Fairfax County Park Authority will be hosting the fifth annual Free Concerts in the Park series at Burke Lake Park. The series has expanded to nine shows with pop, rock and R&B music. Peterson's Ice Cream, 2 Silos beer and food trucks will be on site at all concerts. Attendees are encouraged to bring blankets and/or a lawn chair.

AUGUST
16 The Colin Thompson Band
23 Riptide

SATURDAY CONCERTS AT WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER

9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton • 7:30 p.m.
AUGUST
19 Karl Stoll & The Danger Zone (Rock, Blues)
26 The United States Army Field Band Six-String Soldiers (Country)

CONCERTS AT FRYING PAN FARM

Thursday Evenings 7:30 - 8:30 p.m. At Park Lawn Near Farmyard
AUGUST
17 The United States Army Blues Band Swamp Romp (Jazz)

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Obituary

William E Steiner II

Passed away peacefully on August 3, 2023 after a long battle with heart and kidney failure. Born in Pittsburgh, PA on July 20, 1942 to the late Helen and Charles F. Steiner Jr., Bill grew up in Warren, OH, graduating from Warren G. Harding High School. He served in the US Navy as an Electronic Technician (ETN) aboard the destroyer USS Douglas H. Fox visiting ports of call throughout the Caribbean, Mediterranean, Red and Black Seas.

Following his military service, he received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Kent State University. He was a member of Delta Upsilon fraternity. He practiced architecture in Warren for several years before moving his young family to Reston, VA, joining the new town development team as Resident Architect with Gulf Reston, Inc. and its successor Mobil Land Development Corp. He was chairman of the Reston Association Architectural Board of Review for twenty years followed by twenty years as member and Administrator to the Reston Town Center Design Review Board.

Upon retirement from Mobil Corp. in 1997, Bill spent ten years with United Airlines as a lobby coordinator at Washington Dulles International Airport earning him and his family free flights for life.

Bill leaves behind: his wife and love of his life Linda H. Miller of Ocean View, DE; two daughters with his first wife Kathy (now deceased) Amanda M. Steiner, Esq. of Port Angeles, WA, and Dr. Alison M. Steiner of Kailua Kona, HI; stepdaughter Tamara Miller (son Sean, daughter Ryan) of Annapolis, MD; stepson Timothy Miller of Alexandria, VA; sister Shirley Finke (Carl) of Erie, PA; brothers Charles F. Steiner III of Warren, OH (deceased), and James R. Steiner of Huntington Beach, CA; many cousins and beloved in-laws.

Bill and Linda thoroughly enjoyed their retirement years in Coastal Delaware. He spent much of his time doing absolutely nothing, often remarking, "Hey, I finally found something I'm good at!"

In lieu of a service, it was Bill's desire that you take a loved one to dinner, raise a glass to an old friend and send a photo to lindahmiller@icloud.com.

Arrangements are in the care of Eastern Shore Cremation and Funeral Service, 504 Franklin Avenue, Berlin, Maryland 21811. To send condolences to the family, please visit www.easternshorecremation.com.

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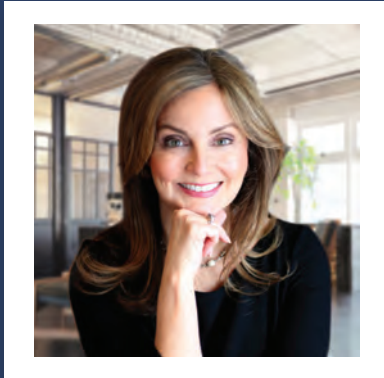
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