

CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station ♦ Lorton ♦ Clifton

Steeped in history, one can easily imagine an Edwardian lady strolling the grounds which reflect on women's struggles to gain the right to vote.

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NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE

2023-2024

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

SEPTEMBER 14-20, 2023

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



ALEXANDRIA symphony orchestra

23 24
2023 2024

TCHAIKOVSKY'S 4TH & BRAHMS VIOLIN



ASO at 80-oh!
SAT • Sep 30, 2023 at 7:30pm
SUN • Oct 1, 2023 at 3:00pm
 James Ross, Music Director
 Elissa Lee Koljonen, *violin*

Lester Green: *Toast*
 (ASO at 80 commission, sponsored by Classical Movements)

Quinn Mason: *Toast of the Town*

Johannes Brahms: Violin Concerto

Pyotr Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4

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THE CONNECTION
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Waitlists Open for Affordable Housing

Individuals interested in applying to affordable housing waitlists have the opportunity to do so Sept. 11 through Sunday, Sept. 17, 2023, at 11:59 p.m., for select properties in the county:

The Arden: Apartments located at 2317 Huntington Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22303

Ovation at Arrowbrook: Apartments located at 1335 Fairfield Ridge Avenue, Herndon VA 20171

Madison Ridge: Apartments located at 14806 Rydell Road, Centerville, VA 20121

The Residences at North Hill: Apartments located at 7250 Nightingale Hill Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306

How to Apply

Interested individuals can apply online via Rent Café, from 8:00 a.m. on Monday, September 11, 2023 through 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, September 17, 2023. Instructions for using Rent Café can be found here:

Individuals who need assistance can call 703-246-5100 or come to the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development office at 3700 Pender Drive in Fairfax, VA.

Those who apply via Rent Café will be randomly placed on a waiting list for these properties. All applications received have an equal opportunity to be selected. Once a unit becomes available, the individuals on a waiting list will be contacted, screened, and determined eligible based on income level, household size, and the size of the rental unit. Households cannot currently be receiving other federal rental housing assistance to qualify.

Housing Funds Make a Local Impact in Fairfax

These affordable housing opportunities are made available through the Project Based Voucher program which provides rental assistance to eligible households to live in specific rental units. Through a contract with the owner of the unit, the FCRHA pays a portion of the monthly rent, while the household pays their portion of the monthly rent based upon 30% to 35% of adjusted gross income. The rental assistance is attached to the specific unit and remains at the property, even if the family moves. The FCRHA uses subsidies from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Project Based Voucher program.

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NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE 2023

About Connection Newspapers in 2023

IN THE MIDST of the crisis which never ends, we at the Connection still hear the call to serve our communities, with a bit of wonder that we are able to continue. We still seek to fulfill our mission by continuing to publish, even with reduced resources. It's still our mission to provide information about where to get help and how to help; to tell the stories of those who are helping, of those who are hungry. It's still our mission to tell the stories of those working for social and racial justice, and battling income inequality.

It is our mission, set out in the first amendment of the U.S. Constitution, to press local government every day for transparency, although this continues to become more difficult. Your local paper can be your window into the workings of schools, police, transportation, zoning, stormwater management, services, and a nearly infinite number of other functions. These are the things that impact our lives at home and work.

The public has a right to expect transparency from such local institutions. The founders clearly anticipated the ongoing need for the press to help in this role.

It is still our mission to deliver the local news you need, to help make sense of what is happening

We publish photos and notes about personal milestones and community events, including births, engagements, weddings, anniversaries, awards and obituaries.

We also publish items about news and events from local businesses. Notes about openings, anniversaries and other business events and milestones are welcome.

If you are planning an event open to the public that you would like to have listed in our calendars, we appreciate getting notice at least two weeks ahead of the event, and we encourage photos.

Your community Connection newspaper is published by the independent, locally owned Local Media Connection LLC.

Our flagship paper, the Alexandria Gazette Packet, is one of, perhaps the oldest continuously publishing papers in the country, beginning in 1784.

We are blessed with remarkable, award-winning staff, contributing writers and photographers

Find What You Need

- ❖ ONLINE: www.connectionnewspapers.com
 - ❖ Digital editions of the week's papers are available at www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/PDFs
 - ❖ Past issues of the Connection back to 2008 are available at <http://connectionarchives.com/PDF/>
 - ❖ Advertising information, Special Section details here www.connectionnewspapers.com/advertising
- Email sales@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9431. Send news to editors@connectionnewspapers.com
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 - ❖ Events to list in the calendar, email to calendars@connectionnewspapers.com or online www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/

who are dedicated to our mission. Most have been writing for the Connection/Gazette for years, some for more than a decade (or two, or three). Each brings areas of interest and expertise. Check the bylines. Don't miss Bonnie Hobbs, Mercia Hobson, Jeanne Theismann, Janet Barnett, Michael Pope, Mike Salmon, Susan Laume, Glenda Booth, Eden Brown, Shirley Ruhe, Hope Nelson, Marilyn Campbell and others.

Local newspapers, including the Connection Newspapers, are facing an existential threat from the combination of nationwide down-

turn in newspaper advertising that has been worsening over several years, compounded by the economic crisis.

Revenue has not nearly rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, and we are going to need more help to keep going. We will renew calls for contributions and subscriptions. If you value local news and you have a budget for advertising and promotion, please endeavor to spend some of it with local newspapers including ours.

— MARY KIMM
MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

— First Amendment, U.S. Constitution

in your community, to advocate for community good, to provide a forum for dialogue on local concerns, and to record achievements, milestones and events in the community and people's lives. It is still our mission to cover the normal news of the local communities.

Photo Journal 2023: New Countywide Strategic Plan Shapes Fairfax

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Connection gathered photos of some recent projects and happenings since the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted its first-ever Countywide Strategic Plan on October 5, 2021. The plan charts a shared future for all, enhanced quality of life, and equitable access, driven by the vision of “One Fairfax.”

A key component of the plan is the ten outcome areas, representing the issues the Fairfax County community cares about most. They were developed based on extensive community input and were reinforced repeatedly over an 18-month outreach period.

The areas include issues regarding cultural and recreational opportunities, empowerment and support for residents facing vulnerabilities, housing and neighborhood livability, mobility and transportation, the environment,

SEE PHOTO JOURNAL, PAGE 8
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



SCREENSHOT

Recreational Opportunities; Support for Residents Facing Vulnerability: Lorton Community Center (2023); a 30,000 square foot facility co-located with the Lorton Library and Lorton Park. It provides space for the Lorton Senior Center and Lorton Community Action Center, plus services, programs, and activities for people of all ages and abilities.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON / THE CONNECTION

Economic Opportunity, Cultural and Recreational Opportunity: At Mount Vernon, Alexandria, the new brand, “Potomac Banks: Explore Fairfax South,” creates synergy between the historical, recreational, cultural, and ecological venues in the region.

NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE 2023

PHOTO COURTESY OF JULIE PARROTTA



Artist's rendition of the City Centre West condo building.



Artist's rendition of Beacon Landing, an affordable apartment building to serve the homeless.

Fairfax City Looks Toward the Horizon

Mixed uses, multifamily homes, stores and businesses planned.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City is proud of its historic Old Town parks and schools, while warmly welcoming new residents, businesses and commercial development throughout the City. Here are details about some of the projects on the horizon:

City Centre West

One of the gateways to Fairfax City is getting a major upgrade courtesy of City Centre West. Arising at 10501 Main St., between Judicial Drive and West Street, it will be an eight-story building with 210,029 square feet of residential, office and commercial uses.

A project of Ox Hill Realty, it'll replace a former bank, an old office building and an unsightly, burned-out restaurant. Fairfax City Council approved it in July, and Ox Hill representative Bob Brant said this mixed-use structure will be something "Fairfax can be proud of and a landmark for the City."

Situated on 1.78 acres, City Centre West will feature 79, for-sale, luxury condominiums and penthouses with amenities and a rooftop pool, 8,500 square feet of medical offices and 28,200 square feet of commercial-office space. There'll also be a drive-through bank, ground-floor retail, a restaurant and a .31-acre pocket park/plaza.

The top six floors of the building will house the one-, two- and three-bedroom residential units, with the 18,000-square-foot bank and offices on the lower floors, and four levels of below-grade, structured parking (309 spaces) for all the uses. The plaza will be for outdoor dining and a space where people may gather for events. It'll be accessible to the public and connect to



The Breezeway Motel's replacement project includes townhouses along Walnut Street.

downtown Fairfax.

The project will provide new road connections to Main Street and to the Fairfax County Judicial Complex. Ox Hill will also build a 10-foot-wide, landscaped sidewalk on Main Street. Groundbreaking is anticipated in March 2024, with project completion expected by spring 2026.

Beacon Landing Affordable Apartments

A project of The Lamb Center and Wesley Housing, Beacon Landing will provide permanent, supportive housing for 54 people experiencing homelessness. It'll replace the ancient, dilapidated Hy-Way Motel on Fairfax Boulevard with a modern, environmentally friendly, five-story apartment building that's 100-percent affordable.

"Giving someone a roof over their head

is life changing," said Tom Barnett with Fairfax County's Office to Prevent and End Homelessness. "It means they won't return to homelessness, and it'll help them build long-time stability."

The building will be a block from The Lamb Center's daytime, drop-in shelter on Campbell Drive. Wesley Housing is the project developer and – with The Lamb Center's guidance – will manage the property. There'll be 42, 350-square-foot efficiency units; 10, one-bedroom; and two, two-bedroom for residents needing caregivers. And 15-percent will be ADA-compliant.

Lamb Center guests chose the name, with one explaining, "Beacon' makes me think of light, home and hope. 'Landing' reminds me of landing a job or landing housing – taking those steps toward a better life."

Since they're permanent homes, residents will have their own rental leases with no time limits. Supportive means a variety of services will help residents stay in and maintain their apartments, find employment/income and address their physical- and behavioral-health needs. And this housing will be affordable – no more than 30 percent of a resident's income, or a minimum of \$50/month.

The second floor will feature a community room for the residents, plus space for Lamb Center case managers to assist residents with living independently and make sure they take their medication and obtain the services they need. Property-management staff will be there, too.

The 1,400-square-foot first floor will be an employment center to help building residents find entry-level jobs. The front door will be controlled access, and there'll be security cameras, plus a 24/7 staffed front desk. A bus stop will be outside the building, and racks for 26 bikes will be provided.

The Lamb Center Executive Director Tara Ruzskowski said this project will serve "the people most vulnerable, marginalized and at-risk, including the elderly and those with disabilities." Apartments will be fully furnished, including washers and dryers. She estimated construction to begin in spring 2024 and take some 14-16 months, with an anticipated building opening in 2025.

New Homes and Commercial Building

Built in the early 1950s, the Breezeway Motel on Fairfax Boulevard will be demolished – as will the Fairfax Gardens Apartments on Cedar Avenue – so Pulte Home Co. may construct townhouses, two-over-two condos and a commercial building in their place. The site is bounded by Fairfax Boulevard, Cedar Avenue and Walnut and Oak streets.

NEWCOMERS 2023

Celebrate Fiesta Fairfax on Sept. 23

Fairfax City is holding a new, community celebration to observe Hispanic Heritage Month. Set for Saturday, Sept. 23, from 3:30-8 p.m., it'll be at Old Town Square, 10415 North St. The fun will include cultural performances, music, food and educational exhibits highlighting the contributions and experiences of the Hispanic, Latino and Latinx community.

The Old Town Square stage will host folkloric dance performances from various countries, as well as a salsa dance demonstration and class followed by a live band so attendees may try out their new dance moves. And Latin food vendors from the around the area will offer a variety of dishes.

Local nonprofits will also be onsite to share information about services and opportunities to work with the Latino community. With Latinos comprising about 20 percent of the City's population, the goal of Fiesta Fairfax is to bring people together to celebrate the



City's diversity.

- *Entertainment Schedule
- 3:40 p.m. Mariachi Estrellas
- 4:25 p.m. Los Quetzales Mexican Dance Ensemble
- 5:00 p.m. Alma Boliviana Fraternity
- 5:25 p.m. Armonias Peruanas
- 5:45 p.m. La Decana
- 5:50 p.m. LUSA Dance Group
- 6:05 p.m. Azucar GMU
- 6:25 p.m. Dance Instruction w/ Laura Ortiz
- 6:55 p.m. Sol y Rumba Band.

— BONNIE HOBBS

Meet Your MVD TEAM!

Our office is here for you! Did you know you can contact us with any County concerns or issues, and we can connect you with the answers? Here are just a few ways we can help:

- Connecting you with County services.
- Sharing information about issues in our community.
- Communicating meetings and events happening near you.
- Answering questions about voting, property, roads, taxes, public safety, health & human services, solid waste, recycling and more!
- Bilingual staff in Spanish and Greek.

There are many ways to

CONNECT WITH TEAM MVD!

Stop by: Mount Vernon Governmental Center
2511 Parkers Lane, Mount Vernon, VA 22306

Keep informed! Sign up for the Mount Vernon Advisor and follow us on social media!
Visit: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/>
Call: 703-780-7518 (TTY 711)
Email: mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Thursday: 5 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Second Saturday Each Month:
Lorton Library: 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
MV District Office: 12:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.
 Walk-ins and by appointment

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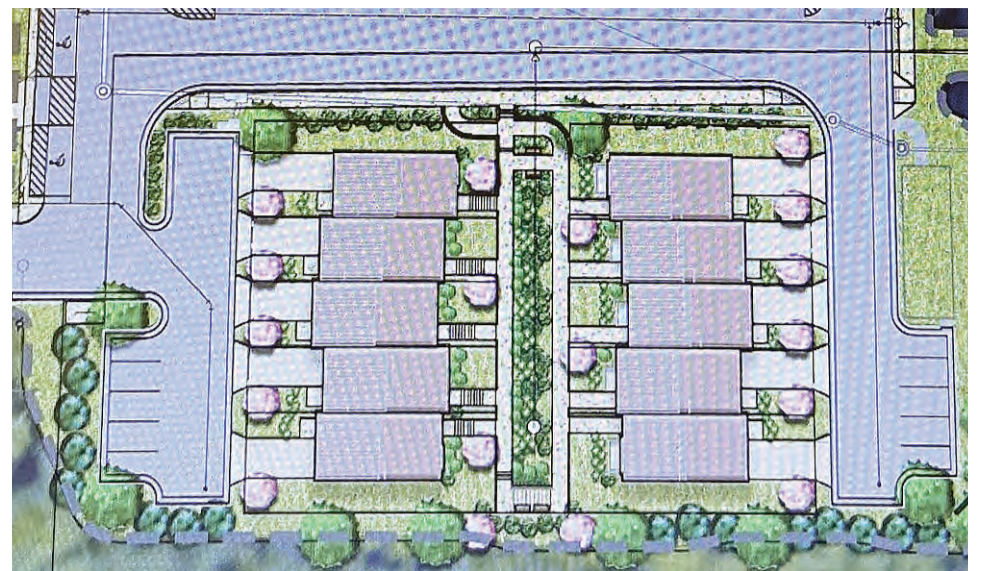
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NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE 2023



Northfax West site plan showing the townhouses, senior-living facility and future-development area.



A site plan of the 10 Glebe View townhouses in Fairfax.

Fairfax City Looks Toward the Horizon

FROM PAGE 4

Planned are 60 homes with 141 parking spaces. There'll be 40 townhouses 40 feet high, with 80 parking spaces; plus 20 condos 51 feet high, with 40 parking spaces and 21 surface spaces. Also envisioned are 8,000-10,010 square feet of commercial space with 44 parking spaces.

Utilities will be underground, and there'll be a playground and picnic area, plus four areas of open space – three, accessible to the public. Each unit will have a sidewalk connecting to the street, and there'll be a 10-foot-wide sidewalk/multi-use trail on Fairfax Boulevard. Also planned is a connection from the multifamily homes to the future commercial development, as well as crosswalks on the adjoining public streets.

Access points to the commercial part of the site are from Fairfax Boulevard and Walnut Street. There's also entry from Walnut Street to the condos, and access from Oak to the townhouses, plus emergency access to the townhomes from Cedar. There'll be a Metro bus stop on Fairfax Boulevard, and traffic impact from the project is expected to be minimal.

Northfax West Revitalization

Fairfax City's Northfax area is being revamped and revitalized at 3570 Chain Bridge Road. The work will be done as follows:

- ❖ Phase One includes construction of a storm-drainage culvert, utility relocations, realignment of Orchard Street, three new crosswalks, a walking trail, sidewalks and bike lanes.

- ❖ Phase Two will be 56 townhouses built by Madison Homes along Farr Avenue and Orchard. They'll be 44 feet high and have 112 parking spaces (two per unit), plus 22 surface spaces for 134 parking spaces total.

- ❖ Phase Three will be construction of a seven-story, senior-living facility by Brightview. It'll contain 114 independent-living units, plus 86 assisted-living units and structured parking.

- ❖ Phase Four is the future development of 3.3 acres along Orchard and Chain Bridge Road. Planned are 25,000 square feet of office, retail and restaurant uses, 180 housing units and a 140-room hotel.

The project also includes extending Farr Avenue, restoring part of Accotink Creek in Van Dyck Park, and creating an 8-foot trail to

Perry Street and Howerton Avenue, as well as a pocket park and tot lot for the townhouses.

Glebe View Townhouses

Fairfax Presbyterian Church, at 10723 Main St. and Presbyterian Way, is donating some 1.6 acres of its land for affordable homes, called Glebe View Townhouses, to be built there. Habitat for Humanity NOVA is the developer, and nonprofit Homestretch/Sacred Homes will own two of the houses. HomeAid will provide building materials and tradesman expertise at reduced prices.

Constructed will be 10, brick-exterior, three-level townhouses, each with three bedrooms and two bathrooms, plus one-car garages and driveways. Ten visitor parking spaces will go on the western side of the property, and a new, 30-space parking area – including much-needed, handicap-accessible spaces – will be built in the southwest corner for the church's use. A walking path will go around the 8.25-acre church property, and there'll be two stormwater-management facilities where today there are none.

To help keep utility bills low, the builder will incorporate energy-efficient construction practices, appliances and lighting – including

rooftop solar panels for all townhouses. The communal green area in front of the townhouses will include a pergola, solar pathway lights, benches and landscaping.

The townhomes will go on the property's east side, adjacent to the Cameron Glen townhouse community. A sidewalk with steps will connect the church with the nearby Autumn Woods community. And a connection on the north side of the townhouses to the adjacent, existing trail by Accotink Creek will also be added.

Eight of the units will be sold to Habitat NOVA families earning less than the area median income. The other two will be sold to Homestretch for its Sacred Homes program lifting families out of poverty. Habitat homeowners will work alongside other volunteers to help build their homes. The sale prices will be below market value because the church is providing the land.

"Rarely do we have an opportunity to do something so innovative, creative and unique to help people in need," said Christopher Fay, Executive Director of Homestretch. "The community of faith here has risen to the challenge – and this can be a new path for others to follow."

Special Events, All Year 'Round in Fairfax City

When it comes to special events, it's hard to beat Fairfax City for the number and variety of entertaining, family-friendly events it holds all year long. Below are highlights of what's on tap for the rest of the year. For specific information about each event, including the times, locations and other specific details, go to <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/special-events>.

Oct. 14	Fall Festival
Nov. 18-19	Holiday Craft Show
Dec. 1-3 & 8-10	Holiday Market
Dec. 2	Festival of Lights & Carols
Dec. 9	Lunch with Santa

- ❖ Rock the Block: From May through October, live bands perform the fourth Friday of the month, 6:30-9:30 p.m., in Old Town Square, 10415 North St. Coming up next Friday, Sept. 22, will be Uncle Jesse, performing hit music from the 1990s and 2000s. Admission is free, and food trucks and beer are available.

- ❖ Fairfax Fall Festival: This annual extravaganza is Saturday, Oct. 14, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. There'll be crafts, food, beer gardens, children's rides and activities, plus three stages of live entertainment. Admission is free, with activities for all ages. Vendors and the carnival will close

at 5 p.m., but the musical entertainment will continue from 5:30-8:30 p.m. in Old Town Square. Go to <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/special-events/fall-festival>.

- ❖ Fun in Fairfax City will continue in 2024, starting Feb. 2-4, with the always popular Chocolate Lovers Festival, followed by other celebrations, such as Fairfax HisTree Day, Beer in the 'Burbs, Fairfax Pride, Juneteenth and the gigantic Fourth of July parade. Check the Website for dates and other information as it becomes available.

— BONNIE HOBBS



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

From left, brothers Peter and Henry look through colorful hula hoops at a vendor's booth at a previous Fairfax Fall Festival.

NEWS

September is National Emergency Preparedness Month

All around the nation, people will be taking action to build stronger, more resilient and prepared communities during September, National Emergency Preparedness Month.

This is an opportunity to look around and find ways to prepare yourself and others in your community for disasters. Taking action to prepare for an emergency before it strikes can lead to better outcomes and provide peace of mind.

Fairfax County's Department of Emergency Management and Security has tools that are designed to aid the community in becoming more prepared for disasters. Take some time to think about ways you can make a difference during this year's Emergency Preparedness Month.

Here are some tips:

- ❖ Prepare yourself and your family: The "Community Emergency Response Guide" (CERG) — available in multiple languages — has information on the types of threats and hazards local to Fairfax County, as well as tools to help you build an emergency plan and kit. It also has information on how to sign up for Fairfax Alerts so that you will receive alerts and warnings in the event of an emergency or disaster.

- ❖ Prepare your neighborhood: Once you have prepared yourself for an emergency, don't stop there. You can be a leader in your neighborhood and organize a group of neighbors to help plan for how your neighborhood will help each other during a disaster.

- ❖ Prepare your business: Whether you own a business or work at a place you think needs an emergency plan, the "Business Disaster Resilience Guide" can help. This guide explains why it is crucial for businesses to have a continuity of operations plan and provides tools to help set the business up for success in the event it is affected by a disaster.

- ❖ Make an emergency kit: Emergency kits include basic supplies and are tailored to every person's need. We recommend every household keep three to five days worth of food, water and supplies in shelter-in-place kits for each member of the household.

- ❖ Read and download the Community Emergency Response Guide: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/cerg

Emergency Pet Preparedness

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter/petresources/petpreparedness>

When potentially disastrous weather is in the forecast, it's best to prepare early! It's always better to be safe than sorry, and there's no time like right now to make sure you have everything you — and your pet — need in the event of a weather-related disaster. Here are some things to keep in mind as you prepare:

1. Make sure your pets' microchip information is up-to-date, and that your dogs are wearing collars with identification tags. In the event that your pet is separated from you, this safety measure can ensure that whoever finds them will be able to find you, too.

2. Make sure you have the needed supplies and important documents for each of your pets. Check out our Pet Preparedness Disaster Kit Checklist for a handy list.

3. If you are evacuating, make sure the place you're going allows pets. There are pet-friendly shelters in Fairfax County, but please check to make sure they will be open. Hotels are not required to accept pets, so please plan accordingly.

4. If you absolutely need to shelter your pets while you get to safety, we will accept pets of Fairfax County residents for temporary safekeeping at the shelter and are preparing kennel space just in case. If you do need to bring your pet(s) to our shelter, PLEASE bring vaccination history and any medications they are on, and preferably a bag of whatever food they're eating as well. If you need assistance getting your pets to safety, please call Animal Protection Police at 703-691-2131.



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Gunston Wok.....703-495-8884
Lorton Barbershop703-495-9029

7-Eleven703-690-2463
Gyro Factory.....703-495-9777
Salon Red703-690-1122
Antonelli's Pizza703-690-4500

Coming Soon Veronica's Taqueria

8212 Gunston Corner Lane, Lorton, VA 22079



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 Struct ID	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
PATRICK	13372	699	HUGHES BROWN RD/RTE 699	WHITE MUD CREEK	8/22/2023
WYTHE	19743	671	CRIGGER RD	CRIGGER CREEK	8/10/2023
PATRICK	13337	675	FRIENDS MISSION/RTE 675	ARARAT RIVER	8/10/2023
BEDFORD	2918	804	TEASS TERRACE/RTE 804	NININGER CREEK	8/9/2023
PATRICK	13336	672	JOHNSON CR RD/RTE 672	JOHNSON CREEK	8/9/2023
PATRICK	13276	626	ABRAM PENN HWY/RTE 626	N. MAYO RIVER	8/1/2023

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

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

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

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.



SCREENSHOT 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Bryan Hill (center left) on the County Exec Trek, Fairfax.

Year One, the 2023 Annual Report

Steps taken to implement Fairfax County Strategic Plan.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

There was no community cake, no banners, speeches, or parades in February of this year when County Executive Bryan Hill shared the Year One Annual Report for the implementation of the first-ever Fairfax County Strategic Plan. Following the plan's development in 2019 and interruption by the pandemic, the Board of Supervisors approved the strategic plan in October 2021, believing that county leadership must look ahead to shape the future of our community.

The 2023 Annual Report detailed the steps taken to implement the plan. It summarized the county's efforts to improve the value and vitality of its 406 square miles for all residents, visitors, and employees.

Four "key drivers" energized the countywide strategic plan: equity, data integration, inclusive engagement, and ten community outcome areas, which are:

- ❖ Cultural and Recreational Opportunities
- ❖ Economic Opportunity
- ❖ Effective and Efficient Government
- ❖ Empowerment and Support for Residents Facing Vulnerability
- ❖ Environment and Energy
- ❖ Healthy Communities
- ❖ Housing and Neighborhood Livability



SCREENSHOT VIA FACEBOOK

Jeff McKay, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

- ❖ Lifelong Education and Learning
- ❖ Mobility and Transportation
- ❖ Safety and Security

According to the plan, "These elements set a new foundation for the way different functions within county government must work together under a shared vision in pursuit of achieving consistent and measurable progress for the benefit of all people in Fairfax County."

Bryan J. Hill, county executive, wrote in his 2023 message sharing the Year One Annual Report, "As we look ahead, we are fully aware that we still have a long way to go to achieve our vision of becoming One Fairfax."

He added, "In Year Two, this will become an even greater focus as we strategically target the formation of infrastructure and strategy that fosters collective action around neighborhoods as the primary environments in which individuals access key opportunity structures."

Fairfax County approved a revision of the county strategic plan in May 2023, in keeping with the intention that the framework of the plan would remain unchanged over time, but the details would be adapted as needed.

The following changes were made to the Countywide Strategic Plan in Year Two and are included in the FY

2024 Advertised Budget:

Change the names of two community outcome areas to match the other eight: Health to Healthy Communities and Environment to Environment and Energy.

Reorganize proposed strategies within the Ten Community Outcome Areas according to community success indicators.

Incorporate recommendations from the Chairman's Task Force on Equity and Opportunity into the strategic plan's proposed strategies.

To reflect Fairfax County Public Schools' (FCPS) new strategic plan, revise existing language.

To reflect the identified headline metrics, update the Economic Opportunity Sample Metrics.

In the Fairfax Countywide Strategic Plan, revised in May 2023, Chairman Jeff McKay wrote, "Inequities persist, and access to opportunity can vary significantly based on one's identity and location." Such is despite the county's "enviable rankings" in key indicators of community prosperity, such as median income, school performance, and public safety.

To review the Strategic Plan or related items as a document, download the following PDFs: Countywide Strategic Plan (Current - Revised May 2023), Countywide Strategic Plan (October 2021), Two-Page Plan Highlights (Drivers and Community Outcome Areas), Alignment with One Fairfax, and Community Engagement Highlights at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zd-Fror-By977x4Y1SPQE7fehAFzlmTZAB_4as4DWlNY/edit.

SEE SUPERVISORS, PAGE 10

Photo Journal 2023: New Countywide Strategic Plan Shapes Fairfax

FROM PAGE 3
and others.

In 2023, the first achievements under the new strategic plan are visible throughout the county. We

hope you enjoy seeing and learning how the future of Fairfax County is unfolding as the plan helps to protect and enrich the quality of life for people and diverse communities.



SCREENSHOT

Environmental and Energy: Fairfax County launches its first all-electric trash truck at the Newington Collections Facility in Lorton.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Empowerment and Support for Residents Facing Vulnerability: Last fall, Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk helped open the Workforce Innovation and Skills Hub (W.I.S.H.), a first-of-its-kind, world-class workforce and technology development center. It is in the Hybla Valley area of Alexandria in the Franconia District. A welding class is underway.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/ THE CONNECTION

Safety and Security: Fairfax County Valor Awards 2023.

NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE 2023

Superintendent Michelle Reid Shares FCPS's Hidden Gems

Did you know we have a Neurodiversity Specialist as well as a Twice Exceptional Specialist to ensure this population of students is supported? For those of you who don't know, a twice exceptional student is one that has been identified as academically gifted in one or more areas and also identified as having a disability. Without support, those challenges can often hide the student's abilities. These roles are unique to K-12 public education in the US. These staff members are such a great resource for our families and teachers. More detailed information and photos can be found here.

Kristen Haynor, Neurodiversity Specialist for Fairfax County Public Schools, first neurodiversity specialist in a K-12 school in the U.S. She hopes her appointment will encourage other districts to do the same. Haynor spends time in the classroom talking to students about her work.

Nonye Oladimeji began as the division's - and Virginia's - first public school - Twice Exceptional (2E) Education Specialist. Rachel Rubio serves as the new FCPS Dyslexia Specialist, a highly specialized role dedicated to the reading and writing disability that affects 20% of the population. Without teachers having the tools to recognize the signs, it can often go undiagnosed.

SEE HIDDEN GEMS, PAGE 11



INSTAGRAM

Dr. Michelle Reid, superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools, engages with students in the classroom and extracurricular settings, where students typically gather.



FCPS

From left, Kristen Haynor, neurodiversity specialist; Nonye Oladimeji, twice exceptional specialist; and Rachel Rubio, dyslexia specialist; meet each week to discuss and plan their work.



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Supervisors Share Issues



SCREENSHOT VIA FACEBOOK CAN USE HEADSHOTS INSTEAD

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

Back row: Walter L. Alcorn, Hunter Mill; Pat Herrity, Springfield; Daniel G. Storck, Mount Vernon; Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay, Elected At-Large; John W. Foust, Dranesville; Rodney L. Lusk, Franconia; (front row) Kathy L. Smith, Sully; Penelope A. Gross, Mason; Dalia A. Palchik, Providence; and James R. Walkinshaw, Braddock.

FROM PAGE 8

The Connection asked members of the Board of Supervisors to identify issues within their districts. No member of the Board claimed the county is utopia. While there is good news in community outcome areas, prevailing issues necessitate change. That will take time.

Comments are organized according to the ten community outcome areas listed in the Fairfax County Strategic Plan, Revised May 2023. Comments have been lightly edited for clarity and space.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay

Economic Opportunity— The pandemic led to massive economic disruptions all around the globe, including here in Fairfax County. As of this year, we are happy to see that we actually have more residents employed now than we did before the onset of the pandemic. We want to continue this momentum and are doing so by working with our Economic Development Authority, county staff, and the community.

Safety and Security— Fairfax County was again named the safest jurisdiction of our size in the country. We have remained the safest jurisdiction by having world-class public safety agencies and a community that cares. I am proud of the work we have done together and look forward to continuing this critical work.

Lifelong Education and Learning— “As a board, we prioritize investing in our schools each year, and this year is no different. Superior public schools are why business-

es choose to locate here and how they can grow here with the available talent pool. It’s also a school system where all students can feel safe and heard.

James R. Walkinshaw, Braddock District

The three most important issues in the Braddock District are continuing to invest in our schools, improving transportation options, and protecting our local environment.

John W. Foust, Dranesville District

Many of the important issues in Dranesville are common across the county, like creating affordable housing, growing the local economy to provide good jobs and revenues to support county programs and services, and making our community more resilient to the ever-worsening impacts of climate change.

Mobility and Transportation, Safety and Security— Making downtown McLean more vibrant and safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. Eliminating the awful congestion in the neighborhoods around the access ramp from Georgetown Pike onto the Beltway. Ensuring adequate infrastructure (including roads, trails, parks, and schools) is provided to serve the significant growth near the new Herndon and Innovation metro stations.

Rodney L. Lusk, Franconia District

Mobility and Transportation— Continue making progress on the redevelopment of the Springfield and Richmond Highway communities.

Lifelong Education and Learning—

We need to prepare our kids for the jobs of the future and help our residents gain marketable skills, training, and certifications that will enable them to pursue careers in innovative technology, the building trades, and medical technology. This is a foundational issue for me and a core focus of my office.

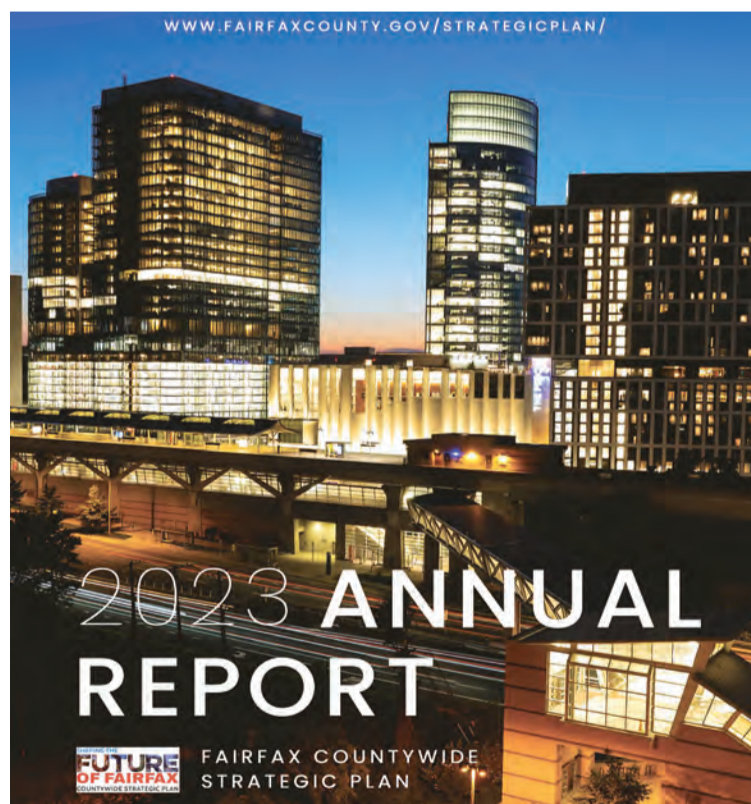
Housing and Neighborhood Livability— We need to continue to look at ways to provide more affordable housing options for

our seniors, our first responders, teachers, and other public-facing members of our community.

Pat Herrity, Springfield District

Effective and Efficient Government— The county’s unsustainable tax increases are adding to residents’ inflation concerns.

Safety and Security Crime— Businesses and residents suffer



SCREENSHOT VIA 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

The cover of the 2023 Annual Report for the first-ever Fairfax County Strategic Plan depicts the Tysons Corner skyline, featuring through the image many of the ten community outcome areas sought in the plan, such as economic opportunity, cultural and recreational opportunities, housing and neighborhood livability, mobility and transportation, and more.

from unprosecuted crimes and a police staffing crisis.

Lifelong Education and Learning— Schools, as parents, students, and teachers struggle to close achievement gaps from lost learning. We need to focus school resources in the classroom on teachers and kids, not on administrators and political agendas.

Healthy Communities— Addressing panhandling and the fentanyl public health crisis are also high on residents’ lists of concerns.

Penny Gross, Mason District Supervisor:

Pedestrian safety; revitalization /redevelopment; affordable and attainable housing. There is a difference between affordable and attainable

Daniel Storck, Mount Vernon District Supervisor:

My top priorities continue to be improving the lives of our families through investments in education, housing, the environment, transportation, public safety, and the kind of economic development and jobs that ensure all have opportunities to live, learn, work, play, and grow older in the Mount Vernon District. It is also critically important that our county continue to be the safest jurisdiction of its size in the country.

One of the most pressing issues in our district continues to be the revitalization of Richmond Highway and Lorton. We have been successfully working together to re-envision Lorton and the Highway, investing in education, and delivering new parks, new public safety facilities, new housing of all types, new businesses, planned ‘The One’ Bus Rapid Transit system, pedestrian and cycling improvements, and so much more, all while making sure no one is left behind.

Another crucial issue is housing. The Mount Vernon District has a wide range, variety, and great diversity of all types of housing, including much lower-cost, substantial middle-income, and some of the most expensive housing in the DMV.

The smart growth housing and community development policies that I helped initiate, plan, fund, and implement in 2016 have resulted in the past two years alone in building or preserving more than 1,000 units of workforce and affordable homes, while more than a thousand middle-income homes were built or started construction. Substantial future “missing middle” homes are planned as well.

Kathy Smith, Sully District Supervisor:

Transportation and first responders/public safety.

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NEWCOMERS 2023



FCPS

Kristen Haynor, Neurodiversity Specialist for Fairfax County Public Schools

Superintendent Michelle Reid's Hidden Gems

FROM PAGE 9

<https://www.fcps.edu/blog/fairfax-county-public-schools-welcomes-first-nation-neurodiversity-specialist-amongst-trio>

What are the most significant issues specific to the FCPS?

Strategic Plan: We are excited to be implementing our FCPS Strategic plan, which will serve as our North Star in ensuring excellence, equity and opportunity for all students through 2030. This plan reflects many months of hard work and input from students, staff and families: we reviewed more than 100,000 feedback survey responses and hosted more than 65 planning team and community meetings.

Our plan includes five goals: Goal #1, a strong start for all students, Goal #2, ensuring all feel safe, supported, included and empowered, Goal #3 reflects our commitment to academic growth and excellence, Goal #4 relies on equitable access and opportunity and Goal #5 is leading for tomorrow's innovation. We will aim to meet our plan's objectives by doing things like increasing Pre-K programs to meet community need, strong support for community literacy, boosting student participation in extracurricular and leadership activities, supporting successful completion of at least Algebra I by eighth grade, expanding availability and enrollment in advanced coursework and bolstering financial literacy among our student population.

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Popular Entertainment Spots and Nearby Eats in South County

Interesting places to pair food and fun.



The elegant mansion of George and Ann Mason, Gunston Hall, its grounds and museum with exhibits and gift shop, is open for visitors to explore colonial history.



Gunston Hall's newly renovated gardens grow plants from a heritage seed bank of plants that would have provided for the colonial's table



Gunston Hall hosts a calendar of events including garden celebration, colonial cocktails and colonial dancing



Occoquan Park embraces history with the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial, and Workhouse brick kiln, while offering a modern event venue, the River View overlooking the Occoquan River



The Workhouse Art Center, under further renovation of buildings surrounding its quad, will welcome the Bunnyman Brewery in 2024



Snuggling against one side of the River View near the boat ramp, the Brickmaker's Cafe provides scenic views of the river and light breezes along with a several menu options



Steeped in history, one can easily imagine an Edwardian lady strolling the grounds which reflect on women's struggles to gain the right to vote

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

The south county areas of Springfield, Lorton, Clifton, Fairfax and Fairfax Station are fortunate to have interesting attractions to enjoy for entertainment, exercise, nature and history. Here are some of our favorite fun, beautiful, natural, historic and quirky places. And because an outing often just doesn't seem perfect without enjoying some food as part of the fun, we have suggestions for food located near the attractions.

Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Rd, Lorton

On Mason Neck, the Gunston Hall plantation, home of Founding Father George Mason and his wife Ann, showcases the 1755 manor house, gardens, grounds and a modern day visitors center and museum. Mason, who lived from 1725 to 1792, was a delegate to the 1787 U.S. Constitutional Convention, one of three who refused to sign the newly written Constitution; and also was the principal author of the Virginia Bill of Rights, the model for the U.S. Bill of Rights. The stylish home for Mason, his wife and nine children shows their wealth and prominence. Surrounded by four large plantations and forest, and tended by tenant farmers and enslaved people, the hall was mostly self-sufficient during Mason's days.

Visitors may take guided tours or explore the grounds on their own, including the kitchen yard with its dairy and laundry;

schoolhouse with tutor's quarters; slave dwellings; on-going archaeology projects; garden and its reconstruction; and the burial ground of the Mason family. Open space invites walking and a woods trail leads to Gunston Cove, off the Potomac River. Hikers can find traces of colonial wagon roads and deer park areas. The hand-built terraced overlook to the Potomac River, recently renovated, is a spot where the Masons entertained guests and may have spotted game.

The riverside gardens, located between the mansion and terraces, are newly renovated with plants grown from heritage seeds. Under archeologists' spades for several years, the space has been returned to the plants and pollinator species that likely thrived there to support the Mason family table.

The Hall celebrates the garden opening with an event on Oct. 7, providing an opportunity to explore what plants are growing, and join in seed saving, crafts and flower arranging.

Exhibits at the Visitor Center trace Ma-

son's legacy of action and ideas, Revolutionary Rights; and clues to the lives of enslaved and free women of Gunston Hall, A Woman's Place.

General admission is \$10; a grounds pass is \$5. For more information, see <https://gunstonhall.org/>

Gunston Hall Picnics

Take advantage of the beauty of the setting by picnicking on the grounds of Gunston Hall. Visitors may bring their own food or order a custom Gunston Hall "picnic box." Ordered 24 hours in advance, from caterer Amphora Catering & Bakery, picnickers have colonial themed menu options for single

meals (\$14-21; kids \$8), and for 10 guests (\$85-175). To preview the menu and order, see <http://www.amphoracatering.com/gunston-hall/>

Occoquan Regional Park, 9751 Ox Rd, Lorton

Enjoy 350 acres of outdoor recreation at Occoquan Regional Park in Lorton. The 5k loop trail provides an opportunity for a walking tour of the park and the history it denotes. A highlight is the new Turning Point Suffragist Memorial telling the story of women's struggle for voting rights. A sole remaining brick kiln, once one of more than a dozen, harks to the area's history of prison

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enterprise. The park offers multiple picnic shelters with grills and covered tables; kayak and paddle-board rentals; fishing from the shoreline or boat ramp for perch, bass, crappie and catfish; softball and open fields; and batting cages, with variable speed pitching machines; in addition to its open space for walking, jogging, or biking. The boat launch is open year-round with daily and annual launch passes available.

Its modern new event space, River View at the Jean R. Packard Center, lives up to its name, and seats up to 300 guests and larger gatherings when seating is not required. A foyer exhibit depicts John Smith's voyage on the Chesapeake Bay, while visitors can watch the modern day voyages of water craft just

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outside the windows or from the vantage point of the walkway along the waterfront. The Center hosted over 100 major events last year, which included 84 times brides selected the venue for their special day. Perhaps brides appreciated the wedding party's access to a private hospitality suite and historic cottage available for preparation, or the two adjacent outdoor spaces for a natural green setting. Short term rentals of a smaller space are available when less space is needed for baby and bridal showers, celebrations of life, or any need for a pleasant room with ample nearby parking.

For large outdoor event space, The Pavilion offers picnicking for groups up to 1,500, capable of hosting large family reunions and

corporate picnics. Pavilion amenities include electricity, covered seating, with tables for up to 250, and additional field space available if needed.

For more information on Occoquan Park venues, see <https://www.novaparks.com/parks/occoquan-regional-park>

Brickmakers Cafe

Attached to one end of the River View events center in Occoquan Park, with a separate entrance, the small cafe with seating inside and on the umbrellaed terrace, offers views of the Occoquan River and gentle breezes. The menu includes hot cafe entrees, sandwiches and salads. A small selection of beer and wine is available, with happy hour price reductions after 2 p.m. The Cafe offers carry out catering and hosts catering for functions, including business meetings, birthday and retirement parties, and rehearsal dinners. See <https://www.novaparks.com/parks/brickmakers-cafe>

BURKE / FAIRFAX / FAIRFAX STATION/CLIFTON/LORTON / SPRINGFIELD ♦ SEPTEMBER 14-20, 2023 ♦ 13

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

SEE INTERESTING PLACES, PAGE 14

Interesting Places To Pair Food and Fun



The Center is home to the Lucy Burns Museum telling the story of suffragists incarnated at the reformatory for silent picketing at the White House.

FROM PAGE 13

an outgrowth of the very successful tourism campaign “Virginia is for Lovers,” recognized by Forbes as one of the top ten tourism marketing campaigns of all time. Following the first appearance in “Modern Bride,” March 1969, people travel from afar to collect photos with “Love” sign backgrounds, each has a unique setting and stylizing. See

<https://www.workhousearts.org/> and <https://www.workhousearts.org/lucy-burns-museum>

Bunnyman Brewing

Coming in March 2024, Bunnyman Brewery will be on site at the Workhouse Art Center’s quad. The brewery will offer food as well as an extensive array of IPAs, beers, ales, stouts, and hard seltzers. The brewery’s new location is made possible by a \$6.3 million renovation project to a portion of the historic prison buildings on the quad. Bunnyman’s arrival will actually be a return to the reformatory grounds home of the legend from which the brewery takes its unusual name. The tall tale tells of a nearby bus crash in the 1900s, from which patients



New in 2023, LEGO Discovery Center provides a new entertainment and shopping experience

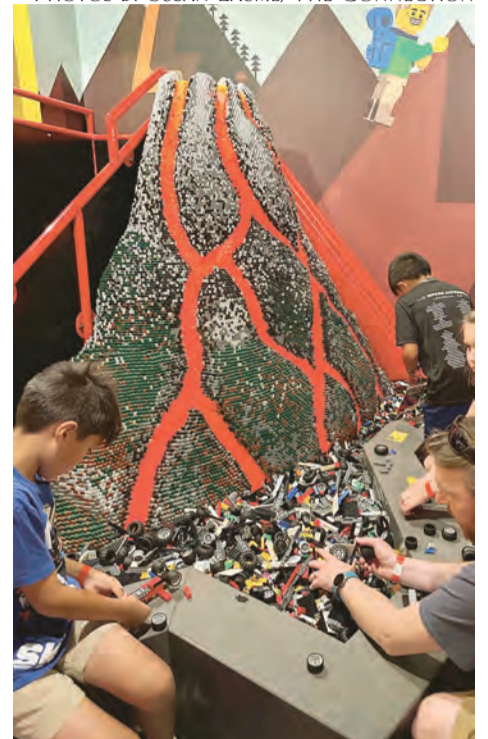
from an “insane asylum” escaped. One left a trail of gutted rabbits as the only clues to his movements. He was the only patient never found. The brewery name marks the legend perhaps best told with a stout in hand. <https://bunnymanbrewing.com/>

LEGO Discovery Center, 6563 Springfield Mall, Springfield

A new arrival to the area’s entertainment scene, the Discovery Center is turning accommodating parents and grandparents into instant subjects of adoration from local kids lucky enough to be escorted to the fun spot.

The 32,000 square foot family entertainment attraction and store on the Springfield Towne Center’s lower level boasts several sections. Twelve zones include multiple activities: LEGO brick building areas, spaceship build, train ride with space pirates, Washington D.C. as a mini-world, 4D cinema, laser maze, and a hero zone sure to help wear out even those with the most energy to burn. Tiny critics often provide the insider’s tip that the laser maze and car race mountain are the areas they like best, of course after trying them all. Tickets start at \$28.99 <https://www.legodiscoverycenter.com/washington-dc/>

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



One of several activities within the Discovery Center, the lava mountain car race meets approval from area kids

Springfield Towne Center, 6500 Springfield Mall, Springfield

Have you noticed that lately “the mall” is being rediscovered as an entertainment center? Make a trip in the evening or on weekends, and find families with small children, couples, and teens making the mall a destination for having fun without having to spend much money. Play areas for tots and older children, window shopping, a food court, a multi-screen movie theater, and people watching, in a climate controlled, cheerful lighted space, with security and easy parking, makes the mall an easy choice. Some even take advantage of the controlled temperature for walking exercise.

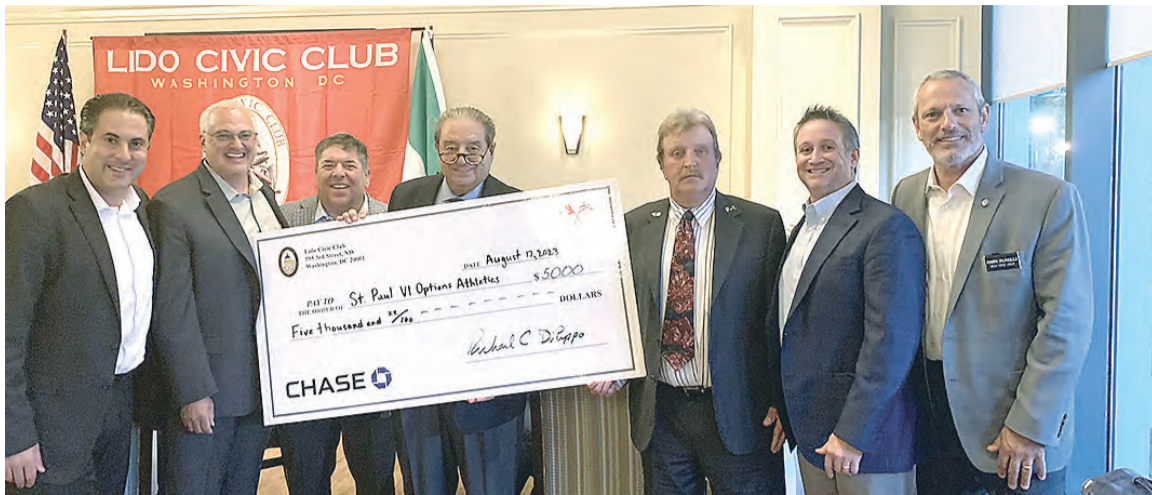
Enclosed, centralized shopping malls saw a boom period from the late 1960s through the 2000s. In recent years, as online shopping emerged as a major competitor, malls began to go out of business. Those that have survived, such as the local Center, typically include attractions, gyms, and movie theaters. The Springfield Towne Center is anchored by Macy’s and Target, and now includes the LEGO entertainment venue. It hosts many free events and programs, often with cultural themes, for the community and families to enjoy year-round. <https://springfieldtownecenter.com/>

Springfield Towne Center Restaurants - Located mostly along the Center’s Loisdale Road side are several restaurant options, beyond the Food Court fast food options located inside. Diners have a wide range of options from ethnic foods: Maggiano’s Little Italy, Italian; Mezeh, Mediterranean; Chuy’s, Mexican; and Nando’s, South African cuisine; to more traditional American food options at Dave & Buster’s, Silver Diner, and Yard House.

For a complete list of restaurants and their locations within or near the Center, see <https://springfieldtownecenter.com/>



Springfield Towne Center, with its concentration of eateries, is a destination for many seeking affordable entertainment



Pictured left to right: Michael Montanti, Glenn Farello, Lido President Rich DiPippo, Civic Committee Chairperson Vito Germinario, Gary Underhill, Mark Magliocchetti (PVI Class of 1993), and John Fanelli.

Lido Civic Club Supports Paul VI Options Athletics

The Lido Civic Club of Washington D.C. donated \$5,000 recently to benefit St. Paul VI Catholic High School's (PVI) Options athletics program.

On Aug. 17, 2023, the Lido Civic Club presented the contribution to Glenn Farello, PVI's Assistant Director of Athletics, and Gary Underhill, Health and Physical Education Teacher and PVI Options Athletics Coach.

The PVI Options program provides students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities access to

an individualized inclusive, student-centered Catholic education. The Options Athletics program includes soccer, basketball, and track.

The Lido Civic Club provides scholarships to students with Italian ancestry and in need of financial support. Applications will open in January 2024 at www.lidoclub.org. Since 2004, the Lido Civic Club has provided over 1 million dollars in financial assistance to Italian/American college students who live in the Washington DC metro area.

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Entertaining Outdoor Pursuits



Bikers and walkers share the multi-use Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Easy Paved Bike Trails
Especially suitable for new, young riders just learning biking skills and older riders in need of less strenuous rides than unpaved trails often require, these trails provide pleasant biking adventures for all.

Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail
The 40 mile long trail runs through stream valleys and urban areas connecting many of Fairfax County's largest parks. The south section between Braddock Road and the Occoquan River is mostly paved running along Accotink Creek and Pohick Creek. It passes Laurel Hill Park, and near the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center before ending near the Occoquan Regional Park dock.

Laurel Hill Park Central Green Loop Trail
A short trail through a nature area located near a new playground with climbing



The Gerry Connolly Cross County trail has many paved and level sections, and can be joined at several points along its length, offering opportunities for biking and other exercise at all levels.



Laurel Hill Park's Loop Trail and Central Green Playground offers an active adventure for young children, two-to-twelve years old, near an easy biking paved loop



The colorful horses of Burke Lake Park's carousel

Carousels

Adventure awaits children of all ages on a galloping horse, or perhaps a unicorn, tiger or dragon, hummingbird or swan, or even an airplane or wagon, as each mount moves to the accompaniment of a special genre of music belonging to carousels. More than just a counter clockwise spin, the rider is transported to the days of 17th century

knights who competed to spear small rings hanging overhead or who paraded on horseback around a courtyard.

Find carousels at:

- Burke Lake Park
- Clemyjontri Park
- Franconia Family Recreation Area
- Frying Pan Park
- Lake Accotink
- Lake Fairfax



The dashing steeds at Franconia Family Recreation Area



Hummingbirds and swans join the carousel parade near Chessie's Back Yard at Franconia Family Recreation Area

jungles and a globe carousel. This loop trail is very well suited to beginning riders with a level surface and short loop. It is near to longer, more difficult, unpaved riding for intermediate riders.

Mt Vernon Trail

An 18-mile paved multi-use trail stretches from George Washington's Mount Vernon estate to Theodore Roosevelt Island. It connects with several regional trails, winding along the Potomac River offering views of Washington, D.C.'s skyline.

Vienna to Hunter Mill Road on W&OD Trail

Enjoy this three mile trail as a six mile round trip near Vienna. The easy route is popular for road biking and walking; a round trip takes less than two hours at a leisurely speed.

Wakefield Park

Popular with bicyclists at all levels, this park has paved and unpaved trails suited

SEE OUTDOOR, PAGE 17

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NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE 2023



The wide, paved Michael A. Kane trail, popular with cyclists, walkers, and joggers connects Wakefield and Accotink parks

Outdoor Pursuits

FROM PAGE 16

to the skill level of many. The easier, wide paved Michael A. Kane Trail is named for the former Park Authority director who rose from Wakefield rec center snack bar manager to head the department. The paved trail meanders through shady woods, and past sunny meadows with a changing seasonal display of wildflowers visited by song birds and butterflies. It's paralleled by the natural surface Creek Trail, which runs along Accotink Creek to entice intermediate riders. Trails connect to Accotink Park to extend the ride.

Washington & Old Dominion Railroad

Regional Park (W&OD) - Nicknamed the skinniest park in Virginia, the 45-mile paved trail runs between Shirlinton and Purcellville. The former roadbed of the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad passes through cityscapes and into the country.

**Brookfield Park - This park boasts a small bicycle pump track for riders of all ages. A pump track is a continuous loop of multileveled dirt that allows cyclists to generate speed without pedaling. The pump track derived its name from the pumping motion of the upper and lower body used by cyclists for balance as they move; **an adventure for those looking for a more physical biking experience.



Colorful kayaks for single and double paddlers, like these at Burke Lake, are rented at area parks

Kayaking Rentals

Local parks offer an opportunity to get onto area lakes and rivers via a small boat, a kayak. Propelled by a long double bladed paddle, kayaking is quiet and gives the feel of being part of the nature you're paddling through. Simple to learn and a perfect way to explore wetland areas and see water fowl, or just get a different type of exercise outdoors.

- Kayak rentals are seasonal and can be found at:
- Burke Lake Park Marina (for fishing only - reopens Spring 2024))
 - Fountainhead Regional Park (March - Nov. 13)
 - Lake Accotink Marina (May - August)
 - Lake Fairfax Park (May- September)
 - Occoquan Regional Park (weekends thru Oct 31; reopens April)
 - Pohick Bay Regional Park (weekends thru Oct 8; reopens April)
 - Riverbend Park (reopens Spring 2024)



The paved trail crosses multiple bridges adding the adventure of water crossings for young riders



Wakefield's Creek Trail offers wood scenes and, in Spring, extensive beds of the well known Virginia Bluebells along the water



The silence of kayaking allows paddlers to become one with nature



Lake Braddock QB Christian Foster #13 looks down the field to receiver Robert Hollen #82



Kai Austin #3 tries to avoid the tackle of Connor Morin #5

Lake Braddock Holds off Westfield To Improve to 2-1

PHOTOS BY WILL PALENSCAR/CONNECTION

BY WILL PALENSCAR
THE CONNECTION

In a low scoring football game in Burke, the Lake Braddock Bruins narrowly held on to beat the Westfield Bulldogs 9-7 on Friday, Sept. 8. After a scoreless first quarter Lake Braddock kicker Carson Gallant kicked a 24 yard field goal with no time remaining in the first half putting Lake Braddock up 3-0. In the second half Jakob Weiss would be the benefactor to a 32 yard

reception which would then setup his 20 yard touchdown reception. The extra point was unsuccessful and Lake Braddock led 9-0. In the 4th quarter Connor Morin scored on a 35 yard touchdown reception with 8:24 to play in the game. Lake Braddock was then able to hold off Westfield from a comeback in the closing minutes of the game.

With the win Lake Braddock improves to (2-1) and will face West Potomac (2-0) on 9/14. Westfield falls to (2-1) and has a bye week and will host Justice HS on 9/22.



Jacob Weiss caught this ball for a 20 yard touchdown reception

Connor Morin scores on this 35 yard touchdown reception



Kennedy Duda #21 runs past Lake Braddock defenders

Hidden and Not-So-Hidden Gems

Faves of Fairfax County Supervisors.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County is the high-tech corridor along the Metro Silver Line and the ten-story perch of a village green that soars above the street on top of Capital One Hall in Tysons, connected to the Watermark Hotel. Fairfax County is also

home to the Federal period villa, a 19th-century gem built for Thomson Francis Mason, grandson of George Mason IV, who authored the Virginia Declaration of Rights.

Fairfax County offers these destinations, along with cycling trails opened in the dark, illuminated by headlights, and zip lines where one can explore the trees from a new perspective.

We asked each of our nine jurisdictional district supervisors and the chairman at large to tell us about their favorite off-the-beaten-path spots in their communities.

Whether you're new to the county, have moved to a different district, or have lived

here for years, why not try some of their recommended faves for a morning or afternoon outing?

Discover what's in Fairfax County's backyards and call its 406 square miles home.

John W. Foust, Dranesville District

❖ **MPAartfest:** On Oct. 1, 2023, the McLean Project for the Arts converts McLean Central Park into a free, one-day, seven-hour festival of the arts. Vendor tents display the works of numerous juried artists, complemented by exhibitions of children's and seniors' artwork, an Open Studio demonstration, and performances by local musicians. McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean

❖ **Colvin Run Mill Historic Site** offers visitors a chance to step back in time. There are tours of the restored mill, which was built around 1811. A general store offers stone-ground cornmeal, wheat flour, grits, "penny candy," snacks, and drinks. Trails are available for quiet walks. Live music, craft demonstrations, ice cream making, and seasonal activities are offered from February through December. 10017 Colvin Run, Great Falls

❖ **Runnymede Park:** The Town of Herndon owns and maintains this 58-acre park. It is the site for many nature-related events, such as the annual NatureFest, the Spring Native Plant Sale, and the Fall Native Plant Sale. The park is near the Sugarland Run Stream and attracts over 100 bird species, deer, foxes, and other wildlife. Guided walks are offered to highlight the wildlife on the trails. Two park shelters are available for rent. 196 Herndon Parkway, Herndon

❖ The McLean Community Center sponsors McLean Day on the third Saturday in May. The festival features live entertainment, carnival rides, exhibitions, and delicious foods for visitors of all ages. The event also includes booths where artisans, local businesses, civic organizations, nonprofit groups, and local officials showcase their wares. Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean

❖ **Herndon Festival,** held in late May, offers something for the whole family. The festival features two entertainment stages, 10K and 5K races, carnival rides, hands-on arts and activities, food vendors, fireworks, and more. Enjoy four days of fun-filled activities and entertainment. 200 Spring Street, Herndon

❖ **Great Falls Freedom Memorial:** This was created in 2004 to honor all who have served our country. The Freedom Memorial hosts annual ceremonies on Memorial Day, Sept. 11, and Veterans' Day, as well as a 5K race on July 4. It is a special place to pay respects to and remember those who have served and sacrificed for our country. 9830 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls (behind the Great Falls Library)

❖ **Herndon Friday Night Live!** Concerts are held on the Herndon Town Green on Friday evenings in the summer. Concerts are free and feature popular local and regional acts. Most featured bands play rock and roll covers from classic to modern rock, but country and original music are also included for good measure. Herndon Town Green, 777 Lynn Street,

James R. Walkinshaw, Braddock District

❖ **Howrey Field Park** is home to three baseball fields, each dedicated to two of the six "Soldiers of Howrey Field" killed there on June 1, 1967. Tragically, a bolt of lightning struck a light pole they had erected to help prepare for the upcoming Little League season. The park is also home to a small memorial and flagpole dedicated to the soldiers. Each year, beginning in 2021, the Board of Supervisors has recognized June 1 as "Soldiers of Howrey Field Day" in Fairfax County.

❖ **Wakefield Skate Park** provides an opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy skateboarding, inline skating, and BMXing on freestyle and competition courses. There are bank ramps, a 4-foot quarter pipe, a pyramid, grind rails, and more. Our son loves to ride his balance bike up and down the ramps alongside the other young and not-so-young skaters and BMXers. It's a great atmosphere and a wonderful amenity for the community.

❖ **Bunnyman Brewing,** born from Fairfax County's most famous urban legend, is now Fairfax County's best craft brewery, serving up innovative, creative, and quality brews. Two retired Fairfax County firefighters founded Bunnyman, which has become Burke's favorite community gathering place. 5583 Guinea Rd, Fairfax, opening soon at the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center



SCREENSHOT

Wakefield Skate Park



SCREENSHOT

Historic Huntley

Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay:

Historic Huntley, located at 6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria, is a 19th-century gem, a federal-period villa. Huntley Meadows Park is an oasis for over 200 wetland birds and deer, beavers, turtles, and other animals. The park and historic Huntley are facilities of the Fairfax County Park Authority.



SCREENSHOT

The Annandale Civic Space at 7200 Columbia Pike will have its grand opening on Oct. 21 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Penelope A. Gross, Mason District

❖ A couple of new gems in Mason District are the Annandale Civic Space at 7200 Columbia Pike, which will have its grand opening on Oct. 21 from 10 to 1, with a ceremony at 10:30. The new civic space is constructed on what was the playing field for the former Annandale Elementary School, now the ACCA Child Development Center. The new civic space will include a community demonstration garden, a children's topographic playground, programming space, walking paths, and, hopefully, a new mural. Check out the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5cYFYoQg6Kc>.

❖ The other fun spot is a mural on the side and back of new shops at the corner of Little River Turnpike and John Marr Drive in Annandale. On the east side of the mural is a floral motif; wrapping around the building to the back on the north side of the building is a more geometric design, but the whole thing acts like a "secret garden" that surprises drivers and passersby. Delightful!

SEE NOT-SO-HIDDEN GERMS, PAGE 20

NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE 2023

Not-So-Hidden Gems

FROM PAGE 19

Dalia A. Palchik, Providence District

❖ Lynh and Van Nguyen, sisters, and artists, founded MosaicARTs Gallery in Merrifield. MosaicARTs holds monthly art exhibitions from local and national artists in their gallery and virtually on their website. In addition, they also offer art classes and happy, creative hours that encourage individuals to explore their creative side. Learn more: Home: Mosaic Arts Site.

❖ Oakton Community Park, located at 2841 Hunter Mill Road, provides a variety of individual and organized recreation activities. While the park is maintained by the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), the Greater Oakton Community Association works with FCPA to maintain the woods, establish a meadow, and improve the historic schoolhouse so it can serve as a place of community gathering.

❖ The Perch, also known as a “park in the sky,” is located on the eleventh floor of Capital One Hall in Tysons. Guests can enjoy fresh air and amazing views while strolling along the park, watching live performances, playing lawn games or mini golf at Perch Putt, or sipping craft beer from Starr Hill Biergarten. The Perch is built for fun for all ages! Learn more: The Perch at Capital One Center.



MosaicARTs holds monthly art exhibitions



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Dan and Deb Storck along the Potomac

Daniel G. Storck, Mount Vernon District

❖ One of my favorite things for my wife and I to do is grab a picnic lunch or dinner and walk, bike, or drive along the George Washington Memorial Parkway to find one of the many perfect spots overlooking the Potomac River and George Washington's Mount Vernon.

❖ Another great ride, walk, or jog option is the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail, which runs 40 miles and connects the entire county from Great Falls Park to Occoquan Regional Park. At Occoquan Regional Park, you can find our country's only national monument to the women's suffrage movement.

❖ The Turning Point Suffragist Memorial is dedicated to the millions of little-known women who engaged in the suffragist movement primarily from 1848 through the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, which allowed most women to vote. Nearby, the Cross County Trail leads you to the Lucy Burns Museum at the Workhouse Arts Center, which tells the story of the suffragists imprisoned at Lorton Prison and the prison's history.

❖ George Washington's Distillery and Gristmill is another often overlooked gem in our community. Few know that George Washington constructed a gristmill at his Dogue Run Farm in 1770-1771. In 1791, he upgraded his operation by installing milling improvements. In its day, the gristmill could produce 5,000 to 8,000 pounds of flour and cornmeal daily. Today, you can visit the working mill to see the water wheel turn as it grinds grain and the working reconstruction of the distillery that still makes George's whiskey. For more about the hidden gems of Mount Vernon, visit Potomac Banks: <https://www.fxva.com/southcounty>.

Visit our website, www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon, to sign up for our newsletter, or follow us on Facebook and Twitter to learn about the myriad district projects, important topics, area activities, and upcoming events. More information about the Mount Vernon District can be found in our Newcomer Guide on our website's “About Us” page.

Pat Herrity, Springfield District

❖ In the Springfield district, we have amazing parks like the popular and nationally ranked Burke Lake Park, which has always been a gem. Not far from Burke Lake Park is the lesser-known but equally beautiful Fountainhead Park, which boasts incredible mountain bike trails, launching and rentals for boats, kayaks, and canoes, and plenty of spots for fishing and picnicking.

❖ Go Ape Zipline & Adventure Park is an outdoor adventure the whole family can share. Located by the



PHOTO VIA FACEBOOK

Fountainhead Regional Park

South Run Rec Center, at the Go Ape Treetop Adventure experience, you can take on suspended obstacles, explore the trees from a new perspective, and fly around on multiple ziplines from exciting heights. Their sole mission is to “inspire everyone to live life adventurously.” It's great for family entertainment, company team building exercises, and recreational parties.

❖ South Run Rec Center has what all other gyms have, but so much more. Not only does it feature a two-story fitness center with a heated indoor pool and poolside spa, but the surrounding park offers soccer and baseball/softball fields, two tennis courts, two outdoor basketball courts, a field house with an athletic turf playing surface, accessible playgrounds, and an off-leash dog area. The playground has canopies for shade in the summer, with two separate playgrounds for older and younger kids. It is also a great parking spot for the many beautiful hiking trails that surround the park.

Kathy Smith, Sully District

❖ The 31st Centreville Day celebration is on Saturday, Oct. 14. This fun-for-the-family event looks into Centreville's long history and brings Centreville's diverse and vibrant community together for a bright look into the present. Food, music, and local artisans round out a great time spent in Centreville's historic district.

❖ Ellanor C. Lawrence Park is a large park with 650 acres of land and a history that spans 8,000 years. The park features the Walney visitor's center, with live insects, plenty of hands-on activities for the kids, and the historic Cabell's Mill. Furthermore, the Sully Woodlands Stewardship Education Center is slated to open in the late fall. The center will become one of two “living buildings” in Virginia, operating pollution-free. Inside the center, you can enhance your knowledge in the STEAM learning area. Join us at Cabell's Mill on Saturday, Oct. 7, for Parktoberfest, a community party underneath the trees. This year's Parktoberfest will feature live music, crafts from local artisans, and great food!

❖ The new Sully Community Center held its ribbon-cutting and grand opening on Sept. 17, 2022. To celebrate its first anniversary, the Sully Community Center is hosting an event

Rodney L. Lusk, Franconia District

❖ Crumbl Cookies' ribbon cutting with franchise co-owner Joel Frary. (Deenie Frary is not in the photo.) My favorites so far are Oreos and Snickerdoodles. I was honored to attend their ribbon cutting in Kingstowne and talk with the franchise owners, Deenie and Joel Frary.”

❖ I really enjoy Della J's Delectables southern home cooking on Richmond Highway. I have a bit of a sweet tooth, and my favorites are their peach cobbler and key lime cake. This African American-owned business is a real treat!

❖ Coming Soon: I wanted to share some exciting things that are happening in Franconia District. We have amazing new retail stores opening soon in Springfield Plaza, including Whole Foods in the fall of 2023 and The Container Store in the spring of 2024. In addition, there are two new restaurants coming to Festival at Manchester Lakes, Firebirds and First

on Saturday, Sept. 30, open to the public. The event will feature an open house at the Sully Community Center, activities for children, food, music, demonstrations, and fun for the whole family. The center holds weekly classes for seniors and technology workshops for teenagers. The facility offers new basketball and pickleball courts and hosts an in-house SACC program. Partnering with Healthworks, a community health wing adorns the Community Center's west wing, offering county residents primary care services. To better access the Community Center, I worked with Fairfax County Department of Transportation staff to establish the Fairfax Connector 901 route. This north-south bus route serves Centreville, Chantilly and Herndon and offers stops close to the Community Center.

If you need any help with county services, please feel welcome to contact my office anytime via email at sully@fairfaxcounty.gov or by phone at 703-814-7100. We have two community rooms available at the Sully Governmental Center for free use by Fairfax County residents. You can reserve our community rooms and sign up for our weekly e-newsletter online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/sully.

ENTERTAINMENT

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 Tyson. 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://tallship-providence.org/>

FUNDAY MONDAY

"Funday Monday is open to children of all ages, however is best suited for the pre-school set! Funday Monday runs from 10:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. and — unless otherwise noted — is held at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. There are plenty of free parking lots/garages in Old Town Fairfax. Stroller access is available at the side entrance Old Town Hall facing Route 236/Main Street. For more information visit www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts."

SCHEDULE

Sept. 18 -- My Gym
Sept. 25 -- Music w/Marsha (Of the Positrons)
Oct. 2 -- Irish Dance w/McGrath Morgan
Oct. 9 -- No Program
Oct. 16 -- Music together Sing and Groove
Oct. 23 -- My Gym
Oct. 30 -- Kids Nature Puppet Show "Creepy Creatures"
Nov 6 -- Miss Mollie's Musical Fun
Nov. 13 -- No Program
Nov. 20 -- My Gym
Nov. 27 -- Drew Blue Shoes Magic
Dec. 4 -- Music Together Sing and Groove
Dec. 11 -- My Gym
Dec. 18 -- TBD

ONGOING

Fall Native Shrub and Tree Sale. At Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. The Fall Native Shrub and Tree Sale has started. Visit <https://bit.ly/WNCPlantSale> to place your order. Orders are due by Friday, September 22 at 5 p.m. (as inventory lasts). Plants must be picked up on Saturday, September 30 between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

SATURDAYS THRU NOVEMBER

Reston Museum. See how Reston's founding principles were implemented by joining the upcoming walking tour. Tour will be held 10 a.m. every Saturday through November. Sign up at: <https://www.restonmuseum.org/event-details/guided-walking-tour-restons-founding-2023-09-09-10-00>

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

Spooky Fall Festivities. At Go Ape Zipline & Adventure Park, South Run RECenter, Springfield. This ground-based experience will take guests on a hike through the park, navigating various creatures from your deepest, darkest nightmares. Participants will be immersed in the natural environment, never knowing what might be waiting around the next curve in the path. Is that just the wind through the branches? Definitely not! This guided, anxiety-filled adventure will take 20-30 minutes with a cost of \$14.95 per person. Go Ape is



Cox Farms Fall Festival runs Sept. 16 through Nov. 7, 2023 in Centreville.

also expanding the Frights at Height experience! Launched in 2022, this autumnal aerial activity is now available on select evenings in both September and October. Guests will find zombies, ghosts, and ghouls hiding in creepy corners under the Treetop Journey zipline and ropes course. Only \$39.95 per person for this 1-hour gravity defying, scream-filled adventure after dark...if you dare. Visit www.goape.com.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 15

Stars & Stripes Golf Charity Event. 6 p.m. At Reston National Golf Course. The event includes four holes of golf, food, drinks, and a door prize ticket. There will be a silent auction for a PXG driver. This event benefits veterans, first responders, and their families. Visit <https://center-for-veterans-in-transition.square.site/>. Herndon Town Councilmember Cesar del Aguila is a supporter.

SEPT. 15-17

Perchfest. At the Perch, at Capital One Center, 1805 Capital One Drive, McLean. Perchfest will feature mini-golf in the clouds, local music, craft beer from Starr Hill Biergarten, fitness classes, Shop Made in VA and community vendors, and so much more. New this year: the inaugural Perch Putt Open (charity golf tournament) will kick-off the weekend festivities on Sept. 15 with emcee, Tommy McFly. Visit the website: <https://www.capitalonecenter.com/events/capital-one-center-presents-perchfest-2>

SATURDAY/SEPT. 16

1st Annual Celebrate Virginia. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Tysons Corner Center, The Plaza, McLean. Enjoy Virginia Beer and Wine Tastings; Live Music; Artisan Market; Participate in Painting a Community Mural; VIP Tent Activities. Bring the family and have some fun outdoors celebrating the talent of Virginia as you enjoy live music and entertainment, shop local artisans' wares, indulge in Virginia Beer Tasting, VIP Wine Tasting, mural painting, giveaways, and more!

SATURDAY/SEPT. 16

Virginia Native American Festival. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. The Native American Festival brings together tribal members from throughout the Commonwealth. Discover the history and long-standing tradition with the Rappahannock Native American Dancers and Drum group. Engage in hands-on demonstrations, including bow and arrow use. Hear captivating stories passed down through generations. Discover traditional crafts with Virginia Tribal Vendors, and savor culinary delights with on-site concessions. The cost is \$12 per person. For more information, visit the Riverbend Park website. Call 703-759-9018 or email FCPARiverbend@fairfaxcounty.gov.

SEPT. 16-NOV. 7

Cox Farms Fall Festival 2023. At Cox Farms, corner of Braddock Road and Pleasant Valley Road, Centreville. The Fall Festival is filled with family-friendly entertainment and attractions including slides, swings, animals, hayrides and more. From the world-famous hayride to our corny Cornundrum and giant slides, our Fall Festival has something for the whole family. The Fall Festival is open Sept. 16-17, and then Thursday through Monday Sept. 23-Nov. 6, plus Tuesday, Nov. 7. Hours Sept. 16 - 17; Thursdays through Mondays Sept. 23 - Oct. 30: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. | Nov. 2 - 7: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. (last entry one hour before closing). Market is open daily through Nov. 7. The Fields of Fear Hours: Friday and Saturday nights Sept. 22 - Nov. 4 (plus Sunday, Oct. 8) 7:30-11 p.m. (last entry 10 p.m.) Featuring more than 20 acres of fear and spooky attractions.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 16

Fall Community Parking Lot Sale. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Rain Date: Sunday, Sept. 17, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. At McLean Community Center, McLean. Find bargains and treasures at this outdoor community parking lot sale with 60-plus community resident vendors selling household items. The area's first, biggest and best sales of the fall season, it offers a wide variety of gently used household goods, electronics, furniture, clothes, appliances and other items. The Kids' Corner is a special area of the sale where children ages three to 15 can use their math and entrepreneurial skills while selling toys, clothes, games and other items.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 16

Old Firehouse Block Party. 1-4 p.m. At the Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd., McLean. Come out and celebrate the Old Firehouse's 33 years of serving the Greater McLean community! Listen and dance to your favorite hits, enjoy free, delicious food, rock climbing, art projects and other free activities. Learn about OFC's After School Program and the firehouse's rich history.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 16

Celebrate Virginia. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At The Plaza at Tysons Corner Center, McLean. The 1st Annual Celebrate Virginia at Tysons Corner Center announces a fun outdoor event celebrating the talent of Virginia for attendees to enjoy live music & entertainment, shop local artisans' wares, indulge in Virginia Beer Tasting, VIP Wine Tasting, mural painting, giveaways, and more! Celebrate Virginia is offered in partnership with Visit Fairfax and Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC). A VIP Wine & Wellness Tent will offer exclusive access to taste eight Virginia wineries.



Be sure to catch Music by Calvin Earl on Sunday, Sept. 17, 2023 at the McLean Central Park Gazebo.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 17

Music by Calvin Earl. 3 p.m. At McLean Central Park Gazebo, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. This free concert performed by Earl, the honorary U.S. Spokesman for the African American Spiritual as a National Treasure, is appropriate for all ages. Call 703-790-0123, TTY: 711 or visit the website, aldentheatre.org.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 17

N Gauge Train Display. 1-4 p.m. At the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold a N gauge Train Display at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. Admission: museum members, free; adults 13 and over, \$5; children 5-12, \$3; under 4, free. Seniors 65+ and military (active & retired), \$4. For more information on the museum and show events phone 703-425-9225. Visit www.fairfax-station.org

MONDAY/SEPT. 18

Military Appreciation Monday Dinners. At 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. At the Old Brogue Restaurant in Great Falls. The new season will kick off in support of the Semper Fi and America's Fund. Please call the Brogue at (703) 759-3309 to make a reservation.

TUESDAY/SEPT. 19

Five Hills Garden Club Meeting. 11 a.m. At Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park Street, N.E., Vienna. Life-Cycling with Monarchs and Honeybees: Gail Gile, former elementary school teacher, will speak at Five Hills Garden Club meeting. The community is invited to attend the program for an overview of monarch butterfly metamorphosis and migration patterns and the life stages of honeybees and honey production.

SEPT. 20-24

Big Fall Book Sale. At Reston Regional Library, Reston. The Friends of the Reston Regional Library will host their Big Fall Sale. This sale will feature more than 30,000 books in very gently used condition, from over 20 categories. All materials are donated. Proceeds go to fund library and literacy programming and materials in our community. Please note: There will be no children's books at this sale. Our next Children's and Educators book sale will be March 2024. Visit the website: www.RestonLibraryFriends.com, or email at restonfriendspr@gmail.com, or call 703-829-5467.

SCHEDULE

Wednesday, September 20th
Public shopping in the Lobby from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 23

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

FREE FALLS PREVENTION SEMINAR AND BALANCE SCREENING

Join team members from Inova's Physical Therapy Center to learn more on topics including:

- Common injury occurrences.
- Common falls prevention risk factors.
- Fall prevention strategies.

All registrants will also benefit from a free screening to assess strength, flexibility and balance.

- All participants must be 60+.
- No recent surgeries in the past 8 weeks.
- Not currently on any restrictions of movement by a physician.

Short lecture/discussion on facts about falling followed by balance screenings performed by Physical Therapy professionals, ending with practical tips on staying safe at home.

Registration required and limited to 30 participants. E-mail ustaris@inova.org, call 703-797-6900 option 4, or go to <https://forms.office.com/r/X6XGyEx9jj> to register.

GIRLS ON THE RUN REGISTRATION OPEN

Registration for the fall 2023 season of Girls on the Run is open! Registration will close on Friday, Sept. 15 at 11:59 p.m. Girls on the Run (GOTR) is an out-of-school program designed to help young girls build key life skills through dynamic lessons. Teams are led by trained volunteer coaches who lead by positive example and have a passion for helping others be the best version of themselves.

Teams typically meet twice a week for 75-90 minutes and are led by volunteer coaches. The 10-week season will begin the week of September 11th and conclude at the celebratory 5K events the weekend of November 18-19.

Each practice has a corresponding lesson from the Girls on the Run research-based curriculum, which focuses on building social, emotional, and physical skills while encouraging healthy habits for life. While many teams meet at schools, GOTR NOVA also offers community teams based out of neighborhoods, community centers, and parks. If a team is not offered at your school, make sure to check out GOTR NOVA's interactive map to find a team near you!

Girls on the Run programming is specifically designed for elementary school girls starting in grade 3 while Heart & Sole programming is created for middle school girls. Visit www.gotrnova.org.

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR CAR FREE DAY 2023

World Car Free Day 2023 will be held Friday, Sept. 22 in the metropolitan Washington region, and registration is now open. This annual event organized by COG's Commuter Connections program encourages residents, commuters, and students to choose a greener way to travel by going car free or car lite on Friday, Sept. 22. By taking the free online pledge at

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 21

Members Only Preview in the Main Sale Room from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
 Thursday, Sept 21st - Saturday, Sept 23
 Open Sale all sections from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Sunday, Sept 24
 Open Sale all sections from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 21

16th Annual Erin Peterson Fund Golf Tournament. 7 a.m. At Westfields Golf Club, 13940 Balmoral Greens Ave., Clifton. In honor of Erin Peterson who was killed in the Virginia Tech tragedy. Tickets are \$200 individual; \$800 foursome. Call 703-830-3795; email info@erinpetersonfund.org.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 22

carfreemetrodc.org, participants contribute to reducing traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, improve their health, and qualify for great prizes. Interested residents can simply take the pledge to reduce their single occupancy trips on Sept. 22 by choosing an alternative travel option such as public transit, bicycling, carpooling, vanpooling, scootering, walking, or simply teleworking. Each registrant will be entered into a raffle for a chance to win great prizes from this year's sponsors.

TUESDAY/SEPT. 19

Champions for Accountability: Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce. 8:30-10:30 a.m. Join in the Champions for Accountability, a leadership discussion that explores the power of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in business. Led by Champions for Accountability leaders including Kendall Holbrook, CEO, DevTechnologies, and Bud Morissette, CEO, Interstate Moving | Relocation | Logistics, Champions for Accountability will be your opportunity to meet with and learn from companies already finding business success in recruiting and retaining diverse talent. Visit novachamber.org.

TUESDAY/SEPT. 19

NARFE Chapter 1116 Meeting. 1 p.m. At Vienna Community Center Auditorium. NARFE (National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association) will host a Candidate Forum for the Mayor of Vienna and eight candidates for Vienna Town Council. Free. Members and guests welcome. Call 703-205-9041.

SEPT. 26 TO DEC. 5

English and Citizenship Classes. At St. Mark Catholic Church, Christian Formation Center, 9972 Vale Road, Vienna. Registration Dates: -Tuesday, September 19, and Thursday September 21 from 7pm to 8 pm. at St. Mark in Vienna. A placement exam will be given. Link to register online: <https://bit.ly/StMarkRegistration2023>. Classes: - Tuesdays and Thursdays, from : September 26- December 5. - English classes from 8 pm to 9:30 pm; - Citizenship, Writing, Conversation from 7 pm to 7:45 pm, same days. Where: - St. Mark Christian Formation Center, 2nd floor. Cost: - English classes: \$25 (for 9 weeks of lessons). - Citizenship, Writing, Conversation : \$10 (for 9 weeks of lessons). - Book cost is extra where applicable. Cash and Credit/Debit accepted! Questions: - Visit the Web page: www.stmarkesl.org/; or - Email: stmarkesl@gmail.com; - Call: 703-980-9380 or 703-403-4170.

MCLEAN NEWCOMERS AND NEIGHBORS

The club was founded in 1969 to create new friendships, provide opportunities for socializing and acquaint residents with the community. It sponsors many group activities including: Anything with food, Armchair Traveler, Book Club, Bunco, Canasta, Crafty Ladies, Genealogy, Golf, Let Us Lunch, Mah Jongg, Mah Jongg NY Style, Movie Lovers, Museums/House and Garden Tours, Nature Walks, Restaurant Critics, Sing for Fun and Tech Forums. Application forms may be

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

Fall Garden Festival. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. This free event celebrates a world of unique plants, captivating garden accessories, live music that sets the perfect ambiance and delectable food options to satisfy your cravings. It's not just any garden gathering -- it's a vibrant celebration of all things green and gorgeous. The Fall Garden Festival is your one-stop destination for gardening inspiration and unique finds. Gather your friends and family and join us for a day filled with nature's beauty and the joy of the gardening community. Call 703-324-8700.

mailed to: Membership McLean Newcomers and Neighbors, P.O. Box 6166, McLean, VA 22106. Visit the website: www.mcleannewcomers.org.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax or www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia Caregivers' Support Group takes place the first and third Tuesdays of each month, 10-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. This group is for caregivers of family members with dementia. Meetings are gently facilitated. For more information and to get the Zoom link, contact Jack Tarr at jtarr5@verizon.net or 703-821-6838.

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, www.havenofnova.org or havenofnova@verizon.net.

Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group Meets from 1:30-3 p.m. the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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

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

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

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

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 THE CONNECTION Newspapers & Online	 Mount Vernon Gazette ALMANAC CENTRE VIEW
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Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

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

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 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 www.connectionnewspapers.com or <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing>

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Debit This!



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I don't know if what I'm about to write comes under the heading of a rant, a pet peeve (drivers backing into parking spaces is my "numero" uno irrational preoccupation), or a logical and reasonable request/solution for an ever-increasing, almost mandatory facet of our respective lives: using a credit card reader when paying in-person with a credit/debit card. I have been in businesses where cash is not accepted (covid notwithstanding).

Apparently, cash is no longer king. More and more as we pay our way around our face-to-face transactions, cash is further down the line in the payment pecking order. Cash might as well be Green Stamps or the "red-headed stepchild," given how little respect and appreciation payees receive for the receipt of paper money rather than plastic.

As for accessing cash from an ATM; though they are not 100% identical, they seem familiar enough from one to the next. All I ask, other than for a cure for cancer (let's be realistic as to what really matters), is some uncharacteristic but much needed government intervention into the private sector to facilitate the shopping/buying experience in person and "uniformalize" the debit-card readers. I would imagine helping/encouraging consumers to consume in the easiest and most efficient manner would certainly be good for the GDP in addition to all our buying/paying experiences. It seems logical, prudent even, that installing some kind system-wide organization/design of the debit keys would benefit an aging population in specific, and society in general where everything everywhere requires a piece of plastic to finalize a purchase.

A few examples: computer keyboards, telephones, cash registers, radio dials, bingo cards, among so many other devices. All meant to simplify our lives.

And yet the similarities/dare I say adherence to some sort of governmental mandate has not stifled the private sector from being able to think about their businesses independently enough to thrive in a highly competitive Western World. Moreover, given that capitalism wants to incentivize its citizens to not only think about growing rich but to act as well on those instincts, it seems sensible to assist the process in any way possible - short of command and control, which enables said business to attract a profitable market share and additionally, rewards the customer for their patronage.

Wouldn't an enjoyable, relatively hassle-free consumer experience enhance a business's profile? If the last thing a consumer does - after they've selected their merchandise/product and taken it to the register to pay, is to have a quick and simple payment system/process to finalize their purchase/selection; wouldn't that encourage, almost instinctively, for the consumer to revisit the establishment that made their transaction so easy?

And given that part of a business's success is measured by repeat business/how sales compare to the previous year, retaining that clientele by providing a pleasant buying experience from start to finish, would seem a reasonable path to pursue/provide. Certainly, I know very little about business to what I know as compared to my years as an independent salesman - selling insurance and newspaper advertising, but I've been a consumer my whole life, and after bad experiences, you rarely return to where you had that bad experience. And since there are so many choices, both in person and online, it would behoove a business to be as attractive as it can be to prospective buyers. Not that consumers are always right, but as customers, they warrant respect and accommodation. Paying customers and especially repeat customers don't grow on trees. As the business, you must grow on them.

Why don't we all work together in a sort of private-public-type partnership?

One where, as Spock from Star Trek: the original has said many times; "The good of the many outweigh the good of the few." Streamlining a system that is pretty much our daily consuming bread that would enable the masses ("Hoi Polloi," as The Three Stooges titled one of their many two-reel comedy shorts, referred to them/us) to have fewer hurdles to completing their consuming transactions would benefit everybody. And capitalism thrives when more are merrier.

If businesses/government ever want to make a deposit on the future, they should make an investment in the present. Help all us consumers to consume more and feel stupid less. Make debit machines exactly alike in look, feel and touch, please? Thank you from the bottom of my wallet.

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

