

THE CONNECTION

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

8 Generations, Secrets Revealed

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Linda Ambrus Broenniman, Great Falls resident and author of "The Pulitzer Saga," sits in her great-grandmother Margit's seat at the Dohány Street Synagogue in Budapest, Hungary.

Remembering 9-11

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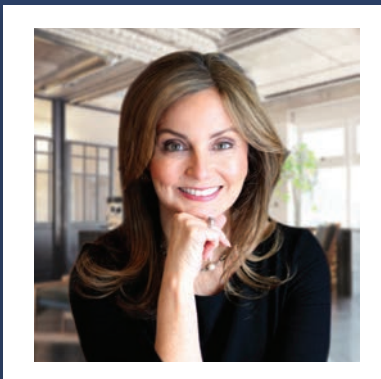
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Great Falls Author Unravels an Eight-Generation Truth



The audience listens attentively to author Linda Ambrus Broenniman.

“The Politzer Saga” tells the story of a remarkable family whose history was shrouded in secrecy when they came to the U.S.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Politzer Saga by Fairfax County author Linda Ambrus Broenniman, a first-generation American Hungarian, became a reality because of how little she knew about her parents and her quest for truth. “An unwritten rule governed discourse at our house: no question asked,” she said in the nonfiction book.

Broenniman is the daughter of research professor Clara M. Ambrus, MD, and Julian L. Ambrus Sr., MD, Ph.D., both practicing Catholics. According to obituary records, her parents emigrated from Hungary to the United States in 1949 after receiving their medical degrees in Europe and working at the Pasteur Institute in Paris. The couple settled in Buffalo, New York, and raised seven children. Clara died in 2011 at age 86 from injuries sustained in a house fire; Julian escaped. He died in 2020 at the age of 95.

Broenniman’s father never revealed a secret to Broenniman and her six siblings. Relatives honored the secret until a slip of the tongue by one disclosed that he was Jewish. “My father continued to deflect until his death,” Broenniman wrote.

Broenniman’s 243-page work is the culmination of dedicated genealogical research overlaid with the poignant narrative life stories of the Hungarian Jewish Politzer/Misner/Ambrus/Virány family over eight generations. Broenniman tells of “their struggles, their bravery, and their accomplishments. Of their generosity of spirit and remarkable resilience.”

Broenniman recently returned from Hungary following the ded-

ication of a permanent exhibition on the third floor of the newly renovated Rumbach Sebestyén Street synagogue in Budapest, Hungary. It is significant because the exhibit is based on the stories in her book, “The Politzer Saga.” They are the stories of her family. The exhibition is composed of ten lyrical and artistically rendered seven-minute films.

The Rumbach Sebestyén Street synagogue plays a vital role in Broenniman’s life. The richly renovated Moorish revival synagogue was a deportation point for 20,000 Jews sent to their deaths during WWII. They were eventually sent to Kamianets-Podilskyi in Ukraine, where they were executed.

During the Siege of Budapest in 1945, a bomb damaged the Rumbach synagogue’s ceiling, breaking glass windows and damaging the staircase. But the real devastation began in the late 1970s when the roof of the ruined building was torn down, opening it to the heavens. Rain, snow, and birds freely accessed the synagogue. But now, it has reopened as a vibrant multi-purpose Jewish cultural center.

The synagogue is only a few blocks from the Dohány Street Synagogue, where Broenniman’s great-grandmother Margit worshipped. Broenniman’s grandfather, Sandor Ambrus, died either on a forced death march or as a Dachau prisoner, Broenniman reported. Her grandmother Bozsi wore black for five years. “When I asked my mother about it, she told me that Bozsi was in mourning,” Broenniman wrote.

Seeing the exhibition for the first time proved difficult for Broenniman.

In an interview on Sept. 15 last week, Broenniman said that in



SCREENSHOTS VIA YOUTUBE

“I have to pinch myself to believe I’m really here,” says author Linda Ambrus Broenniman on Sept. 2 as she speaks at the Rumbach Synagogue in Budapest, Hungary.

September 2022, she was in Budapest and saw the ten films and exhibit that told the story of the Hungarian Jewish Politzer/Misner/Ambrus/Virány family.

“I was all by myself All this grief was able to come out when I saw it by myself, grieving for this family who had suffered so much hardship,” Broenniman said. She also felt sorrow for her new friends, part of her journey to this point, András Gyekiczki and László Rajk, who had since died.

Gyekiczki was a disciplined researcher who assisted her efforts. He was “an amazing sleuth.” She dedicated her book to him because “without András, this book would not have been possible,” she wrote. Gyekiczki held various positions after the fall of the Iron Curtain, including chief of staff to Hungary’s Minister of Interior and mayor of Budapest.

Broenniman remembered László Rajk, the Hungarian who directed the ten films. Broenniman never got the chance to meet Rajk in person. “He was an amazing person. He was an architect and a very political figure. He previously collaborated with András on the exhibition “Our Forgotten Neighbors.” And then he started to work on this exhibit,” Broenniman said.

In her book, Broenniman describes her childhood as a happy one, “a charmed life.” However, secrets about her parents’ past came to light in the early 1980s. In a Sept. 2, 2023 video, Broenniman says that her sister Madeline discovered their great-grandmother Margit was Jewish. Afraid of diving into the unknown and shaking up her world, Broenniman did nothing.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

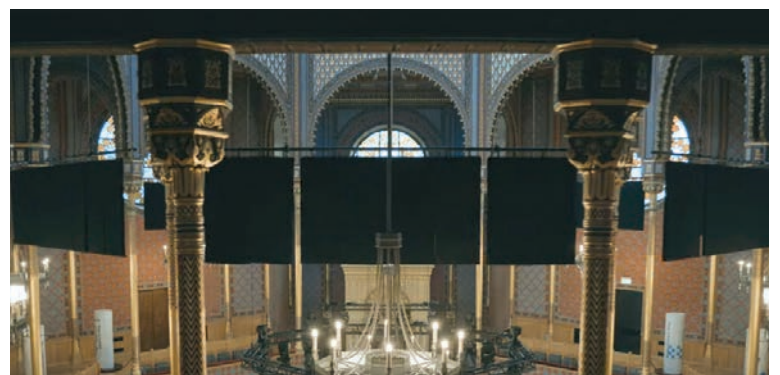
Linda Ambrus Broenniman, a Great Falls resident and author of “The Politzer Saga,” released Sept. 12, sits in her great-grandmother Margit’s seat at the Dohány Street Synagogue within blocks from the Rumbach Synagogue in Budapest, Hungary.



Interior of the renovated Rumbach Synagogue in Budapest, Hungary.



Exterior of the renovated Rumbach Synagogue in Budapest, Hungary.



Blue, red, and gold dominate the sanctuary of the Moorish-influenced Rumbach Synagogue in Budapest, Hungary.

The secrets persisted, and neither her parents nor grandmother Bozsi would discuss them. They became the willing keepers of her father’s secrets, concealing his Jewish ancestry. Broenniman

wrote in her book that her entire family, including Grandmother Bozsi, attended Catholic church every Sunday.

Broenniman traveled to Buda-

SEE GREAT FALLS, PAGE 11

PUBLIC NOTICE

**Proposed Limited Access Control Change
I-495 near Corporate Ridge
Fairfax County**

Willingness for Public Comment

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) invites you to review information about a proposed change in limited access control on I-495 (Capital Beltway) near the terminus of Corporate Ridge.

The purpose of this requested change in the limited access line is to allow the construction of a pedestrian connection to the existing 14-foot shared-use trail that connects Magarity Road to the commercial core of Tysons. Under the existing condition, the designation as limited access right of way precludes the construction of the pedestrian connector. The proposed lateral shift in limited access is approximately 6.5 to 13.5 feet and occurs over 195 feet. This project will involve changes in limited access control.

Materials are available for review online at <https://www.virginiadot.org/CorporateRidge> or by contacting the VDOT Project Manager, Mr. Sid Siddiqui, P.E. at 703-259-3225 or TTY/TDD 711 to review the materials.

The Commonwealth Transportation Board will consider the proposed limited access change at a future meeting.

If your concerns cannot be satisfied, VDOT is willing to hold a public hearing. You may request that a public hearing be held by sending a written request to Mr. Sid Siddiqui, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, at 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 on or prior to **October 10, 2023**. If upon receiving public comments it is deemed necessary to hold a public hearing, notice of date, time and place of the hearing will be posted.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775.

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REMEMBERING



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Each year on Sept. 11, the front lawn of West Centreville Fire Station 38 is adorned with multitudes of small, American flags. This station's firefighters – who also responded to the Pentagon on 9-11 – place 343 flags outside in honor of the 343 firefighters who lost their lives that day in New York. Each little, white tag atop every flag contains the name and unit of one of those firefighters.

22 Years Later, Lest We Forget



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REMEMBERING

9/11 at Great Falls Freedom Memorial 2023



Flags are lowered to half-staff during the 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial on Sept. 11, 2023. From left, elected officials who represent Great Falls, Va., Del. Rip Sullivan Jr., Sen. Jennifer Boysko, and Supervisor John W. Foust.



The Great Falls community gathers for the 9/11 remembrance ceremony at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GFFREEDOM.ORG

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The community of Great Falls remains deeply affected by the repercussions of that tragic day 22 years ago. On Monday, Sept. 11, 2023 at 7 p.m., the Great Falls community gathered at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial for a Remembrance Ceremony.

The keynote speaker would be Vitale Christy of Great Falls. He was an 8-year-old student at a Fairfax County Public School in Great Falls, Forestville Elementary, on Sept. 11, 2001.

On Sept. 11, 2023, the Great Falls community remembered those whose lives were violently and abruptly cut short in heinous acts of terrorism unfolding at the Pentagon, the World Trade Center in New York City, and a grassy field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. They came to the Great Falls Freedom Memorial to honor and remember.

Christy said that while much of that day 22 years ago is a blur, he recalled anxious excitement in the classroom as child after child was excused to the principal's office, not to be seen the rest of the day. The teachers told them nothing. When Christy got off the bus, he asked his dad why everyone was leaving class early. His dad said they'd talk later and "go play." While the rest of the country was captivated by the horror of black smoke towering in the sky, Christy's eyes were consumed by the imaginative possibilities of his Legos on the floor in the foyer.

It was with heavy hearts that the Great Falls community came to honor individually their six friends, loved ones, and colleagues who died during the 9/11 terrorist attack aboard American Airlines Flight 77, from



IMAGE SOURCE: FIND A GRAVE
George W. Simmons and his wife Diane M. Simmons, of Great Falls, died Sept. 11, 2001

Washington to Los Angeles, that crashed into the Pentagon with 64 people aboard.

They are Richard Peter Gabriel Sr.; George W. Simmons and his wife, Diane M. Simmons; Ann Judge, 49; Barbara Olson, 45; and Lisa J. Raines, 42.

United States Marine Corps First Lieutenant Richard Peter Gabriel Sr., of Arlington, Va., age 54, a Vietnam War veteran and Purple Heart recipient, was killed in the terrorist attack on the Pentagon. Richard was a passenger aboard American Airlines Flight 77. His service to his country will forever be remembered.

George W. Simmons and his wife, Diane M. Simmons, of Great Falls, were two souls taken too soon during the attack. They boarded Flight 77 on Tuesday, Sept. 11, 2001, en route to Kauai, Hawaii, to bury Diane's father, Bill Helm. He had asked that his remains be sprinkled over Kauai. "George will be remembered as a very special man who left a lasting positive impression on everyone he met. He will be missed but never



9/11 victim, Ann C. Judge of Great Falls.



9/11 victim, Barbara K. Olson.



9/11 victim, Lisa Raines.

IMAGES SOURCE: PENTAGON MEMORIAL

forgotten," according to the 9/11 Pentagon Memorial Heroes.

The terrorists claimed the lives of Ann C. Judge, Barbara K. Olson, and Lisa J. Raines.

Ann Judge, 49, of Great Falls, was the travel office manager for the National Geographic Society. She accompanied students and teachers on an educational trip to the Channel Islands in California.

Barbara Olson, 45, of Great Falls, was a television commentator married to U.S. Solicitor General Theodore Olson. She twice called her husband as the plane was being hijacked and described details, including that the attackers were armed with knives. She had planned to take a different flight but changed it at the last minute to be with her husband on his birthday.

Lisa J. Raines, 42, of Great Falls, was senior vice president for government relations at the Washington office of Genzyme, a biotechnology firm.

According to Christy, the truth cascaded over him later that night as he watched the attack repeatedly play on a loop. "Meanwhile, members of this very community spent their evening crying uncontrollably as they realized the people they loved most were taken from them. Ann Judge. Barbara



PHOTO COURTESY OF GFFREEDOM.ORG

Keynote speaker Vitale Christy of Great Falls was eight years old and FCPS student in Great Falls on 9/11 in 2001.

Olson. Lisa Raines. Mark Schurmeier. Diane Simmons. George Simmons. Kip Taylor. Richard Gabriel."

Christy said he feels very fortunate and blessed to have grown up in Great Falls. He has so many fond and loving memories of his community. He learned how to rock climb on the jagged cliffs, got tagged with blue and red paint on color day as a freshman at Langley, umpired for the Great Falls Little League, and waited tables at the Tavern during his first summer home from college.

"We must remain thankful for our freedom and use it to extend a patriotic love that uplifts our friends and neighbors. Never forget 9/11. Never forget the day America looked up... God bless you, friends; God bless our little village; God bless Virginia; and God bless these United States of America."

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

‘We Focus on Hot Spots’ Learning about Sully Police Station’s bike team.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Officially called the Neighborhood Patrol Unit, the Sully District Police Station’s Bike Team is a valuable asset to both the police department and the community. When pursuing a criminal, bikes can travel off-road where cruisers can’t go.

But at other times, team members are goodwill ambassadors for the police, participating in the Centreville Day parade, bike rodeos, National Night Out and bike-safety events.

Sully’s four, full-time members are 2nd Lt. Scott Reynolds and PFCs Avery Brunk, Tom Rubinstein and Zach Barger. And they recently addressed a meeting of the station’s Citizens Advisory Committee to explain what they do.

“One of our goals is to be visible in the community and interact with the residents,” said Rubinstein. “People can contact us to come to neighborhood events, and we’ll talk about bike safety. Kids

love talking with us. And community members are always welcome to reach out to our team with any concerns about crimes occurring within our community and ask any questions they have.”

“Our team is regularly conducting proactive patrols within the Sully District to apprehend criminals and deter crime,” he continued. “We can ride our bikes around this community without being as noticeable as a cruiser is. And we routinely receive tips about crimes from vigilant community members. We also coordinate weekly with our crime prevention officer, station commander and assistant station commander to construct operations to proactively apprehend routine offenders.”

Sully’s bike team covers Centreville, Chantilly, Clifton and Fairfax Station. And Rubinstein showed slides of some of the drugs they were able to seize after making traffic stops. “We focus on our hot spots with lots of problems,” said Reynolds. “We’ll go to places that have had retail thefts or where we know drug deals are made.”



The Sully Police Bike Team: From left, PFCs Avery Brunk, Zach Barger and Tom Rubinstein and 2nd Lt. Scott Reynolds.

For example, after stopping a particular person, the team confiscated 814 fentanyl pills he had in his possession, as well as cocaine, a handgun and a ski mask. Police charged him with eight felonies and a misdemeanor. Another time, they pursued a known drug dealer on foot in Centreville. During the chase, the individual tossed 39, foil-wrapped fentanyl pills on the ground. He was apprehended and charged with possession with intent to distribute a Schedule II narcotic.

Bike-team members also arrested an 18-year-old who was distributing marijuana to juveniles within Chantilly. Police charged him with possession of marijuana with intent to distribute and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. And Sully’s team even joined with Reston’s police bike team in the spring to nab a serial shoplifter.

“They do phenomenal work to keep this community safe,” said then Station Commander Rachel Levy. “They work hard and go above and beyond the call of duty.

SEE LEARNING ABOUT, PAGE 8

BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

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'People Can Feel Safe Leaving their Dogs Here'

The Dog Stop opens in Centreville Square.

By BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The Dog Stop held its grand opening, Saturday, Sept. 9, in the Centreville Square Shopping Center in Centreville. But the owners, employees, plus local and company dignitaries gathered there, the day before, for its ribbon cutting.

Situated on a curve in the upper, left-hand corner of the shopping center – between Shilla Bakery and Sweet Rolled Tacos – the new business is at 6001 Centreville Crest Lane. And it offers boarding, daycare, grooming, training and nutrition for all types of dogs.

Owned by husband-and-wife Bhavesh and Hiral Mehta of Centreville's Manorgate community, it's the second Dog Stop in Virginia (the first is in Richmond) and the 29th nationwide. There are 15-20 employees, and the dogs are always supervised.

"We love Bhavesh and Hiral because they're passionate about dogs and know how to safely care for them," said Patrick Morris, a business consultant for the franchise management. "And this is the perfect building – there's even a stop sign outside. And since this used to be a children's daycare, we didn't have to do a lot of construction."

Pleased that The Dog Stop is in such an inviting neighborhood, he added, "Everyone's been so nice. There are lots of people with dogs here, and the community's been extremely supportive. We're also happy to give tours of the facility. We put the dogs first – we want people to feel safe leaving their dogs here with us."

Indeed, the business prides itself on promoting healthy and happy dogs through socialization, physical exercise and mental stimula-



Cutting the ribbon: from left, Jennifer Rose and Kathy Smith, plus Hiral, Bhavesh and Sahil Mehta and others in attendance.



From left, Bhavesh, Hiral and Sahil Mehta.



Roni Robins and her dog Lily, a miniature Australian Labradoodle, in one of the daycare rooms.



The Dog Stop in Centreville has a 9,000-square-foot interior.



Cami Boye showing one of the dog-washing stations and the doggie door where dogs hop inside. From left are Roni Robins, Hiral Mehta and Boye.

tion. Dogs are able to enjoy everything from professional grooming and relaxing spa treatments to romping in the outdoor play yard with similar-sized canines. There's even a retail shop selling dog toys, treats, food and supplies.

Hours are Monday-Friday, 6:30 a.m.-7 p.m.; and Saturday-Sunday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Phone: 703-719-8670; Website: www.TheDogStop.com. Krista Poland is the general manager.

"This is such a beautiful and wonderful space," said Jennifer Rose, executive director of the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, during the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "And we're happy to be here to celebrate this business's opening."

Echoing her sentiments, Super-

SEE THE DOG STOP, PAGE 9

Learning About Sully Police Station's Bike Team

FROM PAGE 7

"We can come up quietly [on a suspect] and be discreet," said Brunk. "And when we're looking for a missing juvenile, we can go on trails and in alleys where cruisers can't."

Now they can do all these

things even better because Sully's bike team is the first one in Fairfax County to use battery-powered e-bikes. They enable officers to ride farther, quicker and with less fatigue because of the vehicle's pedal-assist feature.

To be on the team, applicants must complete a 40-hour training course. Lt. Matt Dehler, the station's assistant commander, has previously taught it so he knows what it entails.

"The officers are highly trained,"

he said. "Among other things, they have to go through cone courses, do jumps and go on long rides," said Dehler. "They also learn how to take care of their bikes because the bikes are their tools."

"Plus, they have to go through

all the same training as other officers," he added. "This is their full-time job – and I think it's the best one. [Criminals] are really surprised, especially at night. They don't expect to see a cop roll up on a bicycle."

Suicide Prevention Month

September is Suicide Prevention month, but it is always time to raise awareness, strengthen the dialogue and remind individuals, friends and families about resources that are available.

Suicide is preventable and can affect anyone regardless of race, age, economic or social status.

Fairfax County offers numerous resources and support services to assist those in need.

Call or text 9-8-8, the 24/7 Suicide and Crisis Hotline.

Suicide is a serious public health matter, and prevention efforts are critical. Suicide is preventable, and there are resources and support services available throughout the year to promote mental health and increase resilience.

Statistics:

- ❖ On average, there are 132 suicides per day.
- ❖ Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in Virginia.
- ❖ Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-14 and the 3rd leading cause of death among people aged 15-24 in the U.S.
- ❖ 59% of all suicides were by firearms.

Education and services are provided throughout Fairfax County and include community-focused workshops, campaigns to raise awareness about mental health and evidence-based suicide prevention and mental health trainings for all residents.

The Suicide Prevention Alliance of Northern Virginia provides information and opportunities for all residents to raise awareness and share resources to prevent suicide.

Warning Signs - What to Look For

The Dog Stop Opens

FROM PAGE 8

Advisor Kathy Smith (D-Sully) told the owners, "I'm excited to have you here. And my office will do everything it can to support you." Likewise, Supervisor James Walkinshaw (D-Braddock) also congratulated The Dog Stop team, and Hiral Mehta thanked everyone for welcoming them to the community.

"It's been my mother's dream forever to open a dog-care facility," said son Sahil Mehta. "It means so much to see you all here to support us. From the floors to the ceilings, we've done everything we can to ensure the dogs' safety, health and happiness."

After the ceremony, he explained that there are epoxy floors so the dogs don't slip and slide, plus UV lights in the ceilings to absorb and kill bacteria in the air. And the exhaust system constantly pumps fresh air into the building.

There are 75 kennels, with a maximum capacity of 150 dogs. People with two dogs may have them boarded together. "My mother truly cares about doing everything right for the dogs," said Sahil. "And she'll make sure every dog is treated well."

Although it's not apparent from the outside, the building is more than 9,000 square feet with a variety of rooms – each with a particular purpose. And an outdoor play area behind the building is surrounded by an 8-foot-high fence. Following the ribbon-cutting, both Hiral and Cami Boye, also

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration indicate the following behaviors as warning signs: Talking about being a burden to others. Giving belongings away. Looking for a way to kill oneself such as searching online or buying a gun. Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live. Talking about feeling trapped or unbearable pain. Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs. Acting anxious or agitated, behaving recklessly. Sleeping too little or too much. Withdrawing or feeling isolated. Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself. Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge. Displaying extreme mood swings.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness cites risk factors that could increase an individual's likelihood to experience suicidal thoughts:

- ❖ A family history of suicide.
- ❖ Substance use: Drugs can create mental highs and lows that worsen suicidal thoughts.
- ❖ Intoxication: Analysis from the CDC indicates around 1 in 5 people who die by suicide had alcohol in their system at the time of death.
- ❖ Access to firearms.
- ❖ A serious or chronic medical illness.
- ❖ Gender: Although more women than men attempt suicide, men are four times more likely to die by suicide. Women and girls are also at risk
- ❖ A history of trauma or abuse.
- ❖ Prolonged stress.
- ❖ A recent tragedy or loss.

How to Respond to Someone in Crisis

- ❖ Use clear language such as, "Do you have

SEE SUICIDE PREVENTION, PAGE 15

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More Than Meets the Eye

McLean Community Center's Fall Community Parking Lot Sale.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

On Saturday, Sept. 16, the McLean Community Center held its much-anticipated Fall Community Parking Lot Sale. The event drew 78 vendors, with a special 20-spot section known as "kids' row" reserved for young entrepreneurs aged five to fifteen.

Catherine Nesbitt, the center's special events manager, praised this year's event, emphasizing its potential for numerous positive outcomes, particularly for the youth sellers. A walk with Nesbitt revealed why the McLean Community Center involves youth and holds the sale twice a year, benefiting not only Saturday's sellers and buyers but also neighbors in need.

As shoppers strolled down the youth row, it became clear that the enterprising young vendors had put considerable thought into display arrangements. They appeared to understand the significance of presentation in potentially selling their toys and clothing items, resulting in money in their pockets.

Many young vendors at the sale created visually appealing layouts to catch the attention of people passing by. The young sellers consistently grouped items, providing an enticing shopping experience. The merchandise appeared clean,



On 'Yes Day,' the Carpenter children could ask for anything, within the rules. They picked MCC's Fall Community Parking Lot Sale.



A beautiful afternoon adds to the fun at the McLean Community Parking Lot Sale.

in very good to excellent condition, and affordable, which was a plus for buyers, especially young children looking for a new toy, video game, or outfit.

Nesbitt said they specifically involve youth vendors to promote their math, financial, and entrepreneurial skills when working with the general public.

"I went down the row and I

asked everyone to raise their hand if they were having fun and they were making money, and they were all very happy to do that," Nesbitt said.

Another advantage of the parking lot sale is that it keeps items out of landfills. "For lack of a better term, it's the ultimate recycling," Nesbitt said. Pants no longer fit? sell them here to someone who

will appreciate them.

Nesbitt noticed the SHARE, Inc. truck pulling up across the parking lot. SHARE, Inc., a local 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, accepts food, clothing, furniture, and other donations from the community and local businesses to assist neighbors in need, including those who have been homeless and are recovering.

SHARE would accept donations from all the sellers based on the list Nesbitt was about to distribute at the end of the sale. Due to a lack of storage space, the nonprofit could only accept some of the unsold items.

The next McLean Community Parking Lot sale will occur in spring of 2024. Watch for the announcement.



A vendor prepares frames for sale.



Vendor Yanai Wang, 12, of McLean, displays her merchandise at the McLean Community Center Parking Lot Sale.



It's a hard decision, given the great selections at the McLean Community Parking Lot Sale.

Great Falls Author Unravels An Eight-Generation Truth

FROM PAGE 3

pest with her mother and father in 2006. Clara was named “Righteous Among Nations” by Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust memorial, among those non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. Her mother, who had advanced Alzheimer’s disease, could not deliver the remarks, so her father did.

“He omitted a vital fact,” writes Broenniman. Julian survived WWII by escaping from a Nazi slave labor camp and finding refuge from the Nazis with Clara.

Broenniman’s search for the truth gathered momentum about five years after the fire that claimed her mother’s life. In 2018, her sister, Madeline, discovered a cardboard box from the fire and sent it to her. Broenniman says she pulled out a marble composition book titled “Our Family Tree,” written in English. Gabor Virany, her father’s cousin, wrote it, she believes. Other documents were in Hungarian and German. Using a Microsoft translator, she read the birth, death, and marriage certificate names.

Broenniman needed far more than just a translator. She writes in her book, “I needed someone who understood historical context and significance.” She is introduced to Anna Bayer, a local Hungarian Jewish expat, who introduces her to Gyekiczki.

On Sept. 2, 2023, Broenniman returned to Budapest. She climbed the steps to the doors of Rumbach synagogue and made her way to its second floor to speak during the dedication celebration of the exhibit and the release of her book.

The screening room again displayed the permanent exhibit of ten films depicting the Jewish Politzer family’s fate from the 18th century to the present day, spanning eight generations. Broenniman is not alone, as she was last year.

Broenniman is with her Jewish family and supporters. After years of diligent research, Broenniman established that she and the rest of her family are descendants of the Politzers. Broenniman is Abraham Polizer’s great-great-great-granddaughter.

She says to the gathered crowd, “I will never know why my father kept his secrets, and it’s tempting to judge him for hiding his Jewish roots, and I admit that I was angry when I found out. That anger is gone now that I know the truth. My father was a remarkable and complicated man.”

“It’s unbelievable that I’m stand-
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May Their Memory Be For A Blessing

Sándor Ambrus, my grandfather
Zoltán Ambrus, my grand-uncle, Sándor’s brother
Ima Gluck Engel, my grand-aunt, Sándor’s sister
Giella Minker Tibold, my great-aunt, sister to Margit Minker Politzer
Frédéric Tibold, my great-uncle, husband of Giella Minker Tibold
Jován Minker, my great-uncle, brother of Margit Minker Politzer
Ignicz Minker, my great-great-grandfather and husband of Josef Politzer
Sarolta Minker, Ignicz Minker’s niece
Bertha Goldschmeidl Politzer, wife of Mihály Politzer (brother of Josef Politzer Minker)
Ilona Politzer, daughter of Bertha and Mihály Politzer
Raoul Barber, son of Ilona Politzer (Josef Politzer Minker’s sister) and Isidor Barber
Maxine Müller, daughter of Giella Barber (Ilona Politzer’s daughter) and Leo Müller
Frédéric Hellsinger, son of Rosa Politzer (Maurin Politzer’s daughter) and Sigmund Hellsinger
Bertha Politzer Herrmann, daughter of Ilés Politzer
Clara Politzer, daughter of Albert Politzer (son of Bernia Politzer) and Fanny Friedmann
Endre Kovács, son of Hermine Politzer (daughter of Bernia Politzer) and Mathias Kovács
Aladár Politzer, son of Farkas Politzer and Karolin Esterreicher
Kornél Török, son of Zsigmond Politzer and Irma Politzer
Arthur Török, son of Zsigmond Politzer and Irma Politzer
Frédéric Török, son of Arthur Török and Frederica Koller
Victor Török, son of Zsigmond Politzer and Irma Politzer
Paul Török, son of Zsigmond Politzer and Irma Politzer
Béla Lederer, son of Margaret Politzer (Zsigmond Politzer’s daughter) and Lauro Lederer
Aranka Politzer Munk, sister-in-law of Zsigmond Politzer, sister of Irma Politzer
Lola Munk, daughter of Aranka Munk, niece of Zsigmond Politzer and Irma Politzer
Leo Politzer, son of Gusztav and Ernestin Politzer
Frank Alberti, son of Gusztav and Ernestin Politzer
George Benes, son of Giella Politzer (daughter of Gusztav Politzer) and Anthony Benes

Family members named here were confirmed to have been killed in the Holocaust.

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The final page of “The Politzer Saga” by Fairfax County author Linda Ambrus Broenniman lists family members who died in the Holocaust.

ing here sharing with you the story of my family, and it’s a family I never even knew existed,” Broenniman says.

Broenniman tells how she and Gyekiczki collaborated for over a year before he shared their findings with Shiza Torney, director of the Hungarian Museum and Archives. It corresponded with the timing of the synagogue’s restoration. Gyekiczki asked Broenniman if it was acceptable to have their family stories displayed. “I approved; he wrote the proposal; it was accepted, and here we all are,” she said.

Toward the end of her book, Broenniman presents her beliefs on why her father renounced Judaism. He could not hide his Hungarian accent in America, but he could hide his religious heritage.

“He did not want to face intolerance again. He chose to keep his Jewish roots secret from everyone, including his children. He had created an identity he would not or could not let go. He would protect it at all costs.”

Broenniman, who currently lives in Great Falls, brought the stories of her Jewish family to light and honored their memories. There is a Jewish expression. “May their memories be for a blessing.” Readers can access the short videos of the ceremony, the exhibit, and the Rumbach Synagogue in Budapest on two YouTube videos: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-mg1_gUCZxE.webloc (three minutes) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYFv8uchqL8.webloc> (twelve minutes).

<https://poltizersaga.com/>

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ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THRU NOV 10

Into the Hothouse Exhibit. At Gillespie Gallery of Art, GMU's Art and Design Building, 4515 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Mason Exhibitions presents Into the Hothouse, an immersive site-specific installation by Chicago-based artist Aimée Beaubien. The exhibit is a category-defying constellation of dozens of gathered, printed, and handmade works that explore botanical and environmental subject matter. Natural forms, technological interventions, and laborious craft techniques abound. The gallery is free and open to the public from Monday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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 preschool 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. 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 also expanding the Frights at Height experi-



Buckets N Boards will appear Saturday, Sept. 23, 2023 at the McLean Central Park Gazebo in McLean.

Buckets N Boards

5 p.m. At McLean Central Park Gazebo, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Presented by The Alden at the McLean Community Center, the show features two masterful musicians and comedians, Matt Levingston and Gareth Sever, who play an amazing array of instruments and found objects. For more information, contact The Alden at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711 or visit the website, aldentheatre.org.

ence! 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.

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.

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. Note: There will be no children's books at this sale. The 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.

restonfriendspr@gmail.com, or call 703-829-5467.

SCHEDULE

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

FRIDAY/SEPT. 22

Free Demo of Painting with Sharpies. 11 a.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. McLean Art Society is honored to present Hanna Emrich giving a step-by-step demonstration using Sharpies as an alternative to paint brushes to create a floral impression as dramatically aesthetic as one might expect from using a brush. Visit www.hzemrich.com.

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.

SEPT. 23-24

PBR Fairfax Invitational (Professional Bull Riders). At Eagle Bank Arena, Fairfax. For two days only, some of the best bull riders in the world will battle the sport's most powerful bovine athletes who are bred to buck in the ultimate David vs. Goliath showdown in a series showcasing one of the most exciting live sporting events to witness. The bull riding action begins at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 23, and 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 24. All 35 competing bull riders will get on one bull each in Round 1 on Saturday evening and Round 2 on Sunday afternoon. The riders' individual two-round scores will be totaled with the Top 10 advancing to the championship round for one more out and a chance at the event title. Tickets for the two-day event are on sale now, and start at \$16, taxes and fees not included. Tickets can be purchased online at Ticketmaster.com and PBR.com, at the EagleBank Arena Box Office or by calling PBR customer service at 1-800-732-1727.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

Blood Drive. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At The Springfield Masonic Lodge, 7001 Backlick Road, Springfield. Walk-ins are welcome or you can reserve an appointment online at <https://www.inovabloodsaves.org/>. They will also be hosting The Medical Care for Children Partnership Foundation (MCCP) which will be providing free dental checkups for children and the Lions Club will be conducting free eye exams for folks of all ages.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

Multicultural Festival. At Reston Town Center, Reston. The Reston Multicultural Festival is an annual event that brings together the people of Reston to celebrate our rich medley

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 13

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ENTERTAINMENT

of cultures. Come out and share with family, friends, and neighbors the music, entertainment, dress, food, and cultural treasures from all over the world that are all in our community. The free event features live music, dancing, children's activities, and much more! The Festival is expanding this year to fill Market Street and use three stages instead of just one in the Town Square Park. Location: Reston Town Center with performances in the Pavilion and Reston Town Square Park – 1900 Market St, Reston.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

Harvest Happenings. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Celebrate autumn with your family! Harvest Happenings is an indoor-outdoor festival with live entertainment, a petting zoo, craft projects and games. Visit our pumpkin patch and purchase a pumpkin to decorate.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

Freedom Fund Jazz for Justice. 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. At Fairfax Marriott at Fair Oaks. Live jazz music presented by NAACP Fairfax Branch. As you immerse yourself in the soul-stirring rhythms embodying the spirit of change, the jazz band Common Ground will provide the musical backdrop to the event.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

2023 SOCO Invitational. 2 p.m. At South County High School, 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. There will be over 24 high school marching bands competing from all over the Commonwealth of Virginia. Concessions will be available. Cost is \$10/person; free 5 years and under.

SEPT. 28 TO OCT. 1

25th Annual Oktoberfest. At Fort Belvoir's Fremont Field (beside Wells Field House), 2104-6028 Goethals Road, Fort Belvoir. Oktoberfest is a four-day festival that highlights authentic German cuisine, beverages, music, and dancing. Enjoy an exciting carnival, Volksmarch 5K/10K Walk and much more. Hours: Thursday 6-10 p.m.; Friday 4-11 p.m.; Saturday 12-11 p.m.; and Sunday 12-8 p.m.

OCT. 28-29

Ghost Town at Burke Lake Park. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Tickets are \$15/person online until Oct. 26. Day of tickets are \$20.

SEPT. 28 TO OCT. 15

"The Chosen." At 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. "The Chosen" by Aaron Posner and Chaim Potok, directed by Alex Levy. Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 2 and 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$25-\$50 general admission, \$15 students, educators, and military. Purchase online at www.1ststage.org or 703-854-1856.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 30

Arts by George! 5 p.m. At GMU Harris Theatre; 8 p.m. at Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. The philanthropic event, headlined by Renée Elise Goldsberry, raises vital support for student scholarships in visual arts, dance, music, theater, game



Fall Fest 2023 runs Sept. 23 to Oct. 29 at Reston Farm Garden Market in Reston.

Fall Fest 2023

At Reston Farm Garden Market, 10800 Baron Cameron Avenue, Reston. Saturdays and Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Fall Fest schedule spans weekends from September 23rd to October 29th, with the Columbus Day special on October 9th, operating from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tickets are \$20 per child and \$5 per parent, while children aged two and under enter for free. The festival offers a variety of activities, including inflatables such as a corn maze, two 20' slides, two pumpkin bounce houses, and a basketball game. There's also a charming petting zoo, the Reston Farm Garden Market Express Train, and live music for entertainment. The market features seasonal items like chrysanthemums, pansies, fresh produce, natural jams, local organic honey, farm-fresh products, pumpkins, seasonal decor, and our famous Apple Cider Donuts. You can also savor offerings from local food trucks throughout the weekend. Book your tickets on our website: <https://www.restonfarm.com/fall-fest>.

design, film, and arts management. At 8 p.m., guests will transition to the Center for the Arts for a live Fund-a-Student Auction, leading up to the performance by Goldsberry. In this concert, Goldsberry will perform a dazzling concert featuring Broadway hits and American songbook classics. Tickets are \$100, \$75, \$50.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 30

Oak Hill Mansion Open House. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Oak Hill Mansion, 4716 Wakefield Chapel Road, Annandale. Travel back in time with a captivating visit to the historic Oak Hill mansion in Annandale. Step into history during

an annual open house event at this private residence on Saturday, Sept. 30, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Note that this year's event will exclusively feature indoor and garden tours, with no satellite parking, shuttles, speaking program or food provided. Guided indoor and garden tours will be offered at 15-minute intervals.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 30

Children's Consignment Sale. Grace Weekday Preschool at 7434 Bath Street, Springfield is holding a children's consignment sale on Saturday, September 30, 2023 from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Cash only and all sales final.

Sully Community Day Is Sept. 30

All community members are invited to attend the first-ever Sully Community Day on Saturday, Sept. 30, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. It'll be held at the Sully Community Center, 13800 Wall Road in Oak Hill. Attendees will be able to learn about various local organizations, such as Fairfax County's Health Department, Park Authority, School Age Child Care (SACC) and Healthworks. The fun also includes food, games and performances, plus demonstrations inside the center.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

In-Person Public Hearing on the McLean Community Center's FY2025 Budget

(July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025)

McLean Community Center Governing Board
Wednesday, Sept. 27, 6:30 p.m.

Small District 1A-Dranesville residents who wish to speak at the Public Hearing are asked to call 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, to be placed on the speakers list. The draft budget proposal will be available on the center's website and copies can be picked up at the center's reception desk on or after Thursday, Sept. 14.

Written comments may be delivered to the McLean Community Center (see address below) marked "Attention: Executive Director," or sent by email to feedback@fairfaxcounty.gov. Written comments may be provided after the Public Hearing up through Friday, Oct. 6.



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Keeping a Republic

BY DELEGATE
KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM



Plum

History records that at the end of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787 Benjamin Franklin who was the senior member of the Convention was asked what kind of government the delegates who had sweltered through months of heat and compromises had produced. His oft-quoted response was "a republic if we can keep it." Through the centuries the Constitution has endured, there have been many instances when there were questions and doubts as to whether we can "keep it." The very compromises that made a unique form of a republic possible create the tensions that shake its very existence.

Traditionally the day after Labor Day has been the start of the election season, but as election seasons run together and overlap confusion can result and fatigue set in about the campaign process and the number and extremeness of candidates. Keeping a republic that has been described as not being perfect but the best system that has ever been devised continues to rest with informed and involved voters.

This election year is the one that occurs every four years in Virginia with a ballot full of offices and candidates seeking those offices. With early voting starting Sept. 22 it is time to start paying attention and steel yourself in a way that will leave you convinced that once you have cast your vote you are satisfied with your choices. Up for election this year are all members of the Virginia General Assembly, 40 senators and 100 delegates, in new districts as a result of legislative redistricting. To find the district in which you reside, go to <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/redistricting/interactive-map/> and to find the persons seeking election in those districts, go to <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/candidate-list/>. The state legislative elections will be particularly meaningful this year because the amount of turnover in membership is the greatest I can remember with retirements and primary election outcomes.

This election is an intense struggle over control of the legislature. Pay careful attention to the candidates because already it is obvious that there are candidates who are as extreme as any you may have read about in other states. Partisan workers are working hard for there is a recognition that the outcomes in Virginia's elections could be a bellwether for what might happen nationally in 2024.

Other offices that are on the ballot this year, and that are referred to as constitutional offices for they are called for in the state constitution, are Commonwealth's attorney, clerk of the court, and sheriff.

As though that is not enough for voters to keep up with, there are local offices. In Fairfax County, voters get to elect the chairman of the Board of Supervisors, their local district member of the Board of Supervisors, their local district School Board member, three at-large School Board members, and representatives on the Soil and Water Conservation Board. You can review a sample ballot for your location at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/sample-ballots>.

Do not be put off by campaign rhetoric and the endless phone calls, campaign mailings, and commercials. We have a republic that allows us through the ballot box to take part in our own governance. We have a democratic republic. Let's do all we can to keep it.

Suicide Prevention Month

FROM PAGE 9

a plan for how you would kill yourself?"

- ❖ Calmly ask supportive questions like, "Can I help you call your psychiatrist?"
- ❖ Express support and concern.
- ❖ Don't raise your voice, threaten or argue.
- ❖ If you're nervous, try not to fidget or pace.
- ❖ Assess the surroundings and remove items such as guns, knives, pills or items that could be used as a weapon.
- ❖ Be patient.

Resources

Asking a person if they are suicidal does not increase suicides or suicidal ideation. Learn how to identify, talk to, and support someone who may be experiencing these warning signs by becoming a Mental Health First Aider and a Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper with the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board.

Sign up for Mental Health First Aid and Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) trainings. Additionally, the Lock and Talk Northern Virginia safety program is a collaborative initiative of SPAN and CSB. This program offers free locking medication boxes and gun safety locks that fit a wide variety of firearms.

If you or someone you care about may be at risk of suicide, don't hesitate to reach out for

help right away. These resources are available 24/7:

- Call or text 9-8-8, the 24/7 Suicide and Crisis Hotline
- Call the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board Emergency Services at 703-573-5679.
- Text "CONNECT" to 855-11 to contact PRS CrisisLink.
- Lifeline Chat: [SuicidePreventionLifeline.org/chat](https://www.lifeline.com)
- Call PRS CrisisLink at 703-527-4077.

In an immediate, life-threatening situation, call 911.

If you are concerned, SPAN offers a Confidential Online Screening.

You can also come directly to the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board's Emergency Services office, which is open 24/7. Sharon Bulova Center for Community Health 8221 Willow Oaks Corporate Drive, Fairfax 703-573-5679, TTY 711

Deciding when to help someone who may be at risk for suicide can be scary, but taking one step to reach out for support could save a life.

Source: Fairfax County www.fairfax-county.gov/news/september-suicide-prevention-month

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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 throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

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

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

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On The Cusp of ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... my/our 45th wedding anniversary on Oct. 20, 2023, quite by familial coincidence, my wife, Dina and I attended her Godson's wedding in Philadelphia last week. Yes, we risked our lives and limbs while escaped prisoner Danelo Cavalcante was on the loose. Nevertheless, we figured it was an acceptable risk, given the occasion. We we're fortunate however, as were the bride and groom and all invited guests, that the wedding wasn't happening at Longwood Gardens, a magnificent and well-known, former Dupont Estate, located in Kennett Square - in Chester County, Pa. Due to the escaped convict, the grounds were closed as a precaution. But other than a few raindrops that landed on the assembled guests, as well as on the bride and groom, the late afternoon/early evening festivities went on without a hitch, although none of us remained dry. And though Danelo was a topic of conversation throughout, since he wasn't an invited guest, we weren't worried too much, as we all ate, drank, and danced to our heart's content.

Seeing so many people so much younger than ourselves dancing the night away with their futures very much in front of them was in stark contrast to us as our futures are our present and have pretty much already been lived. The age difference between Chris, Shannon, and yours truly and most of their friends is almost 40 years, a generation and a half. We are contemporaries - of their parents. Yet, we attended as peers of a sort, who happen to be family. In addition, I think our knowing Chris his entire life gave us a certain curiosity and legitimacy among many of Chris and Shannon's friends. After all, we were there at Chris' birth.

I wouldn't say it was awkward being around so many 20-somethings, but I will admit to it being a teachable moment/learning experience as the generations - as worlds did on a long ago "Seinfeld episode," collided. Though we acted our age, comparatively speaking, we stayed out past midnight, and tried to be as interested in the attendees lives as the occasion allowed. Meaning, the music was loud and hearing any conversation was challenging. Still, we tried to stay in the moment. All of which was made easier at the pre-wedding and afterparties that occurred in the hotel's bar, as well as the groom's mother's house the following day for Sunday brunch. In each instance, the energy and enthusiasm were super positive and amazingly genuine.

All throughout the weekend festivities, I couldn't help looking around at all the younger people and doing the math, and juxtaposing our ages and marital years, and wondering (A) where had all the time - since we got married in Oct., '78, gone and (B) how in the heck did we get this old? Granted, you are young as you feel, or as Grouch Marx so famously said: "You're as young as the woman you feel," so I don't feel old even though my wife is age 68. It matters more to me what's in your heart and head more so than the color of your hair or the lines in your face. I prefer to listen to what one says and does, not focus of what they can't do. Moreover, I want to see if they still have a rye smile on their face and a bounce in the step, regardless of their age or circumstances. I realize age/years married is just a number but holy smokes, 45, compared to witnessing and participating in a married couple's day one of year one, gave us both (Dina and I) pause and cause to reflect. I can't say "What a long, strange trip it's been," because unlike The Grateful Dead, we've generally colored between the lines and stayed on the straight and narrow. Though we've accumulated lots of life's experiences, we tried not to offer too much advice too soon to too many people, many of whom were getting ready to embark on their own post-college adventures. We figured they'd live and learn on their own. They didn't need any unsolicited advice from us.

But the occasion and simultaneous reflection of our life together didn't give us indigestion or constipation or remorse/anxiety in the least. Instead, it gave us/me one of the happiest weekends we've experienced in quite a while. Being around all these young people, full of hopes and dreams and ambitions for the future was infectious, even for us old fogies. It wasn't at all bittersweet. It was more like milk chocolate for me: extremely satisfying.

Best wishes to Chris and Shannon. We look forward to seeing them soon and hearing about their honeymoon abroad, and hanging out with them and their friends, if they'll allow us. It turns out their energy and enthusiasm were just what this older couple needed - and prefers. "Peace and serenity" is for "Festativus," not the rest of us.

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



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