

CONNECTION

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

Koraline Blend, 4-1/2, paints a reindeer at the Sweet Promise table at the rainy Saturday's Fairfax Fall Festival.



ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 12 ♦ PIZZA, PAGE 14

PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Lamb Center Raises Funds For Housing and More

PAGE 3

Former Fairfax Officer Indicted in February Death

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Building a Home for Osprey

PAGE 10

Fun at Fairfax Fall Festival

PAGE 8

BULLETIN BOARD

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

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 18

An Evening With Dr. Michelle Reid, 6 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Fairfax County Schools Superintendent Dr. Michelle Reid will be answering questions from students. All students from kindergarten through 12th grade are encouraged to bring their questions or simply come to meet and listen to our new FCPS Superintendent. The Superintendent oversees almost 200 schools and centers in a county serving approximately 180,000 students. This event will be focused on questions from students attending elementary, middle, and high

school from within the McLean, Langley, and Marshall Pyramids. If you have any questions, please email, Jim Beggs, MCA Education and Youth Committee Chair, e-y_committee@mcleancitizens.org

SATURDAY/OCT. 28

National Drug Takeback Day. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At all Fairfax County Police Stations. Keeping unused, unwanted, and expired medications in your home can lead to accidental poisoning, overdose, and misuse. Getting rid of medications that are no longer needed is especially important now with the opioid

epidemic continuing to impact many families throughout the nation and right here in our community.

FREE HALLOWEEN WEEKEND LYFT RIDES

Preparing to combat that time of year when according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, nearly half (48%) of U.S. traffic deaths involve drunk drivers, a local nonprofit organization announced that free safe rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during this month's Halloween celebration. Offered

by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the 2023 Halloween SoberRide program will be in operation beginning at 4 p.m. on Saturday, October 28th and operate until 4 a.m. on Sunday, October 29th as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk period. During this 12-hour period, area residents ages 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download the Lyft app to their phones then enter the SoberRide code in the app's 'Payment' tab (under the 'Add Lyft Pass' option) to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home.

WRAP's 2023 Halloween SoberRide promo code will be posted at 3 p.m. on Saturday, October 28 on www.SoberRide.com.

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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 6

SCHOOL BOARD

Kevin Pinkney

Franconia District

Putting Education, Families, and Teachers First

- ✓ **Spend wisely.** Schools are funded by hardworking families and businesses in our community. Redirect funds to classrooms and reduce backoffice spending.
- ✓ **Restore commonsense discipline.** Schools must be safe. We should expect good behavior of all students. Safer classrooms help retain good teachers.
- ✓ **Respect parents.** Parents have right to instill and nurture values and beliefs in their own children and to make decisions consistent with their customs and faith.

Paid for by Friends of Kevin Pinkney

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BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

From left, Wesley Housing executives Judith Cabelli and Kamilah McAfee with Tara Ruskowski.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID BULOVA

John and Jeanette Mason

Giving Help, Hope and Changing Lives

The Lamb Center holds banquet fundraiser.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The Lamb Center in Fairfax City is a daytime, drop-in shelter offering meals, showers, clothing, laundry services, housing searches, plus recovery and employment counseling, to poor and unhoused people. And during its fundraising banquet Oct. 5 at the Fairview Park Marriott, attendees learned about this nonprofit's mission, successes and continuing needs.

Before they ate, the Rev. Vernon Walton of First Baptist Church of Vienna asked God to help everyone there “be mindful of those who do not have food to eat, shelter or clothing. We pray that our gathering challenges each of us to advocate for those who are the least among us.”

Then City Councilmember Tom Ross honored his longtime friend and mentor, former City Mayor John Mason and his wife Jeanette. In May, the Masons celebrated their 60th anniversary by inspiring their community to rally together and raise more than \$11,000 for The Lamb Center.

“The Lamb Center’s mission and this City hold a special place in the Masons’ hearts, and they chose to commemorate their joyful occasion by giving back,” said Ross. “They exemplify the true essence of community spirit, uniting and catalyzing action for the betterment of our homeless neighbors. Their generosity warms our hearts, and we sincerely thank them.”

Keynote speaker was Kamilah McAfee, president and CEO of Wesley Housing, a nonprofit dedicated to providing quality affordable housing. However, she said, “It’s not just about the bricks and mortar, but about how we, as a community, extend compassion and care to our neighbors.”

As a mother, she compared the children’s game of musical chairs – where those reaching the chairs



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Jennifer Edwards

first win – to life. “This mirrors the privilege many of us have in securing safe and decent homes in our communities,” she explained. “Those with greater financial resources have more choices, while the most vulnerable among us have the fewest opportunities.”

In a community where shelter options are scarce, said McAfee, “Far too many are left behind. The most recent, point-in-time count for Fairfax County indicated over 1,300 individuals chronically left behind – an increase of over 10 percent over the prior year.”

“Wesley Housing has a longstanding commitment to addressing housing needs for our most vulnerable community members,” she continued. “But when [The Lamb Center] approached us in early 2022 to partner with them on their [Beacon Landing] project to develop 54 units of permanent, supportive housing,

A Place Where People Can Get a Fresh Start

Two former Lamb Center guests share their stories.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The Lamb Center is a place where lives are changed, and people have an opportunity to make a fresh start. And during this nonprofit’s recent banquet, two of its former guests, Padma and Jesse, shared their stories with those attending. (To protect their privacy, they only gave their first names).

Padma became homeless at the end of 2021 after leaving her job to start her own business, which didn’t materialize as she’d envisioned. “I lost everything,” she said. “And before I knew what happened, I was without a home. I didn’t seek help from family and friends. Homelessness was daunting, at first.

“However, I started meeting people in similar situations, and they made me realize I wasn’t alone on this journey. I came to TLC in August 2022. I got information about Medicaid, SNAP [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, providing federal funds for food] and housing, and was also connected with FACETS [which helps with basic needs].”

Soon, Padma began visiting The Lamb Center every day because, she explained, “For people experiencing homelessness, their immediate needs are food, taking a shower, doing laundry, and having a place to store whatever little stuff they own. They also have the resources to help you get a new start. A doctor and a dentist come once a week, and there’s a temporary jobs program with the City and county.”

She was one of the City Jobs workers, with the Parks Department, and enjoyed it. And the money she earned helped her pay for a bus pass and other critical needs. “I eventually got a job at Whole Foods, and TLC helped me apply for hous-

ing,” said Padma. “Once it was approved, TLC provided the household and kitchen items for the house, and I’ve been in my new home since February.”

Now, she said proudly, “I have a place to do knitting and crocheting – which I’d missed doing. This wouldn’t have been possible if not for TLC. All the staff members are dedicated, compassionate and devoted to the cause, and I can’t thank them enough.”

As for Jesse, he was taking care of his father, in December 2020, when his dad died. Afterward, he found himself homeless. He had a good job but, between child-support and health-insurance payments, he couldn’t make ends meet. He was in Tennessee then and started walking north.

“I headed to visit the Vietnam Memorial in [Washington], D.C., because that was something my father always wanted to do and didn’t get to,” said Jesse. “After traveling to other states, I eventually came to Fairfax, looking for a job. It was October-November, and I was stuffing my clothes with paper to stay warm, and that’s how I came to TLC.”

“A CUE bus driver told me about it, and they helped me get Medicaid, mental-health treatment and a voucher to look for an apartment,” he continued. “Now I’m almost fully housed, and it’s all because of people’s generous donations to TLC, plus its volunteers and staff.”

“I just have so much gratitude for how giving a community I’ve found here in Fairfax County and in the City of Fairfax. I’ve volunteered, and it’s been a wonderful experience. I’m also working roughly 30 hours/week with City Jobs, and those types of things make getting a housing voucher possible. And I know I’m not the only person who’s visited TLC and come out better.”

SEE LAMB CENTER, PAGE 15

Fired Fairfax Officer Indicted By a Special Grand Jury

Faces charges of manslaughter and reckless discharge of a weapon.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Last week special grand jury indicted former Fairfax County police officer Wayne Shifflitt on felony charges for involuntary manslaughter and reckless discharge of a weapon for the fatal shooting of Timothy Johnson in February. Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano requested to empanel the special grand jury after a regular grand jury declined to indict Shifflitt. A judge approved empanelling the special grand jury.

Only once in the department's history, in 2015, has a police officer been charged for killing someone while on duty. That incident was the 2013 police shooting by Adam D. Torres of John B. Geer, an unarmed man, as he stood in the doorway to his own Springfield home. Torres agreed to a plea deal to involuntary manslaughter and a 12-month sentence.

Descano did so because, on April 17, a grand jury declined to indict Shifflitt after he fatally shot an unarmed shoplifting suspect during a nighttime foot pursuit outside of Tysons Corner Center on Feb. 22.

At that time, Descano said, "Since, by law, no prosecutors were permitted to be present in the room when the investigating officers made their presentation to the grand jury, I can't say for sure what information was conveyed to the grand jurors."

What happened on Feb. 22 casts a shadow over the county's lack of a foot pursuit policy and why deescalation and decision-making training (ICAT) was delayed.

Dimly lit police body-worn camera video of the Feb. 22 incident, released by Chief Kevin Davis on March 23, shows two Fairfax Police officers, later identified as Sgt. Wesley Shifflitt and Officer James Sadler, responding to suspected shoplifting of sunglasses. They chase a suspect later identified as Johnson, in a foot pursuit out of Tysons Corner Center mall to a parking garage, down a stairwell, through the garage, and toward Rt. 7, heading into a small wooded area.

An officer can be heard saying, "Get on the ground," four times, and "Stop reaching," twice. The officers discharge their firearms; gunfire pops can be heard. Johnson is struck in the chest once, and restrained.

Johnson says: "I'm not reaching for nothing. I have nothing. ... I'm shot, man. Hurry."

Other officers rendered aid until Fairfax County Fire and Rescue arrived. Johnson is taken to a nearby hospital and pronounced dead.

Immediately after the shooting, as seen on the police body cam, Shifflitt tells another officer (4:41), "He didn't get any rounds off... I don't know if he was armed; he was continually reaching in his waistband. ...



FILE PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION
Melissa Johnson, Timothy Johnson's mother, at the NAACP Justice Rally outside the Fairfax County Government Center on Saturday morning, April 1: "He was our son, and he was loved."

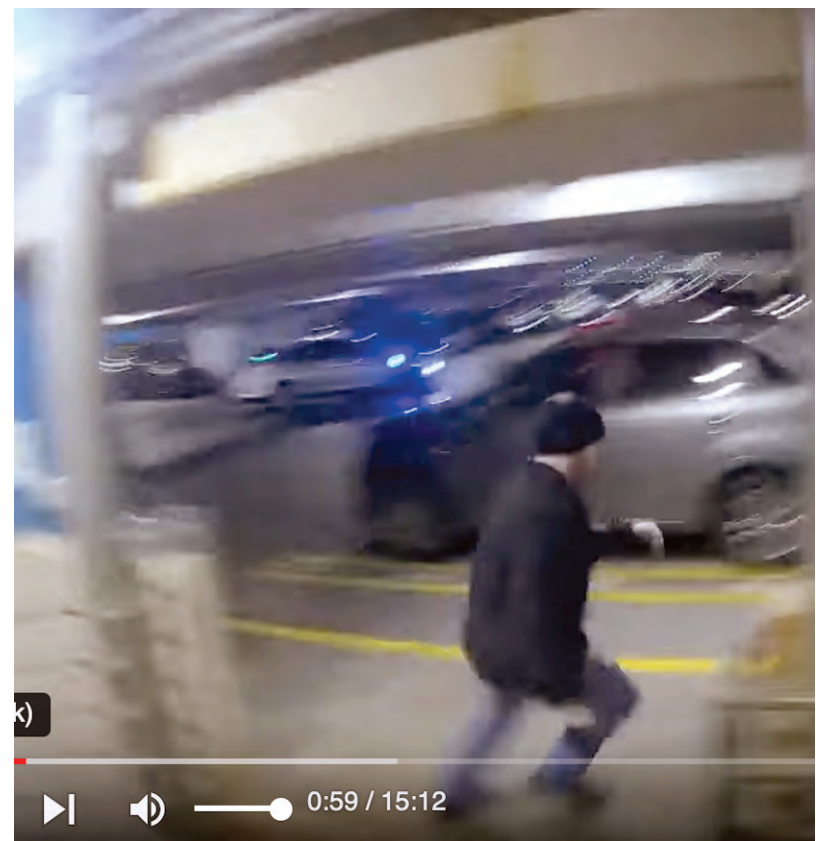


Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano

(8:30) I was to the right of the suspect. ...
(8:35) I recall shooting two rounds ... like into the woods."

DESCANO SAID in his Oct. 12 post that a court date for Shifflitt will be set on Friday, Oct. 20. "As the elected head of Fairfax County's justice system, my primary goal is to keep this community safe, and I have the utmost respect for the police officers throughout Fairfax County who work tirelessly to protect our community," Descano posted. He cautioned, "A criminal indictment is an accusation, and defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty."

Looking back over the related events and recommendations, on March 23, nearly a month after the fatal shooting of Johnson, Chief Kevin Davis held a press conference and released the Feb. 22, 2023 body-worn camera footage from the police shooting in-



SCREENSHOT
Timothy Johnson, suspected of shoplifting sunglasses at Tysons Corner Nordstrom, flees from Fairfax County Police officers as seen in the police body worn camera footage taken Feb. 22, 2023.

cident. Davis also confirmed that the officer who discharged the fatal wound, Shifflitt, was fired. Asked why the officer was no longer with the department, Davis said that the officer's actions did "not comport with our general orders, our policies, and our procedures ... and in particular, use of force."

Davis referred to the Police Executive Research Forum's (PERF) pending recommendations on police shooting incidents and how they might influence future law enforcement strategies in the county. Davis said that PERF [Police Executive Reform Research Forum], "the nation's leading think tank of American policing," would "assess the last couple of years of the department's officer-involved shootings."

PERF's involvement, requested by FCPD, came after a sharp uptick in police shooting incidents here.

"We're eager to continue working with PERF, and to consider all those recommendations, and continue to get better," Davis said.

According to Davis, PERF would independently look at the circumstances — "every condition you can imagine associated with officer-involved shootings"— to see what PERF could recommend to the department.

"Because they're the pros, they're the professionals," Davis said, referring to PERF. Davis clarified that PERF would not "directly" look at the Johnson police-involved shooting.

As of Feb. 22, 2023, Fairfax County Police had yet to implement ICAT [Integrating, Communications, Assessment, and Tactics] training for its sworn officers, despite receiving recommendations to do so in 2021. Training had been postponed to the spring

of 2023. Neither had a foot pursuit policy been adopted.

The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) developed the ICAT de-escalation training program to guide officers in defusing critical incidents.

IN A RESEARCH PROJECT on an investigation of the use of forces by the Fairfax County Police Department supported through an agreement between Fairfax County Office of the Independent Police Auditor and the University of Texas at San Antonio, June 2021, the authors called for the Fairfax Police Department to "consider adoption of Integrating Communication Assessment and Tactics (ICAT) training, developed by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), to supplement the de-escalation training currently provided. This 16-hour training is the only police de-escalation training supported by empirical evidence demonstrating reductions in police use of force."

PERF cited in its Fairfax County Police Department's April 2023 Review of Issues Surrounding Recent Police Shooting Incidents that 2022 FCPD recognized the need for ICAT training.

PERF said in its April Review 2023 that the February 22, 2023 police shooting-incident is an example of an incident where proportionality and better critical thinking could have affected the outcome. "A clear concept of proportionality and use of the CDM [Critical Decision-Making Model] may have led the officer to think through other available options from the start and may have inspired a different response," opined PERF in the report.

SEE FAIRFAX OFFICER INDICTED, PAGE 6
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Residents Who Encountered Wild Animals Asked to Call Health Department

After identifying a rabid raccoon and skunk within a mile of each other over the last 25 days, the Fairfax County Health Department is asking residents in the Centreville/Bull Run area to steer clear of wild animals and to report any animal attacks right away.

The rabid animals were in the western most part of the county near Cub Run Stream Valley Park & Trail, Pleasant Hill Park, and James McDonnell Recreation Center. They were found close to Pleasant Valley Road north of Highway 29 in residential areas. Both animals interacted with domestic pets, resulting in the testing of the wild animals.

During the time they were sick, the rabid animals may have had contact with other people or pets. If you, someone you know, or a pet touched or was bitten or scratched by any wild animals between 9/19/23 and 10/14/23, you are urged to call the Fairfax County Health Department's Rabies Program at 703-246-2433, TTY 711.

Rabies is a serious disease caused by a virus that can infect wildlife, particularly foxes, raccoons, skunks and bats, and domestic animals, such as dogs and cats. The rabies virus is found in the saliva and central nervous tissue of an infected animal.

People get rabies when they are bitten or scratched by an animal that is sick with the disease. The virus can also be passed along when an infected animal's saliva, brain or spinal nervous tissue enters an open wound, mouth, nose or eyes of another mammal. To date, 22 animals have been diagnosed with rabies in the Fairfax Health District in 2023.

Animals with rabies may act normally during the early stages of the disease, making it difficult to know if the animal is infected. As the disease progresses, animals often show changes in behavior. For example, wild animals may act very docile and domestic animals may become aggressive. Rabid animals may stagger,

drool, or become paralyzed. Protect yourself and your family from rabies: stay away from wild animals and be sure pets are vaccinated against rabies every year.

Here are other important steps to protect yourself and your pets from rabies:

- ❖ Do not allow your pets to roam unattended.
- ❖ Do not adopt or feed wild or stray animals.
- ❖ Seal openings in your house so that wildlife cannot enter.
- ❖ Report animal bites, animals that are acting strangely (including domestic animals), or altercations between wild and domestic animals to Fairfax County's Animal Protection Police at 703-691-2131, TTY 711.

If bitten or scratched by an animal that might have rabies, wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical attention right away. When vaccinations are provided in time, rabies treatment is 100 percent effective in preventing the disease. But if not treated, rabies is 100 percent fatal.

More information about rabies: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/rabies.

Civil War Show

Civil War Books, Relics and Memorabilia Show. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 4. At Arlington-Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Bud Mayo and Don Hakenson will be sponsoring the Civil War Books, Relics and Memorabilia Show. Admission is \$5 and vendors are welcome. SCV members receive a table discount. Contact Don Hakenson at dhakenson@verizon.net or 703-971-4984, or contact Bud Mayo at mayo5304@cox.net, or 703-389-1505.

CIVIL WAR

BOOKS, RELICS & MEMORABILIA SHOW

Saturday, November 4, 10:00 – 4:00

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

Admission, \$5 Per Person

Vendors Welcome

703-389-1505 / 703-785-5294

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<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF>

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23 SEASON 24

NEW WORLD SYMPHONY

Going Home



SAT • Nov 4, 2023 at 7:30pm

Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center

SOLD OUT SUN • Nov 5, 2023 at 3:00pm

George Washington Masonic Memorial

James Ross, Music Director

Stephen Seifert, mountain dulcimer

Featuring **Dawn Avery: Tscenacomoco** (ASO at 80 commission, sponsored by Classical Movements), **Margaret Bonds: Montgomery Variations**, **Conni Ellisor: Blackberry Winter**, and **Antonín Dvořák: Symphony No. 9**.

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Fired Officer Indicted

FROM PAGE 4

According to Fairfax Police, “ICAT provides police officers with the tools, skills, and options they need to defuse a range of critical incidents successfully and safely. Developed ... with input from hundreds of police professionals from across the United States, ICAT takes the essential building blocks of crisis intervention, critical thinking, effective communications, and tactics and puts them together in an integrated approach to training. The training program is anchored by the Critical Decision-Making Model that helps officers assess situations, make safe and effective decisions, and document and learn from their actions.”

The CY 2023 Equity Impact Plan by “Leadership Sponsor Kevin Davis, Chief of Police, and Equity Lead Major James Kraus” reported that the Fairfax police department committed to spring of 2023 as to when its sworn officers would receive Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics (iCAT) training. Fairfax County Police Department’s April 2023 Review of Issues Surrounding Recent Police Shooting Incident

As for a foot pursuit policy, PERF cited in Section V. Foot Pursuits of its Fairfax County Police Department’s April 2023 Review of



McLean OIS 2.22.23: Full BWC Release

Unlisted

Fairfax County Police Department
5.89K subscribers

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SCREENSHOT IMAGE VIA FCPD VIDEO

Image from dimly lit body worn camera footage released by Fairfax County Police Department. Police shot and killed Timothy Johnson on Feb. 22, 2023, outside Tysons Corner Center mall after chasing him on foot.

Issues Surrounding Recent Police Shooting Incidents: “Researchers noted in the previously referenced 2021 University of Texas at San Antonio report that: “[FCPD] should consider adopting a foot pursuit policy to help reduce force and injuries to officers and suspects. FCPD has yet to implement a foot pursuit policy [in 2023] PERF strongly advises the agency to do so.”

When Descano posted on Friday, October 13, that a special grand jury had indicted

former Fairfax County police officer Wayne Shifflitt on felony charges of involuntary manslaughter and reckless discharge of a weapon, he closed by saying, “The work of public safety includes charging officers for crimes when such actions are legally warranted. After reviewing the evidence in this case, I believe that probable cause existed that Shifflitt committed a crime and that the entirety of the evidence should be put to a jury of community members.”

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 2

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 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.

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ROUNDUPS

GMU Space Day is Oct. 22

The 2nd Annual Mason Space Day will be held Sunday, Oct. 22, from 3-9 p.m. at George Mason University's Fairfax City campus. This free, family-friendly event will offer an exciting and engaging opportunity to learn about the technology and science behind aerospace projects.

All ages are invited to learn about the latest in space exploration from those on the front lines and explore space firsthand through a tour of Mason's Observatory. Charles F. Bolden Jr., former head of NASA and a former astronaut, will deliver the keynote address.

Food trucks will be available onsite. Go to <https://science.gmu.edu/academics/departments-units/physics-and-astronomy-department/space-day-2023> to register in advance and for more information.

Fairfax High's Choral Concert, Oct. 26

The sounds of music will fill the air when the Fairfax High Chorus presents its fall Pyramid Concert, Thursday, Oct. 26, at 7 p.m. in the school auditorium. The free event features students from Fairfax, as well as from its feeder schools.

Help Woodson High's Food Pantry

It's difficult for students to concentrate on school when they haven't had enough to eat. But nonprofit Britepaths' Food4Thought pantry at Woodson High in Fairfax is extremely low on food and supplies and needs the community's help to be replenished. To help, go to britepaths.org/Food4Thought to see what's needed, donate funds online and learn about Britepaths' other partner schools.

Currently, the Woodson food pantry could use gift cards to Amazon, BJ's or Costco, as well as: Peanut butter, jelly, pasta sauce, applesauce, crackers, cereal, granola bars, microwave popcorn, and personal-hygiene items. Anyone wishing to help may bring these things to the school office at 9525 Main St. in Fairfax, Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Halloween Rides by SoberRide

A local nonprofit organization will offer free safe rides to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during this month's Halloween celebration.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the 2023 Halloween SoberRide program will be in operation beginning at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 28 and operate until

4:00 a.m. on Sunday, October 29th as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk period.

During this twelve-hour period, area residents ages 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download the Lyft app to their phones then enter the SoberRide code in the app's 'Payment' tab (under the 'Add Lyft Pass' option) to receive their

no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's 2023 Halloween SoberRide® promo code will be posted at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 28 on www.SoberRide.com.

WRAP also offers its SoberRide® program on St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day and the winter holidays through and including New Year's.

Sponsors of WRAP's 2023 Halloween SoberRide campaign include 395 Express Lanes, Amazon, Anheuser-Busch, Giant Food, Glory Days Grill, Lyft, Molson Coors Beverage Company, New Belgium Brewing, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association.

Since 1991, WRAP's SoberRide program has provided 86,805 free safe rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.



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. Std. #	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
RUSSELL	16424	624	DRILL ROAD	LEWIS CREEK	9/14/2023
HALIFAX	9250	639	ROCK BARN ROAD	BUFFALO CREEK	9/1/2023
MECKLENBURG	11980	635	SAFFOLD ROAD	MEHERRIN RIVER	9/1/2023

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.

REGISTER NOW

Saturday Evening 10/21/23

Community Event



Date: Saturday, October 21, 2023

Time: Main Event 6:30-9:00pm

Where: Burke Raquet and Swim Club
6001 Burke Commons Road
Burke, VA 22015

Play Tennis, Pickleball, Socialize or Volunteer at our Breast Cancer Charity Event, includes Silent Auction, wine tasting and 50/50 Raffle. Get involved for a good cause and meet a great group of FUN People!

About Swing for Pink!

Come support patients in our local community through our partnership with the Inova Schar Cancer Institute.

All proceeds benefit breast cancer education, screening and treatment.

The Breast Care Institute at Inova **Mount Vernon Hospital** and the Joseph Viar and Bonnie Christ Cancer Center at **Inova Alexandria Hospital**

- \$30 Pre-Registration - includes social, tennis & pickleball round robins
- \$15 Reunion and Social (no raquet play)
- \$35 Round Robins Registration on day of event

Register online: <https://swingforpinkmtvac.wordpress.com/join-the-fight/register/>

Donate online: <https://swingforpinkmtvac.wordpress.com/join-the-fight/donate/>

Volunteer to help: Email [Deb Oelschlager SFPdonate@gmail.com](mailto:Deb.Oelschlager@SFPdonate@gmail.com)

Another **CONNECTION** Community Partnership

- New Indoor Venue
- Tennis Round Robin
- Pickleball Round Robin
- Snacks
- Wine Tasting
- Silents Auction
- 50/50 Raffle
- Room to Socialize
- And have Fun!



SFP Website



Rainy-Day Fun at Fairfax Fall Festival

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

A rainy day didn't dampen anyone's fun at Saturday's Fairfax Fall Festival.



Ellie Cho, 7, standing by Fire Station 3's foam truck.



Ellie Tsai, 4, is a ray of sunshine in her yellow duck raincoat and galoshes.



Rob Hornfeck Enterprise rocks the Old Town Square stage.



Main Street view: Despite the rainy weather, crowds kept coming all day to the festival.



Koraline Blend, 4-1/2, paints a reindeer at the Sweet Promise table.



Susan Huff of Sligo's Treasures holds a sponge coral and unakite necklace.



Teresa Musni, of BabaBOWtique by Teresa, sells tutu bags and cute knit caps.



Ida Beylee serves Greek baklava and cabbage rolls from Havabite Eatery.



Eric Energy teaching children about the science behind tornadoes.



Khoa Nguyen of East Wind Vietnamese restaurant serving shrimp skewers.



Trinity Nickisch, of the Fairfax City 4-H and Crazy for K9s clubs, offers baked goods for donations to The Lamb Center.



From left, Matt Simmons and Andy Faehl of Capital Ale House cook Polish sausage and onions.



Jean-Luc Levite, 5, with Sparky the Fire Dog at Fairfax's Fire Station 3.



Elliott Hill, 5, poses with a festive stuffed animal at the Weber's Pet Supermarket stand with employees (back, from left) Cindy Holcomb and Debra Clark.

Laurel Hill Park Raises Osprey Platform



A new osprey nesting platform slips into place commanding the open sky of Laurel Hill Park.

Volunteers and park maintenance crew team up in effort.

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

There are not nearly as many Ospreys in the Lorton area as in areas closer to the Chesapeake Bay. The birds are making a comeback here and across the U.S. after the impacts of pesticides crashed their numbers with poisoning and thinned eggshells. In 2007, there were estimated to be 16,000 to 19,000 breeding pairs across the country; up from only 3,500 pairs in the 1950's. And, thanks to an accommodating Fairfax County Park Authority, their Area 4 Maintenance Operations crew, and a small group of park volunteers, one more new home has been raised to attract additional breeding Osprey pairs to Lorton's Laurel Hill Park.

Area 4 managers championed the idea of providing a nest platform for a while without finding a group willing to take on the effort. Then, earlier this year, the Laurel Hill Park's own volunteer team agreed to take on the project as a joint effort, with installation

assistance. Modifying a design recommended by Cornell Lab of Ornithology, to add a roosting perch, William Beletsky, of Springfield, constructed the platform structure. Other volunteers helped to salvage materials, scouted a likely spot, and sought out required Park Authority approvals.

The greatest hurdle for the project volunteers was finding a support pole substantial enough to support the weight of the 40-by-40 inch platform, and long enough to place the platform at a height preferred by ospreys. When a recycled 50-foot utility pole became available, the team's problem was solved.

The challenge shifted to the installation crew to use available equipment to dig the six foot hole and raise the long pole, with the platform pre-attached. No bucket equipment was available. A mechanical auger attached to loader equipment quickly dug the hole to the depth required to give ample foundation. Safety guide ropes were attached to the pole; one providing part of the lift. A tractor fitted with a forklift, and with an



The nest platform's primary volunteer builder, Bill Beletsky (right) attaches it to the support assisted by Alex Guevara-Santes, Maynard Slicker, and Alan Hartman of Area 4 Maintenance Operations.

The mechanical auger quickly digs a six-foot hole to receive the nest's pole support, checked for required depth by maintenance operations employee Jerry Parsell.



A recycled 50-foot utility pole is moved to the site by maintenance operations employee Alex Guevara-Santos in advance of installation day.

assist from the loading machine for stability, maneuvered the pole slowly and gently, coaxing it up and into the hole, earning a cheer from watching crew and volunteers. A climbing guard to ward off predators will be added.

Ospreys, which are not as maneuverable as other hawks, need nest sites in open areas for an easy approach, which have a sturdy base, and are not susceptible to raids by ground predators such as raccoons and snakes. Also called, "fish hawks" for their preferred diet, they need to be near water. They typically build their nests on snags, high trees, and on human built platforms, such as channel markers, light posts and utility poles. Their nests are built with sticks, lined with grasses, vines,



County park authority team members Jerry Parsell, Maynard Slicker, Alan Hartman, and Alex Guevara-Santos and volunteer Bill Beletsky (second from right) with their completed installation

SEE OSPREY, PAGE 11

Osprey

FROM PAGE 10

sod, and sometimes plastic debris which can prove hazardous to the birds and their chicks.

The male collects the materials and the female arranges it. In the first years, the nest is relatively small, but the pair usually returns to the same nest year after year, adding to the nest size, which can reach a diameter of three to six feet and a considerable depth, up to 13 feet. They raise only one brood per season, with one to four eggs.

The large raptors, a species of hawk, have a wingspan of about four feet, but weigh only three to four pounds. They are often mistaken for their similarly white-headed, larger cousin, the Bald Eagle, which has a larger wingspan of up to 8.5 feet, and weighs 6 to 14 pounds.

Two nearby osprey nests, one on the former Nike site, and one in Occoquan Regional Park, have produced chicks in multiple seasons. Those birds, parents and juveniles, departed in September on their southern migration to South America or the Caribbean. Volunteers must await the return of the parents and prior years' ju-



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUNIE

In Spring, the team hopes to welcome more ospreys to the area, like this juvenile female rescued from entanglement this summer in Lorton.

veniles in the Spring, usually early March, to see if a pair will take up residence on the new platform. An added unknown is whether the juvenile female rescued in July in Lorton from plastic line entanglement and released in the Shenandoah river valley (see Connection, July 27, and August 19) will return to our area this Spring or next, or will choose a mate, and return to the Shenandoah establishing her own new family there.

Volunteers expect to train binoculars on the nest regularly in the Spring. The nest platform's location, just off the loop trail at the Central Green, will make it easy for all park users to join the Osprey watch.

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ENTERTAINMENT



The Haunted Trail at Workhouse Arts Center runs now through Oct. 31, 2023 in Lorton.



"Disney's Mary Poppins" will be featured by the Hayfield Dramahawks on Oct. 19-21, 2023 at Hayfield Secondary School in Alexandria.

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 hand-made 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://tallshipprovidence.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

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

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>

MONTH OF 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 experience! Launched in 2022, this autumnal aerial activity is now available on select evenings in 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.

NOW THRU 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.

NOW THRU OCT. 29

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>.

SEPT. 28 TO OCT. 22 (EXTENDED)

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

OCT. 6 TO OCT. 31

The Haunted Trail. Every Friday, Saturday and Sunday night starting at 6:30 p.m. At The Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. The Workhouse Arts Center celebrates its 10th annual Haunted Trail by bringing scares and laughs to the Halloween season. Haunt: Game Over immerses guests through a highly themed walk-through experience, as creepy characters deliver contactless scares in multiple scenes. Guests will travel in small groups via a timed entry for a frightening experience that brings them next to abandoned, historic buildings where they will encounter terrifying characters and sights that are not for the faint of heart. The spirits will get loud with live music on Fridays, Saturdays, and Halloween night, with a rotating schedule of band performances in the Rizer Pavilion, which also serves as the check-in area and 'virtual line' for Haunt entry. Food trucks, soft drinks, snacks, wine, beer, and themed-specialty drinks will be available for purchase on campus. Gates open at 6:30 p.m.; Final

groups will be dispatched by 10:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays; and 9:30 p.m. on Sundays.

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 18

Nefesh Mountain – Jewish/Bluegrass Band. 8:00 p.m. At Center-Stage at Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Nefesh combines elements of Appalachian bluegrass, Celtic folk and Eastern European melodies with messages of inclusivity, diversity and hope. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com.

THURSDAY/OCT. 19

Pickleball Mixer and Fundraiser. 12:30-3:30 p.m. At Worldgate Health Club & Spa, 13037 Worldgate Drive, Herndon. Join the Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia for their 2nd annual Pickleball Mixer & Fundraiser. Attendees of all playing levels are welcome. There will be a tutorial for beginners, competitive play for advanced players, two golf simulator stations, health refreshments, a smoothie bar, a silent auction, and lots of fun! The price is \$60 per ticket in advance and \$75 at the door. Call 703-281-0538 or <https://scnova.org/event/2023-scnova-pickleball-mixer-fundraiser> to register today.

OCT. 19-21

"Disney's Mary Poppins." 7 p.m. and 2 p.m. on Oct. 21. At Hayfield Secondary School 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. The Hayfield Dramahawks present Disney's Mary Poppins! It will be SUPER-CALIFRAGILICIOUS! Tickets can be purchased at hayfielddrama.com or at the door and concessions are also available.

FALL BOOK SALE

At Centreville Regional Library 14200 Saint Germain Dr., Centreville. Fiction, nonfiction, DVDs and audiobooks. Bag sale on Sunday; fill a grocery bag with books for \$10. Oct. 20, Friday, 1-5 p.m. Oct. 21, Saturday, 10-5 p.m. Oct. 22, Sunday, 1-4 p.m.

BONITA LESTINA OLD TOWN HALL PERFORMANCE SERIES

Enjoy an evening of music showcasing a variety of genres in the elegant interior of historic Old Town Hall (3999 University Drive) in the heart of Fairfax City. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. and performances begin at 8 p.m. and run from October to April. Admission is free. Visit: www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/

cultural-arts.

SCHEDULE

October 20: Barclay Brass - Brass Ensemble
November 3: Swingology - Jazz Bossa Nova, Manouche and Swing
November 17: Graham Breedlove – Blues
December 8: Marcolivia – Classical String Duo
January 5: Baltimore Composers Forum – Modern
January 19: Navy Band Wind Quintet – Classical
February 2: Kadencia – Puerto Rican Orchestra (part of the Chocolate Lovers Festival!)
February 16: Matt Trkula – Classical Guitar
March 8: Mandoleers – Mandolin and Guitar Orchestra
March 22: James & Victor – Jazz Duo/Steel Pan
April 5: Francesca Hurst – Solo Piano
April 19: Sylvan Waters Duo – Harp/Brass

THURSDAY/OCT 19

Artist Talk. 7-9 p.m. At McLean Project for the Arts Emerson and Atrium Galleries; 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. MPA Curator and Artistic Director Nancy Sausser will host an in-person Artist Talk. The talk will include artists featured in (Not) Strictly Painting, a juried biennial exhibition celebrating the depth and breadth of paintings—or works related in some way to painting—from artists throughout the mid-Atlantic area. Artist Talk RSVP – <https://tinyurl.com/notstrictlypaintingartisttalk>

FRIDAY/OCT. 20

Malpaso Dance Company. 8 p.m. At GMU's Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Tickets: \$48, \$41, \$29; half-price for youth through Grade 12. Since forming in 2012, this classically trained Cuban dance troupe has ascended to the top of contemporary dance with performances that are as technically brilliant as they are passionately expressive. Visit cfa.gmu.edu.

OCT. 20-22

"Jesus Christ Superstar." At Capital One Hall, Tysons Corner. Friday, Oct. 20 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 21, at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Sunday Oct. 22 at 12 p.m. and 6 p.m. Celebrating its 50th Anniversary, a new production of the iconic musical phenomenon returns to the stage. Featuring award-winning lyrics by Tim Rice and music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, Jesus Christ Superstar is set against the backdrop of an extraordinary series of events during the final weeks in the life

ENTERTAINMENT



“Songwriter City” featuring Lee Thomas Miller and Wendell Mobley can be seen on Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023 at the McLean Community Center.

of Jesus Christ as seen through the eyes of Judas. Reflecting the rock roots that defined a generation, the legendary score includes, ‘I Don’t Know How to Love Him,’ ‘Gethsemane’ and ‘Superstar.’ Visit capitalonehall.com.

OCT. 20-29

“9 to 5 The Musical.” At GMU’s Harris Theatre 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. October 20, 21, 27, 28 at 8 p.m.; October 22, 29 at 2 p.m. George Mason University’s School of Theater is presenting “9 to 5 The Musical,” an exciting musical adaptation of the comedy film. Directed by Rex Daugherty (Artistic Director of Theatre, Solas Nua; MFA, Directing, George Mason University), Music Directed by Joe Walsh, Choreographed by Ariel Kraje, and performed by the cast of Mason theater students, the humorous energy and captivating performance will leave audiences in awe. Visit the website: <https://cvpa.calendar.gmu.edu/9-to-5-the-musical>.

“ON GOLDEN POND”

Oct. 20, 21, 27, 28; Nov. 3, 4 at 8 p.m.; 2 p.m. on Oct. 29 and Nov. 5. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, Vienna. Presented by the Vienna Theatre Company and Vienna Department of Parks and Recreation. Directed by Terri Ritchey; Produced by Reece Smyth and Pete Storck. Visit www.viennatheatercompany.org.

SATURDAY/OCT. 21

Maniac Pumpkin Carvers. 12-6 p.m. At the Tysons Corner Center Fall Festival, McLean. Tysons Corner Center announces a free family-friendly Fall Festival on The Plaza. Candytopia, a sweet interactive experience, located on the lower level of the center, across from H&M will feature a photo booth for everyone to enjoy. Kid-friendly activities will include a Best Buddies craft corner and more, while adults can try the LUSH bath bomb experience and enjoy Barrel & Bushel beer garden, along with other participating vendors.

SATURDAY/OCT. 21

“Songwriter City.” 7 p.m. Featuring Lee Thomas Miller and Wendell Mobley. Presented by The Alden, at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Connect to the songs. Connect to the stories behind them. Connect with the songwriters who wrote them. Get a glimpse into the life of a Nashville songwriter and the songs that you’ve heard on the radio for years. Visit www.mcleancenter.org.

OCT. 21-22

Goblin Golf. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Halloween arrives early at the Burke Lake Park mini golf course. Enjoy a festive-themed experience with Halloween treats included. Our ghosts and goblins will be appearing throughout the day from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Bring a date, a friend or the whole family. This mini golf experience is fun for everyone! Buy your tickets before they sell out! Cost is \$10. Call 703-323-6600.

SUNDAY/OCT. 22

Halloween Carnival. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Enjoy multiple Halloween Themed games. In addition to candy and fun, silly, and weird Halloween prizes, win tickets to place in the box of different prize baskets. There will be several to choose from and you do not need to be present to win. Costumes are optional; please bring a Trick or Treat bag to collect your goodies. Additional instructions for the event and game play will be provided at the admissions table. Adults \$6.00 (13 and above); Youth \$3.00 (5 to 12); Children FREE (4 and under). Admissions will open at 12:30. Visit www.fairfax-station.org.

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 25

Tea & Talk. 11 a.m. At McLean Project for the Arts Emerson and Atrium Galleries; 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. MPA Curator and Artistic

Director Nancy Sausser will host a Tea & Talk, presented by the Rotary Club of McLean. Guests are invited to enjoy a cup of tea and discuss (Not) Strictly Painting 14 with the MPA team. Tea & Talk RSVP – <https://tinyurl.com/not-strictlypaintingteandtalk>

FRIDAY/OCT. 27

Djembe Drumming Family Workshop Featuring Master Artist Kofi Dennis. 7 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. No experience necessary. Kofi Dennis will teach participants basic drumming skills and the workshop will end with a group drum circle. Families with children (age 8+) can participate together. Drums will be provided for use. Visit www.mcleancenter.org.

FRIDAY/OCT. 27

Still Life Artist Anna Katalina. 11 a.m. At the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. McLean Art Society is honored to present Anna Katalina, giving a demonstration of how to transfer a drawing or image from paper to canvas, the first step in creating her distinctly realistic and luminous paintings. Katalina has been called “a modern Dutch Master,” influenced by the 17th century small Dutch paintings. Her work draws from European travel, music, literature, and the performing arts, while striking a balance between traditional and modern and exploring both serious and lighthearted themes.

OCT. 27-28

Halloween on the Farm. At Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Celebrate Halloween and trick-or-treat on the farm! Enjoy farm animals, play games and make crafts. The program runs in one-hour time slots and costs \$10 per person. For more informa-

tion, visit the Frying Pan Farm Park website or call 703-437-9101.

SATURDAY/OCT. 28

Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra with Christian McBride. 8 p.m. At GMU’s Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Christian McBride joins the Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra led by founder, artistic director, and virtuoso saxophonist Jim Carroll, in an unforgettable night of bravado, improvisation, and jazz swagger. Tickets: \$50, \$43, \$30; half-price for youth through Grade 12. Visit cfa.gmu.edu.

SATURDAY/OCT. 28

Halloween at The Perch. 12-8 p.m. At 1805 Capital One Drive, 11th Floor, Tysons Corner. Kids party from 12-4 p.m. Adult costume contest at 4-8 p.m. Join in the ultimate Halloween costume party, featuring spooky golf, pumpkin and face painting, seasonal beverages, pumpkin pie eating contests and more.

SATURDAY/OCT. 28

Halloween Bash at South Run Rec Center, 7550 Reservation Drive, Springfield. Celebrate the season and get moving at the South Run Rec Center Halloween Bash. This event features the Monter Mash 5K Dash, Halloween Fun Run 1-Mile, and Spooktacular Tiny Tot Trot with moon bounce and obstacle course for ages 2-4. For more information, visit the South Run Rec Center website or call 703-866-0566.

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Lamb Center Holds Banquet Fundraiser

FROM PAGE 3

my first instinct was not to say yes. We had a number of other, priority projects underway and we know the immense challenges of multilayered financing, addressing community concerns and navigating complex operational needs.”

However, stressed McAfee, “I truly believe Divine intervention advanced this project to the very top in the way it moved so many people’s hearts and minds and committed them to this cause.” She said affordable-housing projects require “champions and partners” to help them cross the finish line, and average 5-7 years to do so.

“From conception to completion, it takes a tremendous amount of patience and perseverance,” said McAfee. “But over the past 20 months, I’ve been astounded by the swift progress we’ve made on Beacon Landing.” She then praised the Wesley/The Lamb Center team, as well as “wide-ranging community support,” plus the City’s efficient approvals process and early commitment of financing necessary to secure the county resources required to obtain state and federal money.

McAfee also thanked former and current Fairfax City Mayors, David Meyer and Catherine Read, City Council, the county’s Board of Supervisors, and Tom Fleetwood, director of the county’s Redevelopment and Housing Authority. In addition, she thanked Virginia Housing, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11th) for “adding chairs, instead of removing them, when the music stopped.”

She said nationwide data and studies show that when people receive permanent, supportive housing first – and then the services they need to address underlying and often persistent trauma – they tend to remain housed, many years later. “Thank you all for being part of this journey,” said McAfee. “We look forward to our shared commitment to Hope and a Future [the banquet’s theme] being realized through Beacon Landing.”

Jennifer Edwards, The Lamb Center’s intake coordinator, said she needs to ask new arrivals deeply personal questions about their life history and current challenges, while trying to develop trust and rapport with them in a short time. “Sometimes, we cry together; sometimes, we pray together,” she said. “And sometimes, we even find something we can laugh about. After that, I share information about our services and guidelines, invite them to join our support groups and connect them with a case manager.”

Edwards also helps guests apply for food and medical benefits, plus vital documents such as their birth certificates and I.D. and Social Security cards. Since their journey to housing can easily take a year, TLC offers them job opportunities and connects them to other community resources.

“People often ask me how I can do this work,” said Edwards. “There are days when I go home in tears; But it’s an absolute privilege to take this first step with our guests. I hold their stories close to my heart and I pray over them every day. But the Lord is with me, every step of the way, and I rely on our team of experienced case managers for support and guidance.”

When people contribute to The Lamb Center, she said, they help the guests feel seen, heard and valued by the community. With financial support, said Edwards, “We can connect them to the resources they need to move toward housing, employment and greater self-sufficiency.”

TLC Executive Director Tara Ruskowski said the facility served a record 1,821 individuals last year. “Sadly, many of the new guests we’re seeing are elderly – some with disabilities, chronic diseases and other health and mobility challenges,” she explained. She attributed the increase in homelessness to the ending of pandemic-fueled, emergency-housing programs and eviction moratoriums.

“It’s been said that TLC is ‘God’s emergency room,’ and we embrace the opportunities to serve and welcome folks and be a place of healing and transformation,” said Ruskowski. “To meet the higher demand, we’re expanding our staff and programming and also added a pastoral director to ensure the heart of our ministry remains rooted in God’s love.”

Calling Beacon Landing the centerpiece of The Lamb Center’s expansion, she thanked Wesley for saying yes to their partnership. “The old Hy-Way Motel will be demolished, probably in March 2024; then that fall, the new building will break ground,” said Ruskowski. “Construction is expected to take about 24 months, so we look to early 2026 for the first residents to move in.

“But tonight is about helping TLC meet today’s needs, as we navigate increased demand for meals, showers, medical and dental services, and case management. There’s no Lamb Center without you – gifts from individuals cover the largest share of our operating expenses. Thank you for your generosity and prayers.” Lamb Center Board member and volunteer Shannon Allen said guests’ success stories (see sidebar) inspire and challenge everyone there. And she thanked the “army of volunteers who mobilize daily to help the most vulnerable among us,” plus TLC staff “who serve our guests with wisdom, love and compassionate hearts.”

Last year, The Lamb Center served 30,488 meals, 151 people received health-clinic appointments, 69 got dental care, 37 participated in the City Jobs program (where they’re paid for work done for Fairfax City), and 65 moved into permanent housing. But none of these things can happen, said Allen, unless those needing help walk inside the building.

“TLC’s front door is a powerful symbol of hope,” she said. “The choice to enter is offered to every person, no matter their look, language or story. People line up there before the day even begins. No one looks alike, and they all carry different burdens – and yet, they’re united by hopeful anticipation. TLC is doing valuable, lifegiving work, but it needs the community to help keep that door open.”

In his closing prayer, Deacon Dave Larrabee, TLC’s pastoral director, asked God to “keep all our guests safe while they’re outside, and lift up our journey to permanent, supportive housing.”

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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.

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Couch The Entire Meal



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I just got my dog's refrigerated food delivered – for the first time. Multiple times already I have gotten my dog's 30lb bag of dry food delivered. For much longer we have been getting our cats wet food, dry food delivered, and recently, thanks to Martha Stewart, we're getting the cats' litter delivered as well. Additionally, as concerns the critters (four cats and one dog), their various prescription medications (flea and tick, heartworm, and kitty Prozac), and miscellaneous animal accessories (waste bags, treats, toys, and bowls) are likewise delivered. During the early stages of the pandemic, we were getting our groceries delivered (no more though), also we were members of a wine-delivery club; monthly they'd replenish our diminishing inventory. Back to us humans, I also get my prescription medication (including my cancer drug), office supplies/computer paper, and most importantly, I get my jellybeans all delivered to my home. (Crucial that I have an ample supply of "Jelly Bellies" as one of the side effects of my thyroid cancer medication is dry mouth/saliva issues so that chocolate doesn't have the same effect on me/satiate in my mouth as it has for the past 65 years or so.) As a result, I still need sweets; ergo the jellybeans, but certain long-standing (and sitting) standards have fallen out of favor. And if today is any indication, we'll also be receiving via the mail, all my wife's beauty products, and horse supplies which will segue nice into the monthly – or so, delivery of clothes – with seasonal accommodations, she's been receiving for a few years now. And even automobiles – via the "car vending machines" can be delivered to your door. In fact, one can pretty much have your cake and eat it too, and have it delivered to your home as well. And finally – for the sake of this article; (this is not an entire list, just the more recent conveniences) travel channels nightly feature and boast destinations/locations from all over the world advertising that one doesn't have to leave home to have adventure and exposure. But wrapping up this paragraph: where's the fun in all of this? Life is for living, not sitting, right?

Getting in the game is way better than sitting on the sidelines/sitting on your couch. Although, the couch may be as far as anybody ever gets – or needs to get anymore. Granted, the couch is likely very comfortable, positioned in front of a rather large television (perhaps even with surround sound/stereo sound), near a bathroom, unaffected by weather and/or traffic/parking hassles, way less expensive than the real thing, close to the refrigerator/snacks/adult beverages, and finally, you don't have to mingle with the masses – which for some might be a good thing. Present company occasionally included.

Despite all these push-button-type amenities, I'm beginning to realize that the availability of all these modern conveniences is making Kenny a dull boy, and as the Brits say: "a bit of a dismal Jimmy." All I must do is to mind my own business, but not necessarily my own manners, and have a cell phone handy, as all I really need to see and do, I can have done and delivered without ever leaving my home. Granted, I can't get my passport stamped but if I pick my channels carefully, I never have to pack my bags and try to locate the proper size plastic bag in which to pack my toiletries. The world isn't necessarily inconvenient, but neither does it typically offer all the comforts of home. But if those comforts and conveniences matter more than touching and seeing and feeling the real thing than perhaps a Barcalounger is in your future.

Still, convenience may be one thing – and an important thing at that, but one's preference/inclination might be quite another. Certainly, as written above, I can appreciate – and benefit from the many super-easy ways there are to consume nowadays. And consume without lifting a finger; well likely lifting a hand to turn a doorknob and open the front door to accept your delivery and/or move your package from porch to pantry. Not only will most of this activity be out of sight, but the effect of it will be that you're increasingly out of touch. There has always been delivery of stuff, but the pandemic – and Amazon (lest not forget) really ratcheted up the delivery options and accommodations possible for man, woman, and child – and of course, business. Now however, after years are calling it in, so to speak and having been there and done that – repeatedly, I'm beginning to reassess. Do I want to stay home and disconnect, or do I want to engage and interact with my fellow man/woman? And though it may not always be pleasant to do so, getting out and about, "mushrooming" (being in a dark and putrid environment) is not exactly ideal either.

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

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