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PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

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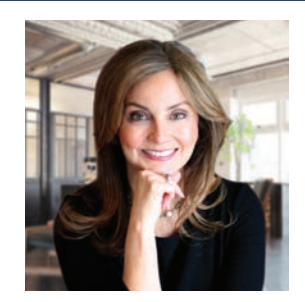
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Park specialist and the day's tour guide, Asia Stroud, points out the planned path for the First Day Hike



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10616 Good Spring Ave, Great Falls \$2,400,000



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9507 Neuse Way, Great Falls \$1,650,000



11106 Rich Meadow Dr, Great Falls \$1,400,000



1112 Riva Ridge Dr, Great Falls \$1,080,000



616 Walker Hill Ln, Great Falls \$1,300,000



1131 Buchanan St, McLean \$3,250,000



1209 Alps Dr, McLean \$2,725,000



10624 Cavalcade St, Great Falls \$985,000



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NEWS

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



About 70 humans and two canines accepted the first day hike challenge

First Day Hikes

A tradition of beginning the year on the right foot.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Many Virginians, like others across the nation, take on the tradition of participating in a first day hike. State parks offer free admission for the first day, and often guided hikes. In Fairfax County, Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck, chair of the Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee, started his own First Day Hike tradition



Park specialist and the day's tour guide, Asia Stroud, points out the planned path for the First Day Hike



NOVA Parks Michael Nardolilli (left) and Matt Felperin (right) join Supervisor Dan Storck in talking about NOVA Parks system and history

on New Year's Day several years ago. Inviting all to join in, this year about 70 human hikers, and two canines took on the challenge.

Morning hikers met at Pohick Bay Regional Park, part of the NOVA Parks system. Participants had the option of either a 2.5 mile or 4 mile loop trail experience. Those accepting the longer challenge had, as their

reward, a brief rest stop at a Pohick Bay overlook to take in the beauty of the sky reflected on the water.

For those who could not join in to walk on the first day of 2024, the trails of our many area parks await to assist all to take a first step toward healthy outdoor exercise and an opportunity to commune with nature.

Fairfax NAACP President Michelle Leete – A Champion for Civil Rights

The Fairfax County NAACP branch announced the sudden passing of its president, Michelle Leete, last weekend. "The esteemed president and unwavering advocate for civil rights departed this world over the weekend, leaving a void in the hearts of those she served alongside and a legacy of tireless dedication to justice, equality, and community empowerment," the Fairfax County NAACP said. "The Fairfax County NAACP branch family is grieving this significant loss, and we extend our deepest condolences to President Leete's family, loved ones, colleagues, and the entire community she served so passionately."

Leete was an active NAACP Fairfax County branch member and a member of its Executive



Michelle Leete

Committee since 2013, President Leete served in many capacities, including Treasurer and Vice President, before being elected President for the 2023-2024 term.

"She was an unwavering leader in the fight for social justice and police reform, and a wonderful human being," said Diane Burkley Alejandro of ACLU People Power Fairfax. "Michelle will be sorely missed."

President Michelle Leete may be gone, but her indomitable spirit will forever remain in the hearts of those she inspired and served, said the NAACP statement.

Details regarding memorial arrangements and community gatherings were not available on Tuesday when the Connection went to press.



FILE PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax NAACP President Michelle Leete, right, at a vigil for Timothy Johnson in April 2023. Johnson was shot dead by Fairfax County police. Leete grips the hand of Johnson's mother, Melissa. Leete died unexpectedly last week.

MLK DAY

The Upcoming 2024 Reston Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II will present keynote address.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, Yale Divinity School professor, an advocate for civil rights and author, will deliver the keynote address at the 2024 Reston Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration on Monday, Jan. 15, at 11 a.m.

Beverly Cosham, the chair of the Reston Community Center's board, said more is needed to complete Dr. King's work. "More remains ... to achieve the vision of a 'beloved community' that Martin Luther King called us to become," Cosham said.

Barber supports and promotes various workers' and women's rights and those of people with disabilities. He currently holds the position of president at Repairers of the Breach, serves as co-chair for the National Poor People's Campaign, and has previously served as the president of the NAACP North Carolina chapter.

Barber has written three books, the latest, "We Are Called to Be a Movement," (Workman Publishing Company, 2020). The book will be available for purchase following his presentation.

The 2024 Reston Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration offers a variety of events, activities, and projects suitable for families and individuals of all ages.

RCC Events for MLK Day Saturday, January 13

9 a.m., Community Service Projects at the Cathy Hudgins Community Center at Southgate, 12125 Pinecrest Road, Reston; 6+, free. Reston and Cornerstones benefit from these projects. Contact Ha Brock at 703-435-7986 or ha@reston.org to volunteer.

4 p.m., Reston Community Orchestra Annual Musical Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at RCC Hunters Woods Community Room; \$18 senior/\$25 adult; free for youth and military. Sopranos Alia Waheed, Beverly Cosham, Dr. Gilbert Pryor, and Al Fatih Academy students perform. One of the four RCO conductor finalists, Mark Irchai, will lead this concert. Tickets are available at the RCC Box Office.

Sunday, January 14

2 p.m., Dan and Claudia Zanes at CenterStage at RCC Hunters Woods; all ages, \$15 Reston/\$20 Non-Reston. Grammy Award-winner Dan Zanes and Haitian American jazz vocalist Claudia Zanes perform old and new songs in this interactive show. The audience can dance and sing in the casual, educationally festive atmosphere. Tickets are available at the RCC Box Office.



FILE PHOTO 2020 BY MERCIA HOBSON

Volunteers make bag lunches for clients at Embry Rucker Community Shelter in Reston as one of the community service projects held at Southgate Community Center (later renamed the Cathy Hudgins Community Center at Southgate) as part of the 2020 Reston Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration.



FILE PHOTO 2020 BY MIKE OLSON

Students from Al Fatih Academy recite Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech during Reston Community Orchestra "Keeping the Dream: 14th Annual Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr."

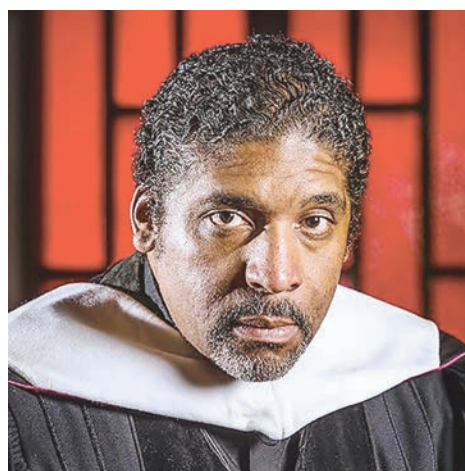
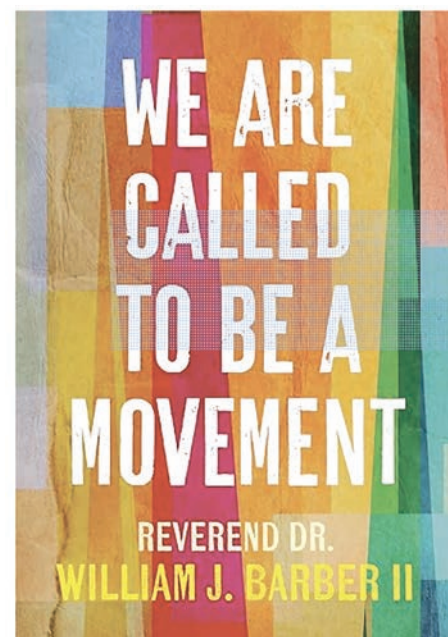


PHOTO VIA AMAZON

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, president of Repairers of the Breach and co-chair of the National Poor People's Campaign, will deliver the keynote address at the 2024 Reston Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration

Monday, January 15

10:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., MLK Birthday Celebration Especially for Youth at RCC Hunters Woods; 6–12 years old, free; registration is required; option to register at the door



SCREENSHOT VIA AMAZON

Barber W. J. (2020) "We Are Called to Be a Movement" Workman Publishing Company, which will be sold after his presentation.

if space allows. Dr. King and Civil Rights Movement-themed videos and crafts for kids. Lunch provided.

11 a.m., Sold-Out: Keynote by William J. Barber II at RCC Hunters Woods: CenterStage The box office will start a ticket waitlist at 10 a.m. Yale Divinity School professor William J. Barber II has pastored Greenleaf Christian Church since 1993. Civil rights and workers' and women's rights are among causes he advocates. A lunch follows in the community room.

HOSTING: Cathy Hudgins Community Center at Southgate, Cornerstones, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services, The Closet, Hunter Mill District Supervisor Walter Alcorn, Reston Association, Reston Community Orchestra, and neighborhood schools partner to host the Reston Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration weekend. Contact RCC Offsite and Collaboration Director Maggie Parker at 703-390-6147 or Margaret.Parker@fairfaxcounty.gov for details. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com or call 703-476-4500 to register for programs.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Healthy Resolutions in 2024

How to reach and keep your New Year's Resolutions.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Tis the season for New Year's Resolutions, when couch potatoes dream of running the Marine Corps Marathon by October and mothers aim to shed 50 pounds in time for their daughter's June wedding. From the latest phone app to the ideal sunscreen ingredients, health and well-being experts across Northern Virginia offer fresh perspectives for achieving realistic goals.

"When I work with clients we start with tiny steps and find a tracking system to chart their progress. Whether or not you use one of the latest apps or simply a pencil and a piece of paper, it's important to find a system that works

for you," advises Health Coach and therapist Marianna Cardozo, MSW, Healthy Living Program Coordinator for Arlington County Dept. of Human Services. "When someone wants to lose weight or improve their health with exercise, but is currently doing nothing, rather than saying 'I want to run a 5K' I start by asking them to set a goal of a 10-minute walk each day.

One way to turn those 10 minutes of movement into 30 minutes or more is immersing yourself in nature, suggests personal trainer Gerald Mason.

"I often take my clients to Great Falls Park, Virginia. The views are breathtaking. When they're taking in the waterfalls they sometimes forget that they are exercising. Whether you're walking by yourself or with a group of friends, the natural surroundings are so stunning that improving your fitness won't seem like a grueling activity at all."

For those who want to improve their flexibility, Jennifer Disano, Executive Director, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), George Mason University suggests putting



PHOTO COURTESY OF OLLI

Practicing chair yoga can benefit those who want to improve their flexibility in 2024 said Jennifer Disano, Executive Director of OLLI at George Mason University.

a spin on age old practice. "Chair yoga is designed for people with mobility limitations. The class includes gentle yoga, stretching exercises, and breathing exercises."

OLLI is one stop shop for those looking for looking to improve or maintain their wellbeing through social engagement and educational enrichment.

Nutritionist and personal chef Jen Smith of Chantilly emphasizes

the importance of hydration for good health. "Start your day by adding a glass of warm lemon water to your morning routine and gradually increase your water intake throughout the day. Carry a water bottle and set reminders to sip regularly."

Don't forget about sunscreen, even during winter, warns esthetician, Valentina Alvarez. "Look for sunscreens with broad-spectrum

protection against both UVA and UVB rays. Ingredients like zinc oxide and titanium dioxide provide effective protection, and antioxidants like vitamins C and E can enhance their efficacy."

"You have to be kind to yourself," adds Cardozo. "When you have a setback you have to remember that life happens. You can get back on track but should honor and celebrate your health.

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Ken Plum: Earning the Public's Trust

BY NANCY MORGAN
BIGMONEYOUTVA

After 50 years in public service to Virginia as a teacher, as the Fairfax County Public Schools Supervisor, and as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates for 44 years, Delegate Ken Plum, is retiring. Plum has worked tirelessly through the highs and lows of crafting public policy in our Commonwealth to make life better for all Virginians.

One of Plum's most steadfast and transformative efforts came to fruition during the 2020 General Assembly. In 2020 Virginia approved a constitutional amendment to improve Virginia's redistricting process. As always, redrawing our voting lines was difficult, but in 2021 our final maps became clearly fairer. With voting districts now representing real communities rather than political interests, we should see faster and better progress toward many solutions that Plum championed in transportation, criminal justice, gun safety, and public school funding.

I'm sure that Plum would agree that anytime we can improve our democratic process, everyday citizens strengthen their influence in state government. This is critical to ensure that our public policies balance the interests of all Virginians and ensure that everyone has an equal voice. Next steps in strengthening Virginia's democracy are proper election reforms to address the outsized influence of money in

our elections and investing in ethics guardrails for our legislators.

Today, Virginia finds itself among the worst-performing states in the union when it comes to transparency and accountability to its citizens. This assessment comes from the non-partisan group, Coalition for Integrity, which ranked Virginia practically at the bottom -- in 46th place. Their report notes that Virginia's campaign finance laws were among the weakest in the country, and that Virginia is one of only five states with no campaign finance limits. These problems are compounded by a lack of regulatory authority in the Department of Elections to enforce existing laws. Meanwhile, our ethics agencies, which are supposed to ensure that no interest comes before the public interest, are routinely undermined by their lack of power to investigate reports of wrongdoing by legislators or to impose sanctions. Ethics agency staff can be dismissed without cause, which itself is an ethics violation.

After witnessing one of the most expensive and tumultuous elections in Virginia's history, citizens are asking for commonsense campaign finance bills to get our legislature back on track. We need limits on campaign donations, possibly coupled with public financing of elections. This would allow the best and the brightest candidates, of all walks of life, to run against opponents who are funded by special interests. According to a 2021 Wason Center poll, 88% of Virginians support disclosure of dark money advertising and 73% support reasonable re-

strictions on personal use of campaign funds. These citizen values should also be included in any reform measure.

Campaign finance reforms, along with long-needed ethics reforms, have been proposed for decades, both in Governor Wilder's 1994 "Commission Report on Campaign Finance Reform" as well as an "Integrity and Public Confidence" report commissioned by Governor McAuliffe in 2014. Both commissions recommended key policy reforms critical to building public trust. Currently, the Virginia Ethics Advisory Council is simply pointing out the boundaries of our ethics laws and telling legislators how they can avoid penalties for accepting gifts. As it stands, our rules are opaque, and legislators can submit inaccurate, incomplete financial disclosure statements without risk of penalty. We need ethical standards and a commission with some real regulatory power to hold legislators accountable to the rules -- and the Virginians they were elected to represent.

In recognition of Ken Plum's remarkable commitment to good governance, we hope that during the 2024 legislative session Virginia can pass laws that will build public trust in Virginia's governing institutions. Other states have implemented needed reforms and improved their transparency and accountability to voters. Now is the time to follow Ken Plum's example by establishing similar commonsense and enforceable campaign finance and ethics laws in Virginia.

[HTTPS://WWW.BIGMONEYOUTVA.ORG/](https://www.bigmoneyoutva.org/)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Fairfax County's Data Center Alley

Fairfax County is quietly creating their own Data Center Alley. Since 2021, the Board of Supervisors has approved (or has allowed to be built by-right) over 4.3 million square feet of data centers -- that's 75 NFL football fields -- in the Sully district alone. Almost all of this rapid growth is along the L-shape of Route 28, from McLearen Road to Route 50 west to Pleasant Valley Road, with more to come.

The negative impacts of these 75- to 100-foot tall data centers on nearby residents won't be apparent for several years since not a single one is operational, mostly due to the inability of Dominion Energy and NOVEC to meet the electrical demand.

And now the first ever, 110-foot tall, data center that has county-wide ramifications, is up for a vote by the Board of Supervisors at the Public Hearing for application RZ 2022-SU-00019 / SE 2022-SU-00038 on Jan. 23 (contact Clerk-ToTheBOS@fairfaxcounty.gov for info, ways to testify and to ask your Supervisor to vote NO).

The taller the data center, the more challenging the cooling requirements which means more

rooftop HVACs, more external noise and more electricity. Three new substations and miles of transmission lines are required for those already approved, and a fourth substation and transmission lines are needed for RZ 2022-SU-00019, but Fairfax County is choosing not to consider electricity when approving data centers.

Any Supervisor that is concerned about the environment or your electric bill is a hypocrite if they vote to approve RZ 2022-SU-00019. The unprecedentedly tall data center is the only facility in the county that is flirting with disaster by storing 148,500 gallons of diesel fuel/exhaust fluid for 27 air- and noise-polluting industrial generators adjacent to a tributary to our drinking water. Diesel spills or fires require chemicals and foam that are hazardous to the environment (especially water) and contain PFAs (forever chemicals). Substations and their towering transmission lines require land. The proposed Aviator to Takeoff substations required to power some of the data centers already under construction, will sacrifice nearly 6 acres of Resource

Protection Areas to run the transmission lines. In its load forecast to the State Corporation Commission, Dominion Energy admits "the increase is driven primarily by data centers" and assumes Virginia will pull out of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) to allow them to continue to use carbon-emitting resources to meet the demand. The electric companies are required by law to provide electricity to any approved con-

struction -- whether they are prepared to or not. And all consumers pay for the new infrastructure; they aren't even subsidized by the data centers that require it. In fact, per Dominion, data centers pay less per megawatt consumed.

Urge your Supervisor to vote NO to RZ 2022-SU-00019 / SE 2022-SU-00038.

Cynthia Shang
Chantilly, Virginia

Submit a Letter to the Editor

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Your name and town will be published with your letter, other personal information will not be shared. If you are a student, your school name, age and grade will also be published.

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BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Smiling after the ribbon cutting are participants including Doug Church, Stephen Motew, Meredith Porter, Erica Cervantes (with scissors), Harold Brown, Pat Herrity, Kathy Smith and Jennifer Rose.

Inova-GoHealth Urgent Care Opens in Greenbriar

Offers walk-in, virtual and scheduled appointments.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Whether people need same-day, walk-in or virtual medical care, they can now find it in Chantilly at the Inova-GoHealth Urgent Care in the Greenbriar Town Center. Located beside the Giant grocery store, it held a gala ribbon cutting Nov. 29, 2023 to mark its arrival in the community.

It opened Nov. 15, on the one-year anniversary of GoHealth in Virginia. Hours are Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m., and Saturday-Sunday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., and patients from 6 months and up are welcome. They may just come in or make an appointment at www.gohealthuc.com.

The facility is more than 2,500 square feet, with four exam rooms, plus an X-ray room. It has a rotating staff of four health-care providers comprised of doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners and physicians' assistants. And if a patient needs to see a specialist, GoHealth can make a direct referral to other doctors within the Inova healthcare system.

"We deal with illnesses, injuries, worker's comp cases, X-rays, sports physicals – the full gamut of urgent-care services," said Erica Cervantes, senior director of operations for the Inova GoHealth partnership in Virginia. "We've received a great reception here. The residents have embraced us, and we're so excited to be part of this charming community."

Harold Brown, GoHealth regional president, explained why Chantilly was chosen for this new center. "We're always looking to create access to healthcare," he said. "So with the number of people who live and

work in this community, it made sense for us to open here."

During the ceremony before the ribbon cutting, Cervantes addressed the attendees. She said GoHealth was happy to celebrate its one-year partnership anniversary with Inova. She also stressed that "We exist to serve our patients. And when they experience a sudden illness or injury and want to see a doctor within an hour – or squeeze in a last-minute sports physical on the way to practice – we make it easy to receive care."

"This center is one of 15 serving Northern Virginia, with more on the way," continued Cervantes. "Our neighbors living near this center are part of a much broader community, and every one of them is deserving of quality care – and access to that care."

Next, Dr. Meredith Porter, this center's medical director, said she loved "having everyone here to welcome and to open up this beautiful center with us. We deliver connected care, with every effort to improve access, overall cost and quality. We also offer more affordable care than our emergency department and yet deliver that same, high-quality care for which Inova is nationally recognized. And here in Greenbriar, we look forward to bringing outstanding care that's integrated to our Fair Oaks community which we're privileged to serve."

Dr. Stephen Motew, Inova's chief clinical officer, expressed appreciation for the Inova-GoHealth leadership team, the community support, first responders and primary-care providers. "This is our 15th center in a 12-month period," he said. "And that pace of growth is expected to continue as we focus on providing much-needed access to a seamless system of care for our communities and our patients."

SEE INOVA-GOHEALTH, PAGE 15

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Grand Opening of Paris Baguette in Herndon

Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce helps celebrate with ribbon cutting.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/
THE CONNECTION

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

A range of French-inspired freshly baked pastries, salads, sandwiches, and Lavazza coffee for takeout or dine-in abound at the recently opened Paris Baguette Bakery Café in Herndon.

On Friday, Dec. 15, Alma Causevic Siddiqui's childhood dream came true when the Dulles Chamber of Commerce hosted the bakery café's ribbon-cutting, ceremonially marking its opening. Family, friends, members of the chamber, bakery staff, and an elected official joined the new franchise in the celebration. Paris Baguette is located at 2324 Silver Arrow Way in the Arrowbrook Centre, a one-minute drive from the Dulles Toll Road and a 10-minute walk from the Innovation Center station on the Silver Line.

Paris Baguette boasts an elevated guest experience yet is a cozy bakery café with a staff of trained bakers and baristas. It is where family and friends can get together to enjoy various pastries, croissants, sandwiches, cakes, breads, and more. They can also purchase items to share later with family and friends.

According to Siddiqui, her love and passion for architecture and design correlate with her love of baking. There are many ways the two professions are alike if one looks closely. Both start with materials that, when combined make something more significant than the sum of its parts. Presentation is equally important in both professions, according to Nacht & Lewis, an innovative design firm, "We eat with our eyes first."

"I have worked in the construction industry, and for the longest time, I've thought about opening a bakery or a coffee shop... When I stumbled upon Paris Baguette, I immediately fell in love with the quality and variety of its products and knew I wanted to bring it to my local community," Siddiqui said. The upscale



Pastries and cakes at Paris Baguette, a bakery café franchise

bakery café's business plan assists her every step of the way.

Siddiqui chose Herndon because no other franchise locations are nearby, and the brand is growing throughout Virginia. "With the continued growth of Herndon's population, there will be an increase in business openings as well," she said.



Paris Baguette celebrates its opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Dec. 15, 2023. Front row from left, Art Anselene, retired town manager, Town of Herndon; Jeff Fairfield, executive director of The Ruth and Hal Launders Charitable Trust; Liana Llanos, baker at Paris Baguette; Alma Causevic Siddiqui and her husband, Farooq Siddiqui, Paris Baguette Herndon owners; Fairfax County Supervisor John W. Foust (D-Draneville); and (back row) John Mosesso, membership services Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Town of Herndon Appoints Director of Parks and Recreation

The Town of Herndon has named Bob Williams, CPRP, as director of Parks and Recreation. Williams replaces Cindy Roeder, who retired from the town this month after more than 20 years of dedicated service.

In his new post, Williams will be responsible for direction of the town's Parks and Recreation department, to include staff management, recreation program planning and development, facilities operation and maintenance, and capital improvement planning. Williams will also oversee operations of Chestnut Grove Cemetery. It will be his job to foster collaborative relationships with Herndon's sports, schools, arts, non-profit and business organizations. He will also provide leadership and oversight to the department's five operating divisions: administration, recreation programs, facilities, aquatics and parks.



Bob Williams

Williams will report to Town Manager Bill Ashton and will serve as a member of the town's management team. "No question, Cindy Roeder's shoes are hard to fill," Ashton said.

Williams has most recently served as director of Parks and Recreation for Martinsburg-Berkeley County, where he created the department's first strategic and master plan and developed improved processes that greatly increased productivity as well as community and employee engagement. Previously, he held positions of increasing responsibility in

the parks and recreation divisions of Alexandria, VA; Licking County, OH; and Chester County, PA. He is a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP) and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Parks and Recreation from Slippery Rock University and a Master of Science degree in Nonprofit Management from Robert Morris University.

Teen Charged with Burglary, Intent to Rape

Fairfax County police say a 911 hang-up phone call led to the arrest of a 16-year-old who allegedly broke into a home with the intent to sexually assault an elderly woman. After receiving the call, Dec. 23, at 10:30 p.m., officers responded to a home in the 14600 block of Northwest Place in Chantilly.

There, an officer from the Sully District Police Station found the distraught homeowner being followed by the teen inside her home. Police say he claimed to be her grandson, but she denied it and the officer tried to detain him. He attempted to flee but was quickly taken into custody.

Detectives from the Major Crimes Bureau determined that the woman heard a knock on her door and was confronted by the juvenile suspect, who then

allegedly forced his way into the home. According to police, the woman "tried to call 911 but was [reportedly] assaulted by the suspect, preventing her from relaying information. The suspect forced the victim to a bedroom and his further assault was stopped when officers arrived."

Police charged the teen with burglary with intent to rape, abduction with intent to defile, preventing a 911 call, and assault and battery.

Detectives are asking anyone with information about this incident to call the Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 3. Tips may also be submitted anonymously via Crime Solvers by phoning 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

— BONNIE HOBBS

RESTAURANT

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS



Mayor Catherine Read is flanked by John and Ellie Kim.



The official ribbon cutting for QUI Korean BBQ restaurant.

QUI Korean BBQ Makes a Big Splash in Fairfax

Customers love the delicious food and cool ambiance.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Featuring quality ingredients and authentic cuisine, The QUI Korean BBQ & Bar has become a huge hit in Fairfax City. And co-owners John and Ellie Kim couldn't be happier.

"The QUI brand started in 2020, and we're honored to come to Fairfax," said John Kim. "The Korean community here is tremendous, and we appreciate all the support from the City and mayor. We also have locations in Chantilly and Gainesville, and we chose to come to Fairfax because the Korean community is very vibrant here."

"We wanted to go with a set menu and something more upscale," he explained. "And we wanted to try different menu items here and bring a more unique taste to the Fairfax community."

At the restaurant's recent ribbon cutting at 10160 Fairfax Blvd., Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read welcomed QUI to the City, as did Tara Borwey, the City's Economic Development Programs Manager, and Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Jennifer Rose.

"I love this restaurant," said Borwey. "They've done a fantastic job of creating a wonderful barbecue place, and I'm glad they chose Fairfax City to open their restaurant."

"This place is so popular," said City Treasurer Tom Scibilia. "Whenever I drive by, it's always packed – so they must be doing something right."

What sets QUI apart from other restaurants, said QUI, is "the quality of the meat we use and the really good side dishes. We pay attention to all the small details in the side dishes with the same dedication to quality as we give to the large ones."

Pleased that business has been so good, he noted that, "Because of K-pop music, Korean culture is trending worldwide. So people come here to try out our food. And once



Enjoying their feast are (clockwise from left) two people named Anna Ko, Wanda Park, Maria Han and Hae Kim.

they do, it's game over. You're getting your food directly off the grill – cooked over an open fire, in front of you, in the middle of your table."

One of the most popular dishes, said Kim, is Bibim Bap – assorted, stir-fried vegetables with a fried egg on top and rice underneath, and then mixed with a spicy, Korean gochujang sauce. Another is Beef Bulgogi – thin-cut, ribeye steak marinated in soy sauce, garlic and onions.

"The meat comes with four sauces for dipping," said Kim. "And you can also get that dish with short ribs cut sideways. It's called L.A. Rib Galbi because it was made popular in Los Angeles. Most Americans start with these dishes because their tastebuds appreciate the flavors, and then they experiment with other menu items."

QUI also serves Korean, Japanese and American beers, plus red and white wines. But, said Kim, "The one we sell the most of is Soju, which is Korean rice wine. It comes in various flavors, including apple and yogurt."

Overall, he said QUI is great for gatherings because of the shared experience people enjoy there. "You're centered around a grill and cooking together, talking, flipping steak and eating. And it's an explosion of flavor in your mouth, while you're enjoying the camaraderie."



QUI Korean BBQ features a cool, modern vibe.

To Go

QUI Korean BBQ is at 10160 Fairfax Blvd., and reservations aren't usually needed. It's open Sunday-Thursday, noon-11 p.m., and Friday-Saturday, noon-midnight. QUI serves both lunch and dinner; but Monday-Friday, it's closed from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Kim also explained the origin of this type of cooking. "Korea was a poor country, so families would share their food together, such as a bowl of soup in the middle of the table," he said. "That's how it started."

He noted, as well, that the meal combo comes with free side dishes, such as salad, sauces, egg custard, corn cheese and pickled veggies called Ban Chan. And, he added, "You can build your meal any way you want – for example, as a lettuce wrap – with the food you like, and cooked to the temperature you prefer." To see the full menu, go to <https://theQUIkoreanbbq.com/>.

"When you want to have a meal in a unique way, this is the place to come," said Kim. "Everyone can have an inclusive experience in a warm and inviting atmosphere."

On a recent afternoon, Anna Ko was enjoying the Prime Combo, which includes L.A. Galbi, with four other women. And they cooked the meat themselves. "It's very good, and the beef is the best – it's fresh and top quality," she said. "I also love the salad

and the corn cheese. We went to the QUI in Chantilly and came here today for the first time. I'd recommend it to others because the food is tasty, the people are friendly and nice, and I love the cool atmosphere."

At another table, husband and wife Josue Godoy and Jennifer Martinez were dining on ribeye steak and L.A. Galbi. Godoy liked the side dishes, especially the pickled onions, cucumbers, jalapeños and radishes, plus Odeng – fish cakes with soy sauce, sesame seeds and bell peppers. "It's really delicious," he said.

It was their second time at QUI. "I hadn't tried a Korean barbecue place before," said Martinez. "And when Josue brought me here for the first time, it was really good. The meat was very tender and the sides were tasty. I'm gluten-free, so I also appreciated the salad and broccoli."

"The ribeye was cooked at the right temperature, and our waiter asked if I wanted some char on my short ribs," added Godoy. "So the servers are very knowledgeable. I've been to other Korean barbecue places, but this one is more relaxed, and I can have a conversation without screaming."

Agreeing, Martinez said, "I prefer a place that's calm and welcoming and where I can bring my family. And this restaurant has a very nice ambiance."

Fairfax High's Choral Cabaret is Friday

The Fairfax High Chorus invites the community to its free Choir Cabaret. This entertaining event is slated for this Friday, Jan. 12, at 7 p.m., in the school atrium (lobby).

Donate Hats, Scarves to Local Homeless

Through Jan. 31, Fairfax City is collecting hats and scarves for its local homeless population. Donations may be dropped off in the City Hall atrium at 10455 Armstrong St. in Fairfax.

Hidden in Plain Sight Program Is Jan. 17

Hidden in Plain Sight (HIPS) program is an in-person, interactive program for adults to learn about the signs of risky behavior in teens and young adults. It touches on drug and alcohol use, mental-health concerns, eating disorders, risky sexual behaviors and more. And it'll be offered Wednesday, Jan. 17, from 6-8:15 p.m. at the Sully District Police Station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly.

The PowerPoint presentation details red flags and how they are indicative of, or used in, risky behavior. Attendees will receive information about up-to-date statistics and local trends, and law enforcement officers will share their experiences in the local community identifying risky behavior and helping to put kids on the right path to a healthy life.

Registration is required, and seats are limited for this free event. Register at [https://bit.ly/sully-](https://bit.ly/sully-hips0124)

hips0124. Email PFC Meg Hawkins at FCPDHIPS@fairfaxcounty.gov with any questions or to set up a presentation for an organization, club or group.

GMU Opens New Mental Health Center

George Mason University's new Center for Community Mental Health is now open at 9900 Main St., Suite 400, in Fairfax City. It provides evidence-based, accessible and affordable therapy and testing services to those in need, regardless of income. The center works with people of various ages, including children as young as 5, and also addresses the mental-health needs of veterans.

Its Emotional Help Line provides free, anonymous and confidential support in both English (703-215-1898) and Spanish (703-914-3878). The line is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Learn more about the center at <https://ccmh.gmu.edu/>.

Car Seat Inspections on Jan. 18

Parents may get their children's car seats inspected on Thursday, Jan. 18, from 5-8:30 p.m., outside the Sully District Police Station. It's at 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. Inspections are done on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants should install the child safety seat themselves so the inspection can be performed. The seat will be properly re-installed, if necessary, and parents will be taught how to install the seat properly. Everyone is eligible. Another car-seat inspection is scheduled for Feb. 1, at the same place and time.

Reckless Driving Charged in Death of Lorton Man

A crash between a car and a motorcycle, two months ago, killed 27-year-old Zafeer Piracha of Lorton. And now, Fairfax County police charged Gael Cruchet, 53, of Ashburn in connection with his death.

The tragedy happened Nov. 16, 2023, at 9:01 p.m., in Centreville. Detectives said Cruchet was driving a 2016 Acura TLX northbound on Route 28, prior to Westfields Boulevard in Centreville, as was Piracha on a 2022 Kawasaki.

According to police, the Acura "struck Piracha, causing him to separate from the motorcycle." Piracha was pronounced dead at the scene, and Cruchet was taken to a local hospital for treatment of injuries not considered life-threatening. Afterward, officers continued to investigate whether speed and/or alcohol were factors in the incident.

As a result, detectives with the Crash Reconstruction Unit concluded that Cruchet was allegedly driving the Acura "well above the posted speed limit," prior to the crash. And on Dec. 15, police charged Cruchet with reckless driving – speeding more than 20 mph higher than the speed limit – which is a civil traffic offense, not a criminal felony.

— BONNIE HOBBS

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.

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/healthy-mindsfairfax or www.nami-north-ernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

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

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Robertson Indicted for Murder of Fairfax Man

Judge hears recording of his confession during hearing.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Aaron James Anthony Robertson didn't know Fairfax resident Luis Barahona Reyes, 50, before brutally attacking him. But Robertson, 30, had been drinking all day and had a temper. So when Reyes approached him and suggested something that angered Robertson, the Fairfax man paid for it with his life.

The details came out, Dec. 13, in Fairfax County General District Court, during Robertson's preliminary hearing on a charge of second-degree murder. And when it ended, Judge Lisa Mayne certified his case to the grand jury – which then indicted him.

Fairfax City Police Det. Joe Pittman, with the Major Crimes unit, testified that he was one of six detectives who responded June 10, 2023, at 9:21 a.m., to the crime scene. "I received a call about a body found behind 9715 Fairfax Blvd.," he said. Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Andrew Bolton then showed him five photos of that scene, which Pittman identified.

"At the rear of a single-level building under construction, we found red handprints on the back wall and in the parking lot," said the detective. "And there was a puddle of blood, 5-10 yards from the building, near the air-conditioning unit, and dragging marks – and two feet sticking out from cardboard boxes covered with bags."

Pittman said the victim was a fully clothed male with dark hair, "a large gash on the right side of his temple, an indentation on the right side of his head, and bruising on his face. He was on top of a mattress saturated with blood; I then saw wounds on his neck, as well." Police later identified him as Reyes.

After seeing footage from surveillance cameras there, Pittman said police identified Robertson as the suspect. He then identified the defendant in court.

Pittman also obtained a video showing both men riding on a City CUE bus before their encounter. Played in court, the video showed them on it, June 9, shortly after 11 p.m. Pittman said the nearest CUE bus stop to the crime scene was at Draper Drive, some 350 yards from where Reyes was found.

Robertson had no fixed address; but on June 11, the detective got a search warrant for his room at a Fair Oaks hotel where he was known to stay with his girlfriend. "We seized Reyes's shoes there," said Pittman. "The top and side of the right shoe was covered with blood, and a DNA examination identified it as belonging to Reyes." Bolton then entered the DNA report into evidence.

Pittman said police continued to investigate and talk to people in the vicinity of the crime scene. Eventually, they built a timeline of both men's whereabouts on June 9. On July 5, Pittman obtained an arrest warrant charging Robertson with second-degree murder; and the next day, Fairfax County police arrested him.

Then, on Sept. 12, Robertson asked Pittman to come to the jail and speak with him. He also said his attorney, Mike Sprano, said it was OK for him to talk to the police. So on Sept. 13, after being advised of

his Miranda rights, Robertson spoke to Pittman and another detective while being videotaped.

Some 17 minutes of that recording were played for the court. In it, Robertson explained what led up to Reyes's death and, in graphic detail, how he killed the Fairfax man.

He said he got into an argument with his fiancé on June 9, and she pepper-sprayed him, so he packed his things and left. "And from that morning, I was drinking that whole day, two to four beers at a time," said Robertson. "That night, I was drinking near Wawa [directly across the street from the crime scene] and didn't know where I'd go stay that night."

When he got off the bus, he said, a man [Reyes] was whistling behind him, but he kept walking. "He said, 'Hey,' and was speaking in Spanish," said Robertson. "He seemed like he needed help getting home." But then, said Robertson, "He [allegedly] said, 'Me and you go back there' and he pointed behind a building and [reportedly] said, 'Sex; I give you money.'"

"So I got upset," said Robertson. "We walked across the street, behind the building, and I put my bags down. I knocked him out and he hit his head hard. I took his beer and poured it over him and walked away. But I thought I should check on this dude."

Robertson said he returned, asked Reyes if he was all right and told him he wasn't gay. "He said something in Spanish, stood up near the wall and went in his pocket and got a small knife and lunged toward me with his right hand," said Robertson. "I told him to back up, but he lunged again."

"I hit him, knocked him down, took the knife out of his hand and started choking him. And I hit his head on the ground and kicked his head with my right foot. He stands up, but I kicked his butt and he fell over."

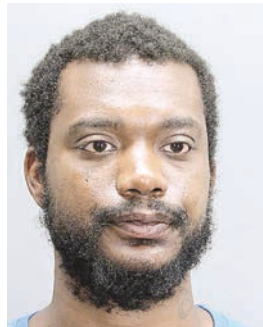
Next, Robertson described how he picked up a near-by brick and hit Reyes with it. And when it broke, he got another brick and continued battering Reyes with that one. Noticing the victim was still breathing, Robertson said he then used the man's knife to stab him.

Afterward, he said, "I left my bags there and walked into the 7-Eleven and washed the blood off my hands. I walked back over there and didn't know what to do. I never did nothing like that in my life. That wasn't my intention; I was scared. I got his arms and pulled him to the dumpster and covered him with cargo boxes and trash bags."

Robertson said he wanted to tell the police what happened because "I knew it was wrong. I didn't want to hurt that man, and I feel bad about it. I've been homeless for six years and was about to start a new job."

When the video ended, Det. Pittman described the knife as a small pocketknife with a 6-inch blade. He said Robertson told them he'd put it in a plastic bag and threw it in a sewer in Maryland, near his grandmother's house.

While cross-examining the detective, Sprano said Robertson told him he was scared when Reyes came at him with a knife and blacked out while he was hitting him. But Pittman said Robertson told police he remembered what he did, but not what his thinking was, at that time.



Robertson

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Presented by The Alden

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Celebration

Keynote Address

Michael Steele: "The Black
Experience & The American Dream"
Saturday, Jan. 13, 4 p.m.

Performance

Calvin Earl: "Music of the Civil
Rights Movement"
Sunday, Jan. 14, 2 p.m.

JAN
13

JAN
14

Presented by The Alden

Performing Arts Movie
Thursday, Jan. 18, 1 p.m.

JAN
18

The Old Firehouse Center

5th & 6th Grader Snowball Dance
Friday, Jan. 19 7 p.m.

JAN
19

Presented by The Alden

"The Never Too Late Show"
starring Don Reed
Saturday, Jan. 20, 7 p.m.

JAN
20

Presented by The Alden

Yvonne Chen, Piano "Music +
Literature: Murakami Music"
Sunday, Jan. 21, 2 p.m.

JAN
21

Presented by The Alden

"The Many Disguises of Robin
Hood" Youth Auditions
Monday-Tuesday,
Jan. 23-24, 7 p.m.

JAN
23-24

Closing Notice

MCC and OFC will be closed on Monday, Jan. 15, for
the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday.



The McLean
Community Center
mcleancenter.org

Home of The Alden Theatre
aldentheatre.org

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ENTERTAINMENT

THE MCLEAN TREES FOUNDATION, NEIGHBORHOOD TREES PROGRAM, WANTS TO HELP YOU PLANT A NATIVE TREE IN YOUR YARD!

Don't know how to plant a tree but want to support the environmental health of your community? Want your family to have the experience of planting a tree? If you live in McLean, the McLean Trees Foundation (MTF) (a local nonprofit) will help you select an appropriate native tree for your property, deliver the tree to your yard, help you plant it, provide information on maintenance, and even check back with you a few months after planting to see how your tree is doing. If you are interested in participating in this program to boost our native tree canopy in McLean, visit the website at <https://www.mcleantreesfoundation.org/neighborhood-tree-program> and submit your application! A fee of \$100 is assessed to cover the costs of the program (limit one 6-7 foot tree in 15 gallon container per household). There is a separate program for those who are interested in spearheading a community tree planting campaign in their neighborhood. MTF's Tree Champion program makes it easy to help your neighbors plant more trees!

HOT WHEELS CHAMPION EXPERIENCE

Hot Wheels Champion Experience, a new interactive event with immersive digital and physical play, has opened at Tysons Corner Center for a limited time. The Hot Wheels Champion Experience is a 16,000-square-foot experience for the whole family based on Hot Wheels brand that has been influencing car culture for 55 years. Combining cutting-edge technology and innovative design, SEE Touring Exhibitions Inc. has tapped the XSpace platform developed by Smart Entertainment Ltd to power this new attraction. XSpace combines immersive video projection and "phygital" systems that control sound, light, video, and personalized interaction into one experience that can react and change in the blink of an eye. Visit hotwheelschampion.com

STARTING NOW

Sip & Stroll. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Shopping with a Twist will be in effect daily during center hours (10 a.m.-9 p.m. Mon.-Sat. /11 a.m.-7 p.m. Sun.), although individual restaurant hours may vary. Adult beverages must be in a logo'd disposable cup provided by the restaurant where the drink was purchased. Only alcoholic beverages purchased from participating restaurants may be taken outside the restaurant and into the shopping center. No outside alcohol is permitted.

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/>

BONITA LESTINA FAIRFAX 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

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

NOV. 3 TO FEB. 4

Eleanor Mahin Thorp: Metopic Ridge. At Tephra ICA at Signature. Tephra Institute of Contemporary Art (Tephra ICA) presents Metopic Ridge, a solo exhibition by artist Eleanor Mahin Thorp. Thorp's paintings take us on an immersive site visit to examine the Blue Ridge Mountains exploring stability and change, the seen and the hidden within rocks. Through her discerning gaze rocks are more than geological entities; instead, they metamorphose into vessels of history and human connection. Drawing inspiration from the fascinating transformations depicted in Persian miniatures, Thorp traces the hidden figures and forms in the rocks. Her paintings reveal the duality of rocks' existence as both a firm witness to time and a medium for that which is intangible.

DEC. 7 TO FEB. 17

McLean Project for the Arts' Winter Exhibitions. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. McLean Project for the Arts will open its winter exhibitions—Moving Beyond Beauty: Reverence and Reclamation (Emerson Gallery) and To March is to Love: Weavings by Janel Leppin (Atrium Gallery)—on December 7, 2023. Both shows will run through February 17, 2024, with an Opening Exhibition Reception on Thursday, December 7, 2023 from 7-9 p.m. Bringing together five artists—Adjoa Jackson Burrows, Jacqui Crocetta, Maggie Gurlay, June Linowitz, and Elzbieta Sikorska—Moving Beyond Beauty features work that is at once aesthetically pleasing and philosophically compelling.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 10

"Kon-Tiki" Foreign Language Film. 6:30 p.m. At The Alden at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Rated PG-13. (Nor-



The Yale Spizzwinks perform on Friday, Jan. 12, 2024 at St. Luke's Catholic Church in McLean.

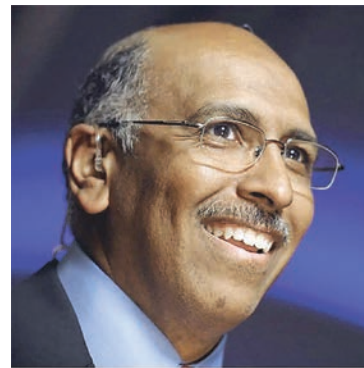
way, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom; Directed by Joachim Rønning and Espen Sandberg); Shown in Norwegian with English subtitles. Oscar and Golden Globe nominee. A dramatized story of Thor Heyerdahl and his Kon-Tiki expedition of 1947. Heyerdahl, an ethnographer and explorer who was convinced that the Polynesian islands were colonized by pre-Columbian South Americans, sets out to prove his thesis by sailing on a balsa wood raft from Peru to the South Pacific.

FRIDAY/JAN. 12

The Yale Spizzwinks Perform. 7:30 p.m. at St. Luke's Catholic Church, 7001 Georgetown Pike, McLean. America's oldest underclassman a cappella group featuring local Langley High School alumnus Tavian Jones, will be performing. Since their founding in 1914, the Spizzwinks have released several dozen albums and performed around the globe, bringing their diverse repertoire of over 600 arrangements everywhere from local New Haven elementary schools, to concert halls including The Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall, special events, businesses, and universities. Every year they take an international tour, most recently to Ecuador, Chile, New Zealand, South Africa, and they are headed to Asia next summer. Check out their website: www.spizzwinks.com or follow them on Instagram @spizzwink. Tickets \$15 adult, \$10 child/student can be purchased on spizzwinks.ticketbud.com or at the door.

SATURDAY/JAN. 13

MLK Day Celebration: Michael Steele: "The Black Experience & The American Dream." 4 p.m. At the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. For all ages. Michael Steele made history as the first Black chairperson of the Republican National Committee. Mr. Steele will bring his perspective to engage us in a dialogue about the Black experience in the context of the American Dream, unflinchingly taking on hard-hitting topics.



Michael Steele will discuss "The Black Experience & The American Dream" at a MLK Day Celebration on Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024 in McLean.

SUNDAY/JAN. 14

MLK Day Celebration: Calvin Earl "Music of the Civil Rights Movement." 2 p.m. At the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. For all ages. As a singer/songwriter/guitarist/storyteller and activist Calvin Earl highlights our collective human story with music intending to bring us to a better understanding of who we are, in the context of our American story. Join us in an uplifting class on the music of the Civil Rights Movement and beyond. Change is inevitable. Music helps us though that change and helps us together imagine our lives beyond who we are and what we know, into who we will become.

SUNDAY/JAN. 14

Dan & Claudia Zanes – Music for All Ages. 2 p.m. At Reston Community Center, Reston. Grammy Award-winner Dan Zanes and Haitian American jazz vocalist Claudia Zanes perform a mix of old and new songs from near and far.

MONDAY/JAN. 15

MLK Keynote Speaker & Luncheon: Rev. William J. Barber. 11 a.m. At Reston Community Center, Reston. Rev. William J. Barber is the President of Repairers of the Breach and co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign, championing various civil rights movements.



Calvin Earl will present "Music of the Civil Rights Movement" on Sunday, Jan. 14, 2024 in McLean.

MONDAY/JAN. 15

Celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day at Frying Pan Farm Park. 10:30-11:30 a.m. At 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Enjoy a dynamic and engaging activity that will have participants rotating through different stations to learn about the Civil Rights Movement, participate in a community service project and reflect on the power of community cooperation. This event is not just educational, it's an opportunity for families to come together and make a positive impact in our community. The program is \$8 per person; all participants must be registered.

TUESDAY/JAN. 16

Five Hills Garden Club Program - Creating with Invasive Plant Cast-Offs. 11 a.m. At Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park Street, N.E. Vienna. Visual journalist Patterson Clark takes a novel approach to using the refuse of invasive species by turning it into beautiful works of art. He harvests exotic invasive vegetation to extract paper fibers, pigments, and lumber, which converge at a printing press to make art that celebrates the bounty and inherent qualities of alien weeds.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 13
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

DINING

Zamarod Afghan Restaurant Celebrates 10th Anniversary

A dining gem in Great Falls.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

This month marks the tenth anniversary of the Great Falls-based Zamarod Afghan Restaurant. Owner Dor Niaz, ever-present and well-known for his authentic Afghan-inspired cooking, said that when he first opened, one of his now regular customers didn't think an Afghan restaurant in Great Falls would succeed.

"I told him I am the ambassador of food and will serve one person at a time, one day at a time. I am here to change that mentality and introduce that cuisine," Niaz said.

Niaz uses only natural ingredients to prepare his menu choices, just as his mother did when he was growing up in Afghanistan. "She is the source of all [the recipes]," he said. Niaz offers a variety of halal options, including lamb, chicken, and beef. For seafood lovers, there is salmon and cod. Vegetarian dishes are also available.

Season and availability permitting, Niaz harvests and adds to his dishes veggies and herbs like rosemary and sage grown in the large planters that encircle the outdoor dining area. If they would like, guests can pick the warm, sun-ripened garden tomatoes directly off the vines to be added to their fresh salads.

Zamarod Afghan Restaurant is cozy yet elegant and considered a local gem ten years after its debut. Coincidentally, the Dari word for emerald — a gem prized for its vivid, bright green hue — is zamarod.

Niaz said one of his most requested dishes is the boneless beef short ribs with rhubarb sauce. He pairs it with a side of sauteed turnips and spinach, pulled from the heat, when still a lovely green, with brown sugar and ginger balsamic rice with almonds and raisins, completing the stunning dish. "That's a winner,



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Owner Dor Niaz stands outside his Afghan restaurant named Zamarod, meaning gem.

winner big time," said Niaz. "We also have a lot of people who request a rack of lamb."

Zamarod in Great Falls is tucked at the end of an unassuming strip mall and located at 10123 Colvin Run, at the corner of Walker Road. Dine in or weather permitting, on the outdoor patio. Take out, order for delivery, or ask about the available catering. Zamarod is open for lunch Monday to Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., dinner Monday to Saturday from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m., and Sunday from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 12

THURSDAY/JAN. 18

"Stop Making Sense" Movie. 1 p.m. At the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. A film by Jonathan Demme and Talking Heads. Considered by critics as the greatest concert film of all time, the live performance was shot over the course of three nights at Hollywood's Pantages Theater in December of 1983 and features Talking Heads' most memorable songs. Rated PG.

FRIDAY/JAN. 19

The Old Firehouse, 5th & 6th Grader Snowball Dance. 7 p.m. At 1440 Chain Bridge Rd., McLean. The Old Firehouse 5th & 6th Grader Parties are themed and decorated accordingly. Partygoers can enjoy free catered food and beverages, a DJ spinning the latest tunes, an open dance floor and a variety of other attractions and activities.

SATURDAY/JAN. 20

"The Never Too Late Show" starring Don Reed. 7 p.m. At the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. A multimedia one-man show written, performed and



"The Never Too Late Show" starring Don Reed will be shown at the McLean Community Center on Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024.

directed by Don Reed. Produced by Don Reed and Pat Hazell. Don Reed presents an inspirational, multi-character comic tale about never giving up. Both hilarious and heartbreaking, it chronicles his travails and perseverance through

the Hollywood gauntlet to late night TV. A journey full of laughter, deceit and ultimately vindication featuring classic footage from "The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson," The National Comedy Center, HBO and other programs.

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Legals

Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF VOLUNTARY REMEDIATION

Pursuant to the Virginia Voluntary Remediation Regulations, Virginia Administrative Code section 9VAC20-160-120, Open Industrial, LLC (Participant) with an address of 7768 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 204, Bethesda, Maryland 20814, hereby provides notice of voluntary remediation at the following site (Site):

Schaeffer Industrial Park, 7817 Loisdale Road, Map Number 0992 01 0007
Springfield, VA 22150
VRP Number VRP00666

The Site is approximately 11.3 acres and is an industrial storage yard consisting of sixteen buildings. Given the historical and present use of the Site for industrial uses (e.g., automotive repair, salvage operations, petroleum salvage and refining, etc.), sampling on the Site detected the presence of metals, volatile-organic compounds, semi-volatile organic compounds, total petroleum hydrocarbons, pesticides, one polychlorinated biphenyl, one herbicide, and oil and grease in soil and/or groundwater which may pose risk to human health or the environment. In order to address potential environmental risks, Participant applied to and was deemed eligible to participate in the Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP). A Site Characterization Report and a Risk Assessment as complete by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The Risk Assessment includes an assessment of the risks to human health and the environment that were evaluated in accordance with DEQ guidelines. The risk evaluation found that the following restrictions placed on the future use of the Site pursuant to the VRP will be protective of human health and the environment: (1) groundwater beneath the Site will not be used for any purpose other than environmental monitoring and testing or dewatering in compliance with law; (2) a residential use restriction that will prohibit the site from being used for residential purposes or children's (under the age of 16) daycare facilities; full-day public or private elementary and secondary schools, or playgrounds; and (3) a deed restriction that will require the preparation of a health and safety plan (HASP) for construction activities conducted at the property to protect construction workers who may come into contact with contaminated soil and/or groundwater. The HASP will also include dust suppression measures to limit offsite exposure to particulates.

Persons wishing to comment on the voluntary remedial action or request additional information should contact the following person who is familiar with the Site:

William Scott Huber
ECS Mid-Atlantic, LLC
14026 Thunderbolt Place, Suite 100
Chantilly, VA 20151-3232
703-471-8400
WHuber@ecsllimited.com

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<p>NOTICE ABANDONED WATERCRAFT</p> <p>Notice is hereby given that the following watercraft has been abandoned for more than 60 DAYS on the property of Mr. Mien S. Niu at 1008 DEAD RUN DR. McLean VA 22101, 202-656-4668.</p> <p>1983 RENKEN boat (white), 19'7", Hull ID #: RBMG1171M83A, Reg #: MD1296AJ</p> <p>Application for Watercraft Registration/Title will be made in accordance with Section 29.1-733.25 of the Code of Virginia if this watercraft is not claimed and removed within 30 days of first publication of this notice. Please contact the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources with questions.</p>		
<p>Legals</p>		
<p>ABC LICENSE</p> <p>Kook Dogg L.L.C trading as Kook Dogg Cafe, 12100 Sunset Hills Rd. R6, Reston, Fairfax County, VA 20190 + 5894.. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Retail Restaurant or Caterer Application - Restaurant, Wine, Beer, Mixed Beverages, Consumed On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Paul Kuchler, Owner. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.</p>		

Legals	Legals
<p>PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF VOLUNTARY REMEDIATION</p> <p>Pursuant to the Virginia Voluntary Remediation Regulations, Virginia Administrative Code section 9VAC20-160-120, Jennings Business Park 3, LLC (Participant) with an address of 156 Fiesta Way, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 hereby provides notice of voluntary remediation at the following site (Site):</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Backlick Road Property 6570 Backlick Road Springfield, Fairfax County, Virginia 22150 VRP Number VRP00563</p> <p>The Site has a history of use for bicycle and lawn mower repair, vehicle sales and vehicle maintenance. Sampling on the Site detected the presence of volatile organic compounds and petroleum hydrocarbons in soil, groundwater and soil gas, and mercury in groundwater. The Participant applied to and was deemed eligible to participate in the Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP) in order to assess and address any environmental risks associated with the detected constituents. A Site Characterization Report and a Risk Assessment have been reviewed and accepted as complete by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The Risk Assessment includes an assessment of the risks to human health and the environment that were evaluated in accordance with DEQ guidelines. The risk evaluation found that the following restrictions placed on the future use of the Site pursuant to the VRP will be protective of human health and the environment: (1) groundwater beneath the Site shall not be used for any purpose other than environmental monitoring and testing, or de-watering in compliance with law; and (2) the Site shall not be used for residential purposes or for children's (under the age of 16) daycare facilities, schools, or playgrounds (although hotels and motels are not prohibited).</p> <p>Persons wishing to comment on the voluntary remedial action or request additional information should contact the following person who is familiar with the Site:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Michael Bruzzesi ENVECO Environmental Solutions, LLC 818 18th St NW, Washington, DC 20006 703-608-5969 mbruzzesi@envecoenvironmental.com</p> <p>Written comments will be accepted until 30 days from the date of publication of this notice.</p>	
<p>Legals</p>	
<p>ABC LICENSE</p> <p>The Woo Corporation trading as The Woo Korean BBQ, 4070 Jermantown Rd., Fairfax, Fairfax City, VA 22030 + 5013. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Retail Restaurant or Caterer Application - Restaurant, Wine, Beer, Mixed Beverages, Consumed On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Sang Hyub Woo, President and Treasurer. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.</p>	
<p>Employment</p> <p>Transaction Network Services Inc. in Reston, VA seeks QA Engineer. Develop test strategies for network apps. Reqs BS in Comp Sci/rtd + 5 yrs exp. Salary: \$136K-\$156K. Mail CV to Transaction Network Services: S Carver 10740 Parkridge Blvd, Ste 100, Reston, VA 20191. Must ref title/Req #R313.</p>	

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PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Local firefighters and other guests mingle behind the reception desk.



Dr. Meredith Porter in one of the exam rooms.

A First



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

It happened just the other day. While visiting close friends in Berlin, Md. (Ocean City) to celebrate the New Year, friends who are well aware of my brother's death and the nature of our relationship (his and mine that is) and who likewise knew Richard very well – and even had their own stories to share, I began to tell a Richard story, as I have a million times in my life. However, on this New Year's Eve, for the first time since Richard died on Dec. 3rd, 2022, I was able to tell the story without choking up or getting teary-eyed. It has taken me more than a year to reach that point.

I can remember very well this past summer, mid-July to be exact while on vacation with my step-father-in-law, Lee and his wife Judy, being unable to complete a Richard story because I got watery eyes and a thickish throat. I tried to speak, even formed the words in my mouth, shaped my lips to pronounce them and couldn't, well; not exactly. But you know what I mean. There was no sound. Then I gathered myself and my thoughts and rebounded enough on the second effort – after a few deep breaths and was able to complete the story. Though the story was supposed to be funny, it became something else. It became emotional and nearly as difficult as it had been telling Richard stories closer to his death. Here it was, almost eight months later, and I still couldn't get through a story about my brother without getting emotional. I choked up so much and so unexpectedly that it left a mark, you might say, on my brain, for future reference.

And this future reference became the presence on New Year's Eve. Dina and I were with our closest friends, friends who had independent relationships with my brother, and who thought the world of him. In fact, I think the Hagans are our only friends who had such a relationship with Richard (he being five years older than us) and his wife, Vanessa, so it was only natural that we would have spent considerable time talking about Richard; it was a safe space for me. And as I began talking about Richard – in the context of the ebb and flow of the conversation, I hesitated almost, anticipating that I'd have to stop, for a time-out of sorts, to gather my thoughts and so forth, and then I just continued, without stopping and completed the story. I took note of it. Here, more than a year later, I'm now able to finish what I start when talking/remiscing about Richard.

It was odd, palpable almost, then when I got to the point of the story that I was sharing about my brother, a point typically when I'd had to stop mid-sentence to take a breath and rub the tears out of my eyes, I didn't have to. I had finally reached the point where the mention of my brother's death didn't weaken my resolve/ability to share a recollection. I simply told the tale, spoke normally-ish about him and smiled at the accomplishment, if you could even call it that, of being able to talk about my brother without crying, et cetera.

New Year's Eve, 2023, now becomes – for me, like one of those dates, "9/11," Nov. 22, 1963, Oct. 27, 2004 when the Red Sox broke the curse and won the World Series (against the St Louis Cardinals) for the first time in 86 years, or "Game 6," Oct. 21st 1975, the World Series against the "Big Red Machine", (Cincinnati Reds) where you know exactly where you were and what you were doing on the date. They are all dates that will stick with me for the remainder of my life. None of them however compare to the loss of my brother, Richard to cancer on Dec. 3, 2022. At least now, I can talk about it. Finish whatever story I start. And even laugh about it without being sad, but grateful in a way. Grateful that I had a brother who meant so much to me and who will be a part of my future as well since I can now embrace his memory – and his loss. He was one of the good guys. Solid as a rock and dependable. If you needed him to be somewhere (like my cancer appointments), he was there. And knowing that he will never "be-there" again in person is unsettling. But at least when I remember him, I can smile. It only took me a year to get here. It was a year I never thought I'd have to endure. In 2009, when I was diagnosed with cancer, I never thought, despite our five-year age difference (Richard was the older brother), he would predecease me. And then he did, at age 73. It has thrown off my whole unwritten plan. And unfortunately, without Richard, there's no plan "B," unwritten or otherwise. Certainly not one that will last anyway.

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

Inova-GoHealth Urgent Care Opens

FROM PAGE 7

Besides walk-in care, seven days a week, said Motew, people may also schedule their visits to the center, up to 48 hours in advance. "With the seasonal illnesses we're seeing, we also see our Inova-GoHealth partnership as critical to connecting people to the Inova health system," he said. "With our five Inova hospitals here, over the last five years, we've intentionally focused on creating a system of care from the start to the end of someone's life."

Pointing at the Washington Nationals mascot there, Motew added, "Through our sports-team support, our work with our community chambers of commerce, and local events, our GoHealth team really helps us make those connections. We're here and ready to support our communities."

Then, Jennifer Rose, executive director of the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, said, "What a great day to be celebrating good health in Greenbriar. Welcome to the neighborhood."

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) also welcomed the center to the Springfield District and recognized the first responders serving that area, calling them a "key part" of the medical system the other speakers mentioned. And he acknowledged the presence of Supervisor Kathy Smith (D-Sully), who lives in Chantilly, at the ceremony.

"Inova is an award-winning hospital and an award-winning system," said Herrity. "It's the system of choice for me, certainly. I've



Those attending Inova-GoHealth's ribbon cutting in the Greenbriar Town Center gather for a group photo after the ceremony.

used this GoHealth model in West Springfield, and it's incredible when you really need care. It's really hard these days to get an appointment with a doctor – a G.P. [general practitioner] or otherwise. So the ability to schedule one in an hour or two works really well, and the service and referrals are great.

"I can't say enough about the Inova system, and the expansion of these [urgent-care centers] into our communities – where peo-

ple really need them – is absolutely critical. It's a quality operation and we look forward to seeing more."

Then Brown thanked the Inova executives who were there and led everyone in applauding the arrival of the firefighters from Station 21 in Fair Oaks.

Next came the ribbon cutting and a tour of the building – but all the while, it was business as usual for the center's staff, which kept working throughout the ceremony.

Robertson Indicted for Murder

FROM PAGE 11

Realizing that, after everything she'd heard, Judge Mayne was going to certify the case against his client to the grand jury, Sprano argued that the charge against Robertson should be a lesser one of manslaughter. He said this crime didn't involve malice – one of the elements of a second-degree murder charge – and that "fear could cause someone to act on im-

pulse without reasonable provocation."

But the prosecutor disagreed. "Malice can be inferred by the use of a weapon," said Bolton. "[Robertson] said he was angry. He stopped several times and knocked [Reyes] out. And he broke two bricks on the man and then stabbed him until he was no longer breathing. The defendant caused the death, and he only went to the back of the building with the man because he was angry."

Mayne then ruled there was "sufficient evidence of probable cause to believe [Robertson] committed second-degree murder," and sent his case to the grand jury for possible indictment. On Dec. 20, it indicted Robertson on that charge, and he's now scheduled for a jury trial, April 22, in Circuit Court. Meanwhile, he remains held without bond in jail, where he's been since his arrest.



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