

CONNECTION

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



AMAZON PUBLISHING
TITLE NAME: TOUGH TUG
BRILLIANCE PO: 51165
ISBN: 9781503950986
COVER PRICE: \$17.99
CARTON QUANTITY: 40
CARTON WEIGHT: 18.6 KG
CARTON DIMENSIONS: 462MM(L)X298MM(W)X208MM(H)

Friends while attending University of Pittsburgh together, reunited to select books for their students at the three different schools where they now teach: Tara Sullivan, 3rd grade, Waynewood Elementary, Mount Vernon; Alex Nietert, Advanced grades 3 - 6, Fort Belvoir; and Christie Takacs, 3rd grade, Spring Hill, McLean

Turning 100 at Fairfax Hooters

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40,000 Books Boost Reading

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PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

PEOPLE

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



The Hooters “girls” blow a birthday kiss to Glenn Ward.

Ward Celebrates a Century with Family, Friends

War veteran feted on 100th birthday at Fairfax Hooters.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Hooters sports bar and grill is famous for its well-endowed waitresses in tight tops and short shorts. But Navy veteran Glenn Ward insists he goes there for the restaurant’s wings and spicy, 3-Mile Island Sauce – really.

In fact, he likes the Hooters in Fairfax City so much that, for the past 10 years, he’s celebrated his birthday and Veterans Day there. And while that fact alone may not be noteworthy, since people often frequent their favorite restaurants, it is for Ward. That’s because, when he gathered there with friends and family last Saturday, Feb. 17, it was to celebrate his 100th birthday.

Some 50 people – many of them traveling from as far away as the West Coast – enjoyed the festivities with him. The event included food and drink, a specially decorated cake, photo collages, the Color Guard from American Legion Post 177 in Fairfax City, and a Hooters waitress singing the National Anthem. And of course, there were a slew of stories and reminiscences about Ward’s life and 30 years of service – including in three wars – in the U.S. Navy.

“Oh, I’m overwhelmed,” he said about the celebration. “I’ve been coming here for years for my birthday parties. But doing it when you’re 100 is really something.”

Ward’s daughter, Cindy Gibbs of Fairfax’s Mantua community, agreed. “It’s like a wake, but he gets to be here,” she said. “My dad has lived in North Arlington for 63 years, but he loves coming to this Hooters because he likes its spicy food.”

She also said her dad’s sharp as a tack. “He lives on his own, takes no medications and still drives,” said Gibbs. “He does two sudokus and two crossword puzzles every day and takes naps with his



Flanking Glenn Ward are daughter Cindy Gibbs and son Terry Ward.

dachshund Scooter. He’s had five dachshunds, all named Scooter. This one is Scooter V, but my husband calls him Cinco.”

Ward’s wife Phyllis died in 2008, just shy of their 60th anniversary. Besides Gibbs, they had a son Terry, four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. And for Ward’s big birthday bash, family members and friends came from California, Nevada, Wisconsin, Michigan, Maryland, Wyoming, New Jersey, Virginia and Pennsylvania to celebrate with him.

Besides gifts from them, the restaurant gave Ward a signed Hooters hat and a token honoring his three decades of military service. The iconic Hooters Girls led everyone in singing happy birthday to the centenarian; and, while standing next to the Color Guard, Hooters waitress Britney Lee sang the National Anthem.

A 2019 Centreville High grad, Lee, 22, writes, sings and records her own music and performs at various venues in Old Town Manassas. “It was really an hon-



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

A collage of Glenn Ward’s life and family members.

Glenn Ward’s Remarkable Century of Achievement

Glenn Ward was born Feb. 16, 1924, in Tiffin, Ohio. Three years later,

his parents purchased a 6-acre, riverfront farm just outside the city limits – meaning no electricity or indoor plumbing.

Heating was by convection through a coal fired furnace. Lighting was by oil lamp or kerosene lantern. Water was hand pumped from a well outside the back door, and an outhouse stood about 30 yards from the house.

Cooking was done on a wood-fired stove or, in summer, a portable gas-fired stove. Electricity was hooked up in 1933 but the outhouse remained in use until 1947 when a bathroom addition was built.

Farm chores were a way of life, and the family sold chickens, eggs, butter, apple cider and clams (from the nearby Sandusky River). Ward walked a mile to attend a one-room school for grades one through eight and was in his high school’s second graduating class in 1941.

Military Career

After the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, and the U.S. entered WWII,

Ward dropped out of college and enlisted in the Navy. He reported for duty on December 26, 1941 – and by February 2, 1942, he was on board the battleship USS New Mexico, headed for the Pacific. Just 17, until then, he’d never traveled further than Ohio’s neighboring state of Pennsylvania.

His first battle-station assignment was loading 100-pound bags of propellant onto a hoist for transport to large artillery. He later trained as a radioman and was transferred to the USS Medusa – a floating repair station, providing rapid repairs to battle-damaged ships.

As a radioman, Ward worked two, four-hour shifts per day, seven days a week, sending and receiving code. After the war,

SEE ACHIEVEMENT, PAGE 4

SEE GLENN WARD, PAGE 4

Lorton Book Event Draws Large Crowd

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Hitomi Sato and Stacy Shick, both 6th grade teachers at Hunt Valley Elementary School, take a moment to contemplate how to get their harvest of books to their vehicle.



Large numbers of families and teachers attended the book fair event.

40,000 books available to open the world for all.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

The Lorton Community Center and Library know that reading opens the world. Their February 10th book drive and family literacy fair aimed to be sure that area families and educators had a means to open that global door to knowledge, learning, and adventure, for all.

Many attendees expressed sur-

prise at finding new books on offer; instead expecting used. And there were lots of free books ready for selection. Separated roughly by reading age, in groupings spread out on the gym floor, books were easily perused by those of any size. Parents and guardians could have up to 10 free books per child for home libraries; 30 books maximum limit per family. Educators and school staff could choose up to 50 free books for their classrooms. Available on a first-come, first served basis, 40,000 books awaited.

David Walrod is president of Fairfax County Federation of Teachers, an affiliate of the national American Federation of Teachers; a major sponsor of the event. He shares that the books come from



Mara Quebbeman, 2 1/2 years old, was just the right height for book selection, while attending with her dad, Jace, of Lorton.



Federation of Teachers volunteers Dailyn Brinas and Diane Tovar move boxes of books to prep for the book event.



Sophia, age 11, Dan, Olivia, age 4, and Amelia age 8, of Lorton were pleased by the free candy and books they found.

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First Book, an organization which champions educational equality; particularly targeting purple star military areas, Title 1 schools, and those with learning challenges. The organization is able to secure large discounts for new books in a wide variety. The books available targeted multi-reading levels and included pop series, bilingual, and known titles; clearly not just overstocks.

Lorton Community Center with its library and proximity to Fort Belvoir made it ideal for the first Fairfax County area "Reading

Opens the World" event, says Walrod. In 2023, AFT had more than 300+ events in 34 states (plus Puerto Rico and DC) at schools, community centers, faith-based organizations and union halls. They plan many more to continue to spread the joy of reading to students, families, educators and school staff in communities across the country. FCFT members were present in numbers to assist as volunteers, setting up and running the event.

Says Walrod, "it is important to be involved, as a union of educa-

tors, who want all students to be successful. Reading skill is the best predictor of high school graduation and going on to college. The more kids get books they want to read, the more they see themselves as readers."

AFT's book drive also was supported by Fairfax County Public Library, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services, and KR Branding Solutions. The event included food trucks, Valentine's Day card making, free dental examinations, and free popcorn. Community services set up tables too.

Glenn Ward Turns 100

FROM PAGE 2

or to sing the National Anthem today,” she said. “I felt a little emotional when our regional manager asked me to do it because my grandfather served in Vietnam.”

Ward’s son, Terry, flew to the party from Nevada. He said his dad was raised on a farm in Ohio with no electricity until he was 9 and no indoor plumbing until long after he’d moved away. As a child, he attended a one-room school, and it took him until the seventh grade to save up the \$25 he needed to buy his first bicycle.

With his dad coming from such humble beginnings and going on to lead an exemplary life of service and heroism, said Terry, “I’ve been in awe of him my whole life. To earn spending money as a kid, he sold onions and radishes from the farm, trapped muskrats for pelts and harvested freshwater clams to sell their shells to a button manufacturer. To go from that to being a commander in the Navy and running the flight deck of an aircraft carrier was pretty amazing.”

Ward was a college freshman when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. Within three weeks, on Dec. 26, he enlisted in the Navy at age 17 and went on to achieve a distinguished military career (see sidebar for details).

“Because of the Navy, he was often gone six months at a time,” said Terry. “So when he was home, we always did things together, like camping or visiting relatives. We always knew right from wrong, and he and my mom insisted both my sister and I go to college because they were the first in their families to go to college.”

Calling Ward “pretty incredible,” Terry said his dad could do anything. “He built a color TV from a kit, and he was always working on cars and doing house repairs and remodeling, like putting on a new roof,” said Terry. “And he always tried to teach me how to do things, too, and be self-reliant. He also influenced me to become a Naval aviator like him. He took me flying with him when I was really young.”

Terry said his parents loved to entertain and meet new people. “They had long-time friends they kept in touch with through the years, and so do my sister and I,” he said. “That’s why so many people turned out for my dad’s birthday. Even the daughter of a man he taught as a flight instructor is here.”

Among the guests was Ward’s goddaughter, Sue Richards Keller of New Jersey. “He’s one of a kind and has the best sense of humor,” she said about Ward. “His mind is so sharp, he’s active and he’s had an amazing life.”

Peter Savarino, a neighbor of Ward’s in Arlington, said Ward knew astronaut Neil Armstrong because their air squadrons “interacted together in one of the wars. Glenn and I chat with each other, and he loves to show me his memorabilia in his house. That includes a tailhook – the part of the plane that hooks onto an aircraft carrier during landings.”



The Color Guard from Fairfax City’s American Legion Post 177.



Phyllis and Glenn Ward on their wedding day in 1949.

“He also loves to tell stories, and I enjoy listening to them,” continued Savarino. “You don’t often meet someone who’s been in three wars and still has the mind to talk about them. And he’s a neighbor you can always go to for advice or to borrow something; he’s always very helpful.” Delighted to be at Ward’s milestone birthday celebration, Savarino said, “Glenn always gets a hoot out of coming to Hooters, and you don’t have many guys like this still around.”

Diane and Doug Smallwood visit Ward every year and flew out to his party from their home in Long Beach, Calif. “We met Glenn and Phyllis when we went on a South Pacific land tour, 45 years ago,” said Diane. “There were just a few Americans, and we traveled by bus around Fiji, New Zealand, Australia and Tahiti. We taught Phyllis how to snorkel and were friends ever since.”

A few years ago, said Diane, Ward was deciding whether to go to San Diego for what could be his Korean War squadron’s last reunion. “His wife had already passed away, and he has grandchildren in San Diego, so he decided to go,” she said. “And Doug and I came out here to house sit and dog sit for him while he did that. At the same time, he also got to visit what he lovingly called his ‘grandcritters’ [grandchildren].”

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Century of Achievement

FROM PAGE 2

he resumed his education, graduating from Bowling Green State University in 1948. But before long, he returned to the military.

He re-entered the Navy as an officer and qualified as a pilot. During the Korean War, he deployed twice and flew 102 combat missions in the A-1 Skyraider aircraft. On his first deployment, his squadron lost 17 planes and seven pilots.

His squadron’s actions later inspired famed author James Michener to write the bestselling book, “The Bridges at Toko-Ri.” Although Michener took artistic license when writing, Ward flew on the actual mission that saw 12 aircraft from the USS Essex each drop a 2,000-pound bomb on North Korean air defenses before destroying critical railroad bridges.

Then, as a commander during the Vietnam War, Ward was the air officer on the aircraft carrier Hornet, conducting combat operations off North Vietnam. He retired in 1974, after 30 years of service, with 4,300 flight hours and 287 carrier landings via tailhook, 183 on a straight deck.

For his distinguished career, he was awarded six Air Medals, plus two Navy Commendation Medals with combat V denoting valor and heroism. The aircraft he flew were as follows: SNJ Texan, F-6F Hellcat, F-8F Bearcat, F-4U Corsair, A-1 Skyraider, E-1B Tracer, E-2A Hawkeye, T-28 Trojan, C-45 Twin Beech Expeditor, and the Douglas R4D (DC-3).

Ward retired to Arlington and enjoyed planning reunions for Navy squadron mates and traveling the world with his wife Phyllis, until her death in 2008.

— TERRY WARD, GLENN’S SON



Britney Lee singing the National Anthem.

Reflecting on their long friendship, she said, “Glenn’s so warm and has great stories, and he and Phyllis were always so welcoming and such good people. We just loved them. And they had friends from all over the world.”

Stressing Ward’s intelligence, Doug Small-

wood said, “His college major was physics, and he does crossword puzzles in pen. It’s wonderful to be here for his 100th birthday; we promised him we would.”

When asked what he was proudest of, Ward said, “My family. My daughter is a successful CPA, and my son was an airplane pilot with Delta after retiring from the Navy. And I had a very happy marriage.”

So what’s the secret to his longevity? “One thing keeping me in shape and alert is that I live in a two-story house with the TV on the lower level,” he replied. “So I go up and down the stairs at least three times a day – and I’m convinced that’s keeping me healthy.”

His favorite TV shows are “Judge Judy,” the national news and “Jeopardy.” And when it comes to “Jeopardy,” said Ward, “Eighty percent of the time, I know the answers.”

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PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Fire chiefs and other first responders gather for announcement of a new 10-year safety broadband network investment. Note COW (Cell On Wings) in upper left and CV (Communication Vehicle) in upper right

COWs, Flying COWs and Sat COLTs? Oh My!

Dedicated 5G communication network aids first responders.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Flying COWs! The term sounds like an exclamation from comic crime fighters Batman and Robin, not an actual emergency management tool. But that it is. Flying COW, short for Cell On Wings, is part of industry leading FirstNet technology that allows first responders to remain 5G network connected, even in rural areas, and even during the most challenging conditions or situations when electric connectivity fails. FirstNet is dedicated to first responders and those who support them – giving them always-on priority use of the network, says AT&T, the network's builder. First responders are using the network to communicate during every day operations, big events, and emergencies in the field, and are calling it "a great system."

Local public safety, FirstNet Authority and AT&T officials gathered on Feb. 13 in Springfield's Fire Station #426, amid the fire station's on-going calls for service. The next series of FirstNet investments will total \$8 billion over 10 years, they said. Beginning in March, FirstNet will be the first wireless network to provide first responders with always-on priority service across 5G. The expansion includes all AT&T 5G commercial spectrum. The system uses a new standalone 5G network core with dedicated public

safety functions. It provides 2.97 million square miles of coverage; 250,000 more square miles than commercial networks, according to the announcement.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Chief, John S. Butler, said, "The IAFC is excited about today's investment announcement — the FirstNet Authority is listening to public safety's needs and putting resources to action to continue to improve the network for our nation's fire and emergency services. We look forward to seeing how these continued improvements and enhancements help us in our lifesaving mission every day."

Sheriff Stacey Kincaid shared that despite the adult detention center's steel and reinforced concrete, "FirstNet has provided always on priority and preemption access to critical applications such as inmate information, electronic medical records and emergency response protocols with minimal delays." Other first responders in attendance also praised the system.

The next phase is \$6.3 billion for full 5G capability, expanded services, and enhanced coverage. Thousands of new cell sites will be built across the country, including 1,000 new sites within the next two years. A standalone 5G core will enhance current 5G functionality, with specific public safety features and support to transition from LTE to 5G.

FirstNet Authority and AT&T say they have been working closely with Virginia public safety officials since 2014. Following that initial collaboration, Virginia became the first state in the nation to adopt the plan and opt in to FirstNet, in July 2017.

SEE COMMUNICATION, PAGE 7

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RESTAURANT WEEK

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KERRY CURRAN



Chicken Tikka from Curry Mantra.



Lobster Roll from Ned's New England Deck.



Faroe Island Salmon from The Wine House.

A Culinary Tour of the World in Fairfax City

Winter Restaurant Week is Feb. 26-March 3.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

It's always a good time to visit Fairfax City – but especially during Restaurant Week. That's when both locals and visitors get a chance to enjoy delicious meals at the City's restaurants for lower-than-normal prices. This year's winter Restaurant Week will be held Monday, Feb. 26 through Sunday, March 3, and the huge variety of global cuisine available promises to offer something for everyone. Most of Fairfax City's restaurants are locally owned and are part of a proudly diverse and exciting culinary scene here.

Participating restaurants will offer prix-fixe menus at set prices of \$25 for brunch/lunch and \$40 for dinner. Additionally, specialty restaurants will feature a two-for-\$10 deal, providing food lovers the opportunity to further explore the rich variety and eclectic flavors of the City's restaurants.

It's the program's seventh year – and although Fairfax is just 6 square miles, 24 restaurants will be taking part in this always-popular event. Dishes from a large number of cultures will be highlighted, as the City's ever-growing assort-

ment of restaurants enables customers to travel the world through their tastebuds.

Restaurants participating in this eagerly anticipated event include Baku Delicious, Bellissimo Restaurant, Commonwealth Brewing Co., Coyote Grill, Curry Mantra, Dolce Vita Italian Kitchen and Wine Bar, Draper's Steak & Seafood, El Pollo Rico, Hamrock's Restaurant, Jas & Fam Caribbean Flavor, Mama Chang, and Meokja Meokja.

Also taking part will be Ned's New England Deck, Okonomi Asian Grill, Old Dominion Pizza, ONE Bar & Grill, Ornerly Beer Co., Patriots Pub & Grill, P.J. Skidoos, Roots Natural Kitchen, Taim Mediterranean Kitchen, The Auld Shebeen, The Wine House, and ViVi Bubble Tea Fairfax.

"Restaurant Week is that nudge our residents get twice a year that says dining out is a community event," explained Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read. "Trying new restaurants, or trying new offerings at favorite places, is something we can do together – and we invite other people to join us too. Dining in the city can be a culinary trip around the world without needing a passport."

"The ongoing success of Fairfax City Restaurant Week is due in part to the hard work of its co-sponsors, the Fairfax City Economic Development Authority, the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, and Old Town Fairfax Business Association," said Economic Development Director Chris Bruno. "Together,



Tiramisu from ONE Bar & Grill.

they have consistently expanded the event, establishing Fairfax City as a premier dining destination and fostering a strong sense of community among restaurant operators."

A few examples of the dinner entrees in store for customers are:

Dolce Vita

Baked Dolce Gamberi - jumbo shrimp, pancetta and caramelized onions tossed with gnocchi and anisette cream sauce; Wood Fired Roasted Vegetables

with farro, balsamic vinegar, pesto and parmigiano-reggiano (may add salmon or chicken); and Roasted Pork Chop with braised white beans, sundried tomatoes, baby arugula and marsala sauce.

(Diners may add a wine pairing for each course for \$15/person).

Mama Chang

Farmer's Stir Fry; Mapo Tofu - soft tofu cooked in a rich, spicy, and savory sauce; Beef Chow Fun - stir-fried beef with wide rice noodles, scallions, ginger and bean sprouts; Braised Pork Belly & Tea Egg; and Mama Fried Rice (choice of vegetable, chicken, beef, shrimp or a combination).

The Wine House

Braised Lamb Shank with cannellini beans with chorizo and a rosemary demi-glace; Faroe Island Salmon Fillet with leek beurre blanc, gnocchi and winter squash medley; Wine House Jumbo Lump



Pimento Bacon Grilled Cheese at Commonwealth Brewing Co.

Crabcake with Dijon cream sauce, roasted red potatoes and asparagus; Pork Tenderloin with prosciutto and olive tapenade, red wine bordelaise, mashed potatoes and haricot vert; Steak Frites – flatiron steak, pommes frites and black peppercorn cream sauce; Beef Burgundy – traditional French beef stew with bacon, mushrooms, pearl onions and gnocchi; and Wild Mushroom Risotto with butternut squash cream sauce, Parmesan cheese and truffle oil.

❖ Diners are encouraged to follow @FairfaxCityRestaurantWeek on Instagram, TikTok and Facebook and tag #FairfaxCityEats. For more information, go to fairfaxcityrestaurantweek.com.



Crispy Brussel Sprouts at Earp's Ordinary.



Fish and Chips at The Auld Shebeen.



Cooking Pork Belly Short Ribs at Meokja Meokja.



Sheriff Stacy Kincaid shared the system is reliable within the detention center's steel and reinforced concrete

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Chief John S. Butler addresses gathered officials in the fire station, describing FirstNet as "here, where it matters most."

Emergency Communication

FROM PAGE 5

What is the FirstNet Authority?

The FirstNet Authority, is an independent agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). The Authority oversees FirstNet, the nation's communications network dedicated to emergency responders and the public safety community. The Authority was established following the tragic experiences of September 11, 2001. During that crisis the radios used by police, fire, and paramedics did not operate well across agencies. Land and mobile phone lines were overwhelmed by the high volume of calls, cutting off communications. First responders struggled to communicate. Therefore, Congress passed legislation in 2012 allocating \$6.5 billion and a 20 megahertz broadband spectrum in the 700 MHz frequency, Band 14, to establish a single nationwide public safety network, and the FirstNet Authority. AT&T was awarded a 25-year network contract in 2017 in a competitive procurement process. The result is a public-private partnership, bringing together the best knowledge of both sectors. AT&T agreed to invest approximately \$40 billion in the network over the life of the contract. They are permitted use of the spectrum for other commercial purposes when not being used by public safety.

The network includes over 180 deployable assets in a dedicated fleet of land-based and airborne portable cell sites. A cell site is an entire set of equipment needed to receive and transmit radio signals for cellular voice and data transmission. They were used by AT&T to beam LTE coverage to customers during big events and disasters for years. They don't rely on commercial power and connect to FirstNet via satellite. Now the concept has allowed expansion of FirstNet into a wider area. Most are available as needed by registered agencies at no cost for equipment, fuel, or personnel.

The miniCRC (mini Compact Rapid Deployable) consists of two rugged boxes each about the size of checked luggage. Able to cover up to half a mile, it links to FirstNet via satellite without relying on commercial power availability. A single person can deploy it within a matter of minutes.

Getting back to COWs and Flying COWs. What are they? A FirstNet COW (Cell On Wheels) is a portable base station on a trailer or truck, used to provide temporary network coverage for emergency situations

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PHOTO COURTESY AT&T

Flying COW, a fully equipped and functional cell site within a tethered drone, is capable of greatly extending network coverage, particularly useful in rugged terrain and in disaster areas



Inside view of a Communication Vehicle (CV), one of 5 deployed as needed to provide longer term connectivity via LTE and/or Wi-Fi, in an air-conditioned command space with overnight accommodation for 2 first responders, with monitors, charging stations, a large exterior screen and speakers for briefings

or high-profile events. It operates on fuel or generator. A FirstNet Flying COW (Cell on Wings) is a drone that serves as a cell site providing a 5G network with Band 14. It is capable of withstanding light rain and wind speeds of up to 25 miles per hour; and can reach heights of up to 400 feet. There are now five Flying COWs in the system.

Burke Centre Shopping Center Left Turn Restriction Fairfax County

Willingness to Hold a Public Hearing

Find out about plans to prohibit left turns from the Burke Centre Shopping Center (5815 Burke Centre Parkway) easternmost access to eastbound Burke Centre Parkway (Route 643) to improve safety. New pavement markings, signs and flex posts will be installed at the intersection to restrict left turns out of the shopping center.

Review the project information at <https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/BurkeCentreSC> or at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-259-2239 or TTY/TDD 711 to make an appointment with appropriate personnel.

If your concerns cannot be satisfied, VDOT is willing to hold a public hearing. You may request that a public hearing be held by sending a written request to Mr. Andrew Beacher, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 on or prior to **March 11, 2024**. If upon receiving public comments it is deemed necessary to hold a public hearing, notice of date, time and place of the hearing will be posted.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775 or TTY/TDD 711.

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ENTERTAINMENT

FORB'S ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT SALE

Online ordering for FORB's annual Native Plant Sale opens on Thursday, February 1, 2024 and closes on Sunday, March 24, 2024. Go to the website at www.forbpark.org, and click "2024 Native Plant Sale" on the home page. There are over 500 plants from which to choose including Virginia Bluebells, Cardinal Flowers, several varieties of Phlox and many, many more. All orders will be picked up on Saturday, April 13, 2024 at the Riverbend Park Educational Pavilion on Potomac Hills Street.

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!

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

March 8: Mandoleers – Mandolin and

8 ❖ BURKE / FAIRFAX / FAIRFAX STATION/CLIFTON/LORTON / SPRINGFIELD ❖ FEBRUARY 22-28, 2024



GAMEmason 2024, a two-day gaming convention, takes place Feb. 23-24, 2024 at George Mason University.

Guitar Orchestra
March 22: James & Victor – Jazz Duo/
Steel Pan
April 5: Francesca Hurst – Solo Piano
April 19: Sylvan Waters Duo – Harp/
Brass

SUNDAY/FEB. 25

Savor the Sweetness of Maple Syrup at Colvin Run Mill. 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. At Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road in Great Falls. As the sap begins to flow and the maple trees are tapped, Colvin Run Mill invites you to embrace the winter warmth by the fire. Immerse yourself in the fascinating process of maple syrup production. Discover the secrets behind why trees produce sap and witness the art of sap collection through tree tapping. Experience the magic as the sap is expertly boiled down to create the delectable maple syrup that graces our tables. Indulge your taste buds by sampling this liquid gold on cornbread made with Colvin Run Mill grains.

FRIDAY/FEB. 23

Film: "A Great Day in Harlem." 1994. At 7:30 p.m. At Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd., Fairfax. ARTScreen Free Film Series: This Oscar-nominated documentary compiles interviews of all the top jazz musicians in NYC in the year 1958, for a piece in Esquire magazine, inspiring the iconic photograph by Art Kane.

FEB. 23-24

Sing Down the Moon: Appalachian Wonder Tales. 7 p.m. At Ernst Theater, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Oakcrest School will present its Middle School Theatre production. The musical leads the audience on a journey through the Appalachian Mountains with six traditional tales and folk-inspired songs. With stories inspired by beloved fairy tales, the evening is sure to be captivating while sharing mountain-lore wisdom for the whole family. Sing Down the Moon: Appalachian Wonder Tales will include performances from more than 25 students, as well as a crew of Upper School students working behind the scenes.

FEB. 23-24

GAMEmason 2024. 10:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. At George Mason University. A two-day gaming convention featuring Esports tournaments, arcade and tabletop gaming, industry panels and keynote speaker voice actress Jennifer Hale. GAMEmason 2024 will feature guest speakers from Bethesda Game Studios, Monument Sports and Entertainment, and more; educational sessions

with Mason faculty and staff as well as alumni and business leaders; free arcade play; tabletop and console gaming; Augmented Reality (AR)/Virtual Reality (VR) demonstrations; an artist alley featuring work by Mason students and featured artists; vendors and businesses from across the game industry; and more. Visit: si.gmu.edu/gamemason.

ARTSCREEN: A FREE FILM SERIES CELEBRATING THE ARTS

Join in a free film series on Friday evenings in the City of Fairfax at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd., Fairfax. Doors open at 7 p.m.; Films begin at 7:30 p.m. Free popcorn, candy, refreshments and door prizes, too!

Feb. 23: A Great Day in Harlem. (1994) Not Rated - The documentary compiles interviews of all the top jazz musicians in NYC in the year 1958, for a piece in Esquire magazine.
April 12: Midnight in Paris. (2011) PG-13 - While on a trip to Paris with his fiancée's family, a nostalgic screenwriter finds himself mysteriously going back to the 1920s every day at midnight.

FRIDAY/FEB. 23

Black History Month Event. 5:30 p.m. Join your neighbors for an evening at the Government Center (12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax) to celebrate Black History Month. This year's theme is "The Value of Telling Our Stories." Enjoy local performances, interactive activities, enlightening discussion and light refreshments.

FRIDAY/FEB. 23

Sweetheart Parent-Child Dance. 7-9 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Children are invited to come to MCC for a fancy "date" with their parent or guardian. Featured activities included a photo booth, a DJ playing favorite dance tunes, craft projects and light refreshments. Create lasting memories by joining us. Parents must attend with their child/children and register individually at mcleancenter.org.

FRIDAY/FEB. 23

Buckets 'N Boards. 7 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Back by popular demand! BNB is a hilarious, high-energy and interactive percussion show that has captivated audiences worldwide! It offers something for everyone in the family—amazing tap dancing, clean comedy, body percussion, beatboxing and more! The show was born from Gareth



Watercolorist Tony Neville will give a talk on Friday, Feb. 23, 2024 at the McLean Community Center in McLean.



The Capital Remodel & Garden Show takes place Feb. 23-25, 2024 at Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly.

Server and Matt Livingston's shared passion for music and rhythm combined with their natural joyous charm and lighting quick wit. To purchase tickets or for more information, visit aldentheatre.org.

FEB. 23-25

Capital Remodel & Garden Show. At Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. Kevin O'Connor, host of "This Old House" will be the featured speaker. Nearly 200 companies will be on hand to showcase the latest products and services in home remodeling, renovation, home décor, landscape and garden design. Local and regional landscape companies will have feature gardens throughout the show. An ongoing schedule of home remodeling and landscape experts conducting seminars will be carried out during the three-day event. The Capital Remodel + Garden Show will run from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m. Friday, Feb 23 and Saturday Feb 24 and from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., Sunday Feb 26. Tickets may be purchased at: www.capitalremodelandgardenshow.com.

FRIDAY/FEB. 23

Watercolorist Tony Neville. 11 a.m. at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. McLean Art Society will present regionally acclaimed watercolorist, Tony Neville giving a step-by-step demonstration of how he proceeds in creating a painting. Mr. Neville works in watercolor, charcoal and acrylic, exploring the Impressionist spirit. He's been juried into numerous art shows at The Art League in Alexandria and in the Washington, D.C. area. He regularly teaches beginner and intermediate watercolor classes in Arlington and conducts workshops on plein air painting. His works are represented in collections on both sides of the Atlantic.

SATURDAY/FEB. 24

Omnium Circus. 2 p.m. At Capital One Hall, 7750 Capital One Tower Road, Tysons Corner. Led by Ringmaster Danette Sheppard Vaughn, this year's show features many new cast members who each bring their own unique talents to this circus adventure including Washington D.C.'s own Ermiyas Muluken who stars as the central character, "Johnny." Making his circus debut is the fabulous Deaf dancer, Malik Paris. Visit OmniumCircus.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 24

15th Annual Monopoly Tournament. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Moose Lodge, 9612 Fernedge Lane, Lorton. Sponsored by Ron Kowalski Real Estate Group to benefit the Lorton Community Action Center. There will be three timed rounds of Monopoly. Players of all skill levels are encouraged to play. Top prizes: 1st-\$500; 2nd-\$250; 3rd-\$100. Trophies & door prizes too! The registration fee is \$35 in advance/online; \$50 at the door. Ages 8+. To register, go to: MonopolyLorton.com or LortonAction.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 24

The Northern Virginia Camp & Summer Fun Expo 2024. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Dulles Town Center, 21100 Dulles Town Circle, Dulles. Washington Parent's camp expos will feature both day and overnight camps, arts, sports, STEM and other special-focus camps and summer programs, ones for children with learning and other differences and summer fun destinations. Attendees will gather details about camp options and learn about summer activities for the entire family. We'll have plenty for the kids to do while parents focus on the best programs for their children. Giveaways, performances and more.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

FACETS' Hypothermia Program Experiences Increase in Clients

With growing need and colder weather, seasonal shelter connects guests with services through April 1.

FACETS began its annual Hypothermia Prevention and Response Program in late November and has experienced an increase in demand with cold weather and local need pushing up the numbers of people seeking shelter. The program rotates between various faith community partner locations throughout the winter to provide a warm, safe, and healthy environment for individuals experiencing homelessness to sleep every night.

"Protecting people experiencing homelessness in our community during the coldest months is the goal of our Hypo effort. In the first two weeks, we are seeing demand for our services jump over last year," said Joe Fay, Executive Director, FACETS. "We have more than 40 faith partners helping house and feed our neighbors during winter nights. We are grateful for their continued commitment in providing these life-saving services."

FACETS, a nonprofit that helps those affected by poverty, hunger, and homelessness in Fairfax County, operates the Hypothermia Prevention and Response Program from Nov. 26 through April 1 in Region 4 of the county's four human services areas. The Hypothermia Prevention program helps neighbors experiencing homelessness find respite from the cold winter. The program serves people across Fairfax and Falls Church in partnership with the Fairfax County government and over 40 faith communities. Last year, FACETS' Hypo program helped 288 different individuals. In the first few weeks, FACETS has already served 125 individuals, compared to 71 for the same period last year.

FACETS' faith partners are also providing meals for the program with different partners rotating week to week. In addition, FACETS offers personalized case management to all guests who want to participate



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Cots await people seeking shelter at FACETS from the cold at night.

to help them move off the streets and into safe and stable housing.

With the second-largest homeless popu-

Donate Supplies to The Lamb Center

The Lamb Center, a nonprofit, day-time drop-in center for the homeless, needs the following supplies, this month: brown paper bags, 3x10-inch; travel-sized toiletries; ponchos; 5x7-inch notepads for the front desk; men's belts (sizes 30-48); men's sneakers (8-13); men's boots, (8-13); and men's jersey boxer briefs (M-XL). All supplies may be brought to The Lamb Center, 3160 Campbell Drive in Fairfax, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; and Saturdays, from 9-11 a.m.

lation in the region, homelessness is a real challenge in the Fairfax County-Falls Church community. With critical help from volunteers and partnerships with the faith and business communities, FACETS works to prevent and end homelessness throughout Fairfax County by offering a full spectrum of services, such as emergency basic needs and financial assistance, counseling and outreach, educational enrichment programs, and permanent housing.

Clients seeking program updates should call FACETS at 703-352-5090 ext. 1302. Households with children that are in need of assistance or shelter should call Coordinated Services Planning at (703) 222-0880. More information can be found at www.FACETSCares.org

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Let us know about an upcoming event

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Legals

DRINKLOCAL LLC trading as BUNNYMAN BREWING, 9514 WORKHOUSE WAY, LORTON, VA 22079. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for BREWERY and RETAIL ON AND OFF PREMISES WINE AND BEER RESTAURANT licenses to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. SAMUEL GRAY, MEMBER. Date notice posted at establishment: 02/21/2024. 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.

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NEWS

Teen Dies in Lorton Crash

A 19-year-old died from injuries after running into the back a roll back dumpster truck yesterday morning on Richmond Highway at Giles Run Road in Lorton.

At approximately 6:25 a.m., Jason Emeric Brunsman, of Occoquan was driving a Ford Transit Van traveling south on Richmond Highway approaching Giles Run Road. The driver of a roll back dumpster truck was stopped in the southbound left lane of Richmond Highway waiting to turn left onto Giles Run Road. Brunsman struck the rear end of the roll back dumpster truck. He was declared deceased at the scene. The driver of the roll back dumpster truck was uninjured.

Preliminarily, detectives from our Crash Reconstruction Unit do not believe alcohol was a factor in the crash and are investigating to determine if speed was a factor.

There have been six traffic crash fatalities in 2024. In 2023, there were three traffic crash fatalities year to date.

Those with information on this crash are asked to please call our Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543.

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 Published by Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
 Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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Thank You Mount Vernon and Lorton!

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK
MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT

The 37th Annual Town Meeting at Mount Vernon High School (MVHS) was another wonderful celebration of community! Residents were excited to visit our crowded Exhibit Hall, meet the KidBiz Young Entrepreneurs, get their flu vaccines, listen and ask questions of local leaders and watch the virtual “helicopter” tour of all that is happening in the Mount Vernon District from Lorton to Huntington.

For those who have not attended the Town Meeting, this annual event provides an opportunity for residents to hear from our local elected representatives, see what is new and planned for the area, learn about our accomplishments of the past year and initiatives for the coming year and ask your questions. The highlight of the morning is always the virtual “flying tour” of the District with newer technology, including GIS – Geographic Information Systems - interactive mapping and, this year, green screen video to make me a helicopter pilot! The County’s GIS data and mapping technology is open to all, with learning tools, and can be found here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/maps/>.

This year we were thrilled to bring back the Taste of Mount Vernon, following the Town Meeting, where many of you stayed to sample foods from our local restaurants, visit with your neighbors and make new friends. A huge thank you to the restaurants who donated their delicious food, time and talents to make this event possible. We even had Grandma from new a new hot spot - Grandma’s Famous Café join us! Other new



Team Grandma from Grandma’s Famous Cafe

restaurants included HoneyGrow Alexandria, El Fresco Tex-Mex Grill and Taco Rock.

An exciting new addition to the Taste this year was MVHS Culinary Arts - Chef Rocky-murray’s Restaurant. The Culinary Arts program at MVHS is part of the Career and Technology Education (CTE) Program, offering students the opportunity to learn the technical applications of many occupations while preparing for higher education or entry-level employment. The program even offers catering services and holiday meals. Contact Culinary Instructor Nabil Ibrahim at nsibrahim@fcps.edu for more information.

Other participants included some of our newer restaurants and old favorites: 2 Jefes Tex-Mex, America’s Best Wings, Chalkboard Wings & BBQ, Della J’s Delectables, Dishes of India, Dominos, Moe’s Southwest Grill, Pollo Campero and Ruby’s Jamaican Kitchen. I hope you will consider visiting these restaurants and letting them know you appreciate their support of our community. And, a special thank you to our amazing

super volunteer, Lady Fairfax 2023 Shirley Short, for all she does and especially for organizing the Taste of Mount Vernon!

We continue to look for ways to improve this annual event and want to hear from you. Please send feedback, ideas and suggestions to mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov. A huge thank you to our many exhibitors, our presenters, the Police Explorers for their service, the Mount Vernon High School Chamber String Quartet for providing musical entertainment, Mount Vernon High School Marine Corps JROTC Color Guard, the Fairfax County Health Department for providing flu vaccines and the KidBiz Young Entrepreneurs Expo!

Did you miss the Town Meeting this year, but still want to watch or pick up a goodie bag? Watch the Town Meeting or just the virtual tour here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/district-videos>. Pick up a “Goodie Bag” at our office (2511 Parkers Lane) which has lots of District information or find the information on our website.

Same Old Story. Thank God!



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not to be overly self-indulgent but, a 15-year anniversary of when I was originally diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer stage IV (on Feb. 20, 2009), is worth mentioning, if I do say so myself. And I do. Moreover, that diagnosis came with a “13 month to two-year” prognosis. In effect a “terminal” diagnosis. I was age 54 and a half – and was just told I might not make it to age 56. Stunned doesn’t begin to describe my reaction. A non-smoker my whole life with no cancer in my immediate family, the diagnosis seemed peculiar. Not that I ever woe is me but receiving this kind of prognosis led me to wonder what I did to deserve this devastating news. My oncologist couldn’t offer an explanation as to why. Sometimes, there’s no rhyme or reason – or no straight line from “normal” health to the slippery slope that I was now on. Cancer is not arithmetic. It didn’t matter why. It only mattered that it was. My oncologist was more interested in treating my forward than he was in examining my past.

And so, it has been for almost 15 years, as I write this column on Sun. Feb. 18. I certainly remember the beginning, middle and end of the diagnostic process: eight weeks from start to finish. And when Team Lourie met – for the first time, the doctor/oncologist who would become the center of my apparently shrinking universe, we entered totally foreign territory. I had never spent a night in a hospital or even broken a bone. Yet here I was sitting across from an oncologist.

We sat in the waiting room until my name was called. We were led to the doctor’s office. He was sitting down waiting for us. He stood up from behind his desk and introduced himself. After the usual pleasantries, we all sat back down, across from one another. The oncologist began by reading the reports/summaries from all the doctors I had visited while trying to determine the cause for my original discomfort in my left-side rib cage. Discomfort that forced me to go to the emergency room on Jan. 1, 2009. First came the report from the emergency room doctor, followed by the pulmonologist, thoracic surgeon, general surgeon (who performed the biopsy), the pathologist (who evaluated the tissue sample), and the oncologist who summarized it all and thus had the grim task of telling me/Team Lourie what all the doctor’s reports had indicated/confirmed: non-small cell lung cancer stage IV. Five opinions. I didn’t think I needed a sixth.

As a result, a week later I had my first chemotherapy infusion. This would go on every three weeks for years. Each appointment lasted anywhere from two hours to six hours, depending on the chemotherapy infused. In addition, I was getting quarterly CT scans to monitor the tumors in my lungs characterized as “Too many. They’re like weeds,” by my oncologist. And what happened? I didn’t die. I thrived even. My oncologist was perplexed. Non-small cell lung cancer stage IV is a killer. Yet here I was, years later, alive, and reasonably well. He called me his “third miracle.”

As time passed – and I kept showing up for appointments, if you know what I mean, my oncologist occasionally reassessed my condition. But he didn’t find enough convincing evidence to alter my treatment, re-stage my disease or even investigate too much further. It wasn’t until I presented with a lump in my throat above my Adams apple that I was referred to an endocrinologist. I made the appointment and again Team Lourie showed up. It took the endocrinologist two seconds (I’m exaggerating. Maybe it was five seconds) to ask me about the lump in my throat. It took her another 10 seconds, after I explained that I’d had this lump for nine months or so – and it had never been biopsied (to her shock) to tell us that she was going to biopsy that lump then and there. (It was a needle biopsy, so it was quite manageable right in her office.) After the procedure, the endocrinologist told me she’d have the results of the biopsy in a few days. The next day I received a call from her: Apparently, in her opinion, I never had stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer. I had, according to her, - and since this was year 9/10, was very slow-moving papillary thyroid cancer. I wasn’t anybody’s miracle. Instead, I might have been somebody’s error.

Now we got that sixth opinion: from the Lombardi Cancer Center at Georgetown University. We sent over my medical records and then set an in-person appointment to follow up with a thyroid cancer doctor. Again, we sat in an office across from the doctor who said quite simply and happily: “If you had lung cancer, we wouldn’t be having this conversation.” Meaning, if I had lung cancer, I wouldn’t be alive. She confirmed the diagnosis and agreed with the medication I was taking and so we went home, as pleased as possible after receiving a cancer diagnosis. However, considering what our previous cancer diagnosis was compared to what the doctor thinks it is now, we felt, for the first time since the original diagnosis, hope.

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

Stage Set for Construction at Springfield Town Center

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The ball is slowly starting to roll on the Springfield Town Center development plans as a portion of the parking lot was cordoned off and filled with construction materials for the new development plans that include 460 apartments and a 165-room hotel on the parcel.

PREIT Development is spearheading the effort, taking advantage of the prime location transportation-wise. There are two major interstates, the Springfield-Franconia Parkway and the Metro station nearby.

“PREIT’s overall vision is to transform Springfield Town Center into a vibrant, multi-use hub and take advantage of its unrivaled location to create the preeminent family entertainment destination in the



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

Looking north from Spring Mall Drive, part of the parking lot is sectioned off for the storage of construction materials that will be used in the redevelopment project.

Washington, DC market,” PREIT said. Included with the transformation is the LEGO Discovery Center that opened in the summer 2023, and traditional retail, top-tier full service dining destinations, entertainment, fitness and other value retail offerings, they said despite the decline in some retail over the last 10 years.

According to Justin Roth, town center

marketing director, the sale of the land went through on Dec. 18, 2023 and the buyer/developer is Hanover R.S. Limited Partnership. In addition to the apartments and hotel, there will be a public fitness/dog park, an expansion of the existing parking garage near JC Penney with a skybridge connecting to the residential building. Construction should be completed in 2025.

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 8

SUNDAY/FEB. 25

Lúnasa. 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. At Reston Community Center’s Center Stage, Reston. Named for an ancient Celtic harvest festival, Lúnasa is a Reston favorite and one of Ireland’s most renowned music groups. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com.

SUNDAY/FEB. 25

A Journey Through Civil Rights History. 2 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. “A Mighty Long Way: My Journey to Justice at Little Rock Central High School,” a part of the Perspectives Speaker Series. This event, presented in partnership with the Fairfax County Public Library,

features Carlotta LaNier, a key figure in the Civil Rights Movement. LaNier will share her experiences as part of the “Little Rock Nine.” Registrations open on Feb. 4 at 2 p.m. Attendees can register online, a book sale and signing will follow the event. <https://library-calendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/11400644>

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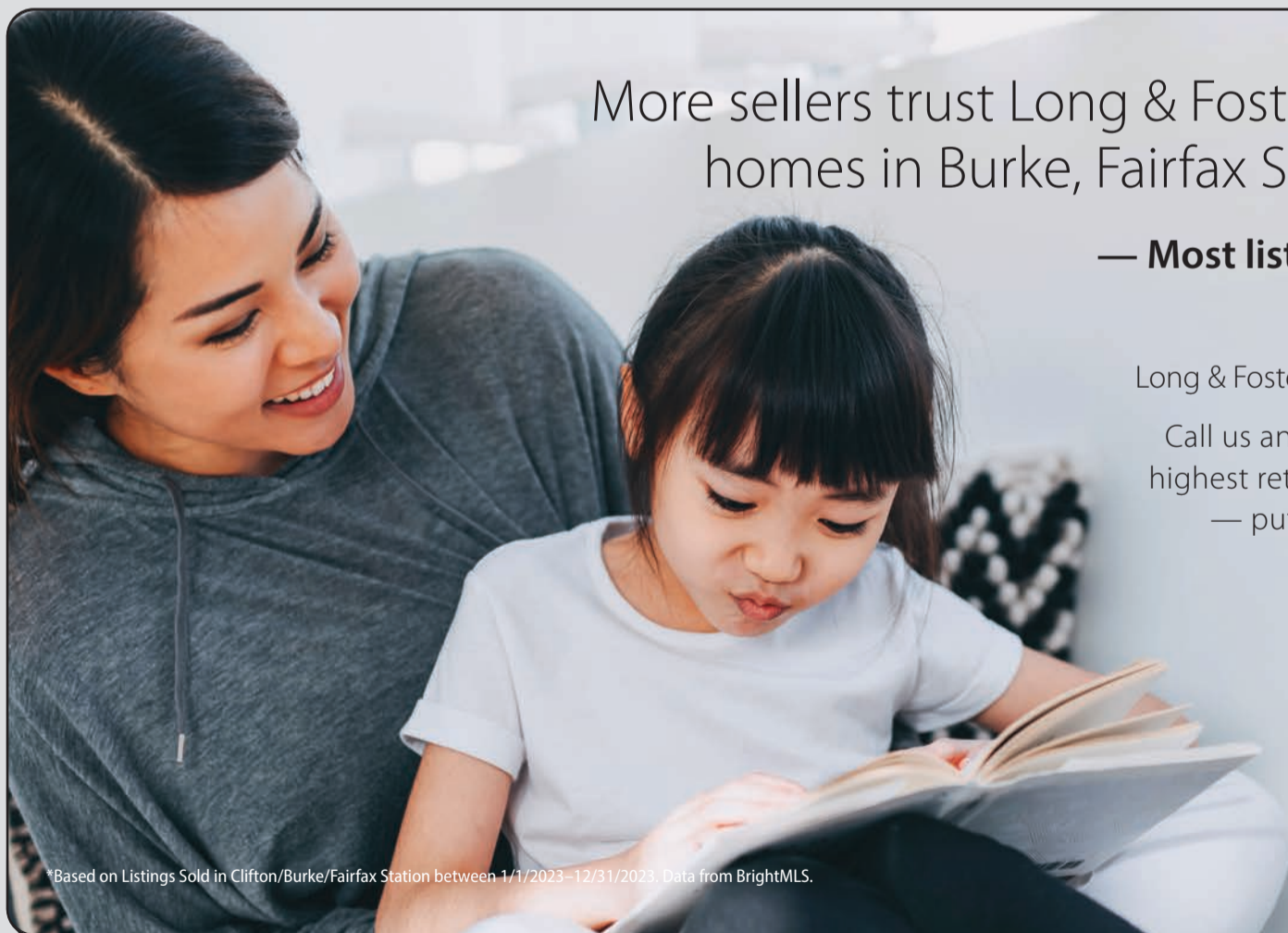
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