

THE CONNECTION

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Reston ♦ Vienna ♦ Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station ♦ Lorton ♦ Clifton

We Are The Champions

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Seahawk Jordan Scott #20 slams this in for two of his 23 points for South Lakes championship win

Students Work to Advance Peace

PAGE 3

Teens Flock for Jobs

PAGE 4

Women's History: Ella Fitzgerald at Lorton Prison Jazz Festivals

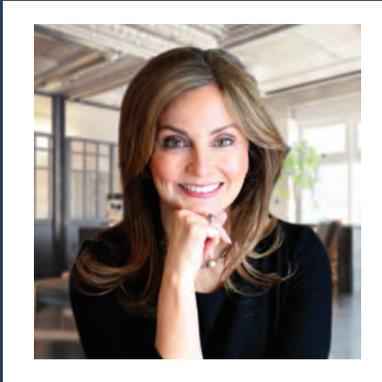
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OPINION, PAGE 8 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 16-19 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 18

PHOTO BY WILL PALENSCAR

MARCH 13-19, 2024

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NEWS

2024 Student Peace Awards of Fairfax County

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Herndon Friends honor countywide high school juniors and seniors.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Students as peace makers inspire, and their dedication to service is commendable. Each year, Herndon Friends, a Quaker society in Herndon, Virginia, invites every high school in Fairfax County to select one junior or senior or a group of students whose efforts promote peace. On Sunday, March 10, Herndon Friends honored the recipients of its 2024 Student Peace Awards of Fairfax County during a reception at the Sherwood C. Community Center in the City of Fairfax.

Margaret Fisher, program co-founder (2006), acknowledged and congratulated the awardees from public high schools, secondary schools, and two private schools for their efforts to think about peace as a means and an objective and for their work as peacemakers. “We have a book for each of you called “Sweet Fruit from the Bitter Tree,” Fisher said. The book, donated by author Mark Andreas and the publisher, is a compilation of 61 stories telling creative and compassionate ways out of conflict.

Frisch said the Friends’ awards began nearly 20 years ago with “one school, one idea, and now look at how far it has spread. ... If you ever wonder if your work is having an effect, think of that.”

Several awardees shared their comments during the gathering before the reception. Sofia Canizalez, spokesperson for awardee school organization Mountain View Mirror, an online newspaper covering diverse topics, including immigration, teen parenting, and mental health, at Mountain View High School, thanked her teacher, Michael Hardy, for helping change her life. The newspaper reports on social justice and helps build confidence among its writers, like Canizalez, who has written about motherhood.

Sean Lacalle, 18, of Herndon and a student at Westfield High School, candidly told how fate and timing led him to join the Westfield Student Ambassadors. Lacalle said he was sitting in his counselor’s office for another matter and “was dragged into it because my counselor needed a Spanish speaker to guide a new student who only spoke Spanish.” After touring with the student and seeing how it eased his transition to a new school, Lacalle was “hooked.”

Lina Liakakos of Great Falls, a junior at Langley High School, is founder/president of the Delivering Hope service club, facilitating monthly donations and events to support homeless shelters and community closets.

SEE STUDENT PEACE AWARDS, PAGE 12
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The 2024 Student Peace Award Recipients with Fairfax County School Board representatives: Seated: Ryan McElveen, At-large; Robyn Lady, Dranesville; far left, School Board Chair Karl Frisch, Providence. And, far right, Sandra Buck Anderson, Springfield District.



Keynote speaker Richard Rubenstein, University Professor Emeritus at George Mason’s Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution



Front row from left, students Sean Lacalle, Evelyn Hunn, Chelsy Murillo-Quintanilla, and Dounia Nadar; back row, Fairfax County School Board representatives: Ryan McElveen, at-large; Robyn Lady, Dranesville District; School Board Chair Karl Frisch, Providence District and Sandra Buck Anderson, Springfield District



From left, Margaret Klarman, Peace Awardee Hlena Hailemariam, senior at Falls Church High School, serves as an FCPS Student Equity Ambassador Leader advocating for policy changes to promote equity and cultural diversity, and Kathleen Webb



Surrounded by a fan club of loved ones, awardee Lina Liakakos, a 16-year-old junior at Langley High School (3rd from right), is the founder/president of the Delivering Hope service club that facilitates monthly donations and events supporting local homeless shelters and community closets.

High School Students Learn about Job Possibilities

Career fair at Chantilly High is huge success.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Some came looking for part-time jobs during the school year, others searched for summer jobs and still others just wanted to get an idea of what's out there. But regardless of their reasons for attending, more than 500 students flocked to the annual teen job fair at Chantilly High.

Held Saturday morning, March 2, the event was sponsored by Supervisor Pat Herry (R-Springfield), in partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools, the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce and other organizations. The jobs available were for full time, after-school, seasonal and volunteer positions, and there were opportunities for internships, as well.

"We had another great turnout," said Herry. "It was wonderful seeing our students connecting with potential employers in a comfortable environment with their peers. And it's exciting to see young students leave this fair with jobs and experience talking to employers."

Nearly 50 businesses and government entities – such as Fairfax County's Park Authority, Department of Public Safety Communications/911, and Fire and Rescue Department – participated. Students, and some parents, too, visited their tables, spoke with representatives and learned what each had to offer.

In addition, two workshops were held to help set up students for success before even taking a job. One dealt with how to compile and write a resume, and the other prepared them for job interviews.

"It was nice to see some opportunities for people my age," said Chantilly junior Hannah Fugh. "I'm looking for a job during the school year that doesn't require that many hours." She spoke with employers about taking training to become either a dental assistant or an electrician.

"They train you until you're 18, and then they offer you a job," she said. "I also liked the workshops here teaching you how to build a resume. That's a good skill to have."

Junior Nate Payne was looking for part-time jobs he could do during school and in the summertime. "The Park Authority had some front-desk positions, and I was also interested in the Merrifield Garden Center," he said. Payne said the job fair is a good idea because "it gives students the opportunity to come out and see different jobs. And it also gave me practice talking to people."

Springfield District School Board member Sandy Anderson was impressed by the breadth of the businesses there, as well as the kinds of workshops offered to the students. "It's an amazing opportunity to show our young people what's out there, in terms of employment," she said. "And it also shows our businesses how eager these kids are to look for work."

Freshman Raagav Bala said he came to



Nate Payne holding some information from potential employers.



Pat Herry and Sandy Anderson

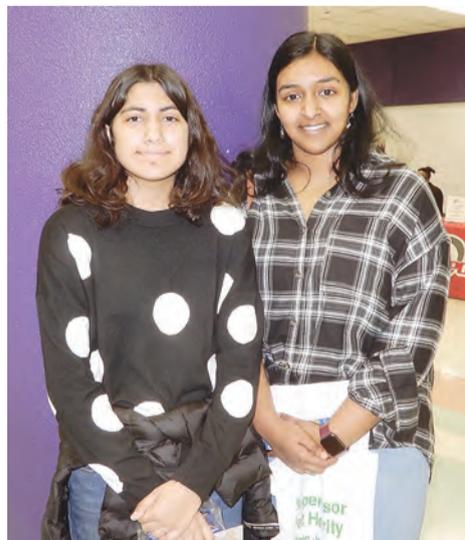
PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



From left are Marie Cheek and daughter Audrey of Caricature Artists Group



Representing Herralink are founder Isabella Solano flanked by brothers (from left) Akarshan and Anmol Anand, both volunteers.



From left are students Nawal Mahmud and Sanjana Sudheer.



Crystal Aquatics' Annie Desmarais (center) poses with (from left) pool manager Andrew Paniszczyn, students Yaron Li and Michael Edwards, and pool manager Chelsea Connelly.

SEE CAREER FAIR, PAGE 6

Fairfax Man Charged in Fatal Car Crash

Police say he was drunk and driving 110 mph.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

In the early-morning hours of Dec. 5, 2023, a violent car crash in Centreville killed a 30-year-old man and sent another to the hospital with life-threatening injuries. Last week, Fairfax County police charged Gabriel Rincon, 22, of Fairfax in connection with the fatality.

Following the crash, police officers from the Sully District Station responded at 12:04 a.m. to the intersection of Route 29 and Clifton Road in Centreville. There, they found a 2013 BMW M3 and a 2012 Hyundai Sonata with severe damage.

According to police, detectives preliminarily determined that the BMW's driver – whom they've now identified as Rincon – was traveling southbound on Stringfellow Road, approaching its intersection with Route 29. (Across Route 29 there, Stringfellow becomes Clifton Road).

Police say the BMW "struck the Hyundai, which Sohail Iqbal of Manassas was driving southbound on Route 29. The collision forced the Hyundai across the intersection, onto the embankment and into a concrete, utility-pole foundation."

Iqbal died after the impact and was pronounced dead at the scene, and Rincon was taken to the hospital. Police initially believed speed was a factor in this fatal collision, and detectives from the Crash Reconstruction Unit continued to investigate whether alcohol was a factor, as well.

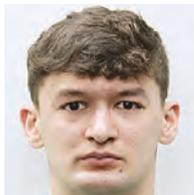
Now, police have revealed their investigation determined that Rincon was allegedly driving more than 110 miles per hour on Stringfellow Road – a 45-mph zone – before the two vehicles collided near the Route 29 intersection. They further allege that "Rincon was intoxicated at the time of the crash."

As a result, they arrested him last week and charged him with DUI-related manslaughter and reckless driving. Since this involuntary manslaughter charge is a Class 5 criminal felony, if convicted Rincon could receive anywhere from one to 10 years in prison, plus a fine of up to \$2,500. Reckless driving is a civil traffic charge.

Police say Rincon turned himself in at the Fairfax County Detention Center and was later released on

his own personal recognizance. He has a June 10 court date.

Meanwhile, anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact the Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips may also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by calling 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).



Rincon

Fatal Motorcycle Crash in Bailey's Crossroads

Detectives from FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit (CRU) are investigating a fatal crash involving a motorcyclist that occurred in Bailey's Crossroads.

Yesterday at 11:10 p.m., officers responded to the intersection of Leesburg Pike and Glen Carlyn Drive for a crash involving a 1996 Yamaha motorcycle and a 2000 Acura sedan.

Preliminarily, detectives determined the driver of the Acura was traveling westbound on Leesburg Pike attempting to make a left turn onto Glen Carlyn Drive when he was struck on the passenger side by the motorcyclist which was eastbound on Leesburg Pike in the left through-lane.

The motorcyclist, Alejandro Portillo, 19 of Arlington, was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced deceased. The driver of the Acura remained on scene and was uninjured. CRU detectives continue to investigate the crash.

Detectives would like to speak to anyone who may have information about this case. Those with information are asked to please call our Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone – 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

There have been 8 traffic crash fatalities in the county to date in 2024. In 2023, there were 3 traffic crash fatalities year to date.

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Career Fair At Chantilly High is Huge Success

FROM PAGE 4

the fair because “I wanted to check out some companies and see if my interests aligned with them. I found a dentistry internship I might try in the future. I’m sure many students are interested in getting a job, either for money or to pursue their passion. And this job fair lets them gain more knowledge about what it’s like to work in a specific field.”

A swimming-pool management company founded in 1974, Crystal Aquatics was one of the businesses at the job fair. “Our base office is in Chantilly, but we run 45 pools in Fairfax and Loudoun counties,” said Annie Desmarais, director of training and staffing. She and two of her pool managers were there hoping to attract some teens to become lifeguards.

Since Crystal Aquatics prides itself on providing personalized service tailored to its customers’ needs, it naturally wants to offer the best possible lifeguards. Before being placed at a pool, its lifeguards are thoroughly interviewed and trained. And a variety of incentives are offered to keep their morale high and ensure a friendly work environment.

Sophomore Michael Edwards came to the fair in search of outdoor, athletic work – specifically, lifeguarding and umpiring baseball games. “I’m looking for a spring and sum-



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Casey Whitmarsh (at right) tells students how to prepare for a job interview.

mer job, and I liked them both,” he said. “But the money as a lifeguard is better. It’s \$12-\$16/hour and is a consistent job. Baseball umpiring for youth leagues pays more, but it’s not consistent, so it’s more like part time. And I’m trying to get a job and make some money.”

Another vendor was Caricature Artists Group. Artist Audrey Cheek, whose mother owns the company, explained how the business works. “Mom will send out requests for artists to sign up on our roster,” said Cheek. “And then – if they can do henna, caricature, face painting, silhouette cutting or balloon twisting – we’ll send them out on jobs.”

“They’ll go to parties and events, and they can earn \$100/hour,” she continued. “We have weekly training sessions where people can work on whatever skill they want to

learn. We can teach them.”

Centreville High 2022 grad Isabella Solano was there, too, with some of her volunteers from Herralink, the company she founded. But unlike the other businesses, she hoped to find volunteers.

“People in retirement homes are pretty lonely, and many only get visited a couple times a year because they don’t live near their families,” said volunteer and Centreville High junior Akarshan Anand. “So we provide community-service hours for students, and they visit the seniors and engage them in activities.”

“There are one-hour events, arts and crafts, movie nights, light and art therapy, plus social-fitness events, such as doing chair yoga with the students,” said Solano. “And we also do one-on-one meetings between

the students and the residents, on weekends, at times convenient to the students. They’ll do things such as playing Scrabble, watching movies or making jewelry together.”

She was happy because many people from the community visited her table at the job fair and learned about Herralink. “A lot of students wanted to get volunteer hours, but some were also genuinely interested in visiting the elders because of their own grandparents.”

“This is a wonderful organization,” added Supervisor Herry. “It’s connected thousands of students with seniors in assisted-living and nursing homes who are basically alone.”

Meanwhile, sophomore Yasmine Hassan was looking for jobs to gain more experience for her future and earn money for college. “I’m thinking of something in the psychology field,” she said. “I also looked at the Gen Z and You table. It’s a business related to mental health and wellness.”

“You help create apps and do internships,” said Hassan. “They talked about how you’d develop and explain your ideas, share them with others and then decide in a meeting if you want to create an app. Some people struggle with keeping up with work, and get burned out and lose motivation, so this would help them with their confidence.”

SEE CAREER FAIR, PAGE 16

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BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

While students and instructors look on, cutting the ribbon are (from left) Chris Bruno, Tara Borwey, Najim Wali, Catherine Read and Nima Mazhari.

Offering a Variety of Mixed Martial Arts

Kaizen MMA opens new location in Old Town Fairfax.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

In Japanese, the word “kaizen” is derived from “kai,” an action that improves something, and “zen,” which means a benefit. Together, they refer to a continual, daily effort to make the whole system better.

That’s the purpose and philosophy of Kaizen MMA – that all the small improvements made during each mixed martial arts class will result in outstanding accomplishments by its students. And it recently opened its newest location at 3950 University Drive, next to Old Dominion Pizza, in Old Town Fairfax.

However, Kaizen MMA is no stranger to Fairfax City. It first opened here on Pickett Road in 2009, then moved to Fairfax Circle before coming to its new home downtown. “I like this location because there’s more foot traffic and it’s in the heart of the City,” said owner Najim Wali. “And there’s also great parking in the nearby [free] parking garage.”

Both males and females are welcome, whether they want to learn self-defense, get in shape, lose weight or just have fun while adding some physical exercise to their day. Classes include Muay Thai (kickboxing), Brazilian jiu-jitsu, wrestling, boxing and Enshin karate (converting defense into offense).

“About 150 adults and 150 kids currently take classes here,” said Wali. “We have individual classes in each specialty, but our focus is a mix of all of them because MMA [mixed martial arts] is the closest to actual, real-life combat. And a good amount of women take classes here for both self-defense and exercise.”

Kaizen has five locations in Northern Virginia and 10 instructors at this one in Fairfax, including husband-and-wife senseis (teachers), Nima and Ruby Mazhari. And although there are other martial-arts studios people could choose to attend, Wali believes his program will provide them the best overall benefits.

“Our instructors are very high-level, professional athletes who have been on world-competition stages, so their experience is world class,” he explained. “And if you go to a gym, you just get a workout. Here, you get a workout and learn something, too.”

Attendees at Kaizen MMA’s recent ribbon cutting included Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read, Economic Development Director Chris Bruno, Old Town Fairfax Business Association Executive Director Tess Rollins, www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

and Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce Chairman Doug Church. Beginning the ceremony was Fairfax City Economic Development’s Programs Manager Tara Borwey, who said, “I’m incredibly excited to welcome this business today.”

Read called Kaizen unique because “they’re not new to the City – they have been here for 15 years. They’ve moved to several different locations, including this one, and I want to say thank you for choosing to stay in the City of Fairfax.”

Gesturing toward the inside of the building where young students were dressed and ready for a training session, she told Wali, “We value businesses like yours and the investment you’ve made in your business, in this City and in these young people – who will be forever imprinted with what you’re teaching them.”

Read also praised Kaizen’s after-school and summer-camp programs, saying, “These are the things that help both the children and the parents in this area to have someplace to send their children that is safe and that is teaching them skills that they will use for the rest of their lives.”

“I can’t say enough about businesses like this,” she continued. “They have five locations and they’re obviously doing incredibly well in the 25 years they’ve been in business. They have a proven business model, and there are a lot of things these young people may forget, but they will not forget what they have learned here.” These things, said Read, are “the discipline, the focus, the camaraderie, the self-esteem and the confidence that they get from being here every day.”

Addressing the crowd next was Wali. “Yes, it’s been 15 years in Fairfax, but it does feel new,” he said. “It feels great to be here – I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else. I’m very happy to be in the City of Fairfax. Every move I’ve made proves even more to me that this was the right location in the right city.”

Also pleased with his chosen profession, he said, “Martial arts changed my life and my world, and I’m happy to be able to give people something they need. First and foremost, my sensei Nima Mazhari has always been with me, guiding me and walking the way with me, so thank you for that. I’m sure he’s happy about this new location, too. And of course, thank you to his wife Ruby who’s been a part of this journey from the beginning, as well.”

Wali then acknowledged his staff, saying, “None of this would have been possible without the effort they put into the students. And now, come in, take off your shoes and walk on the mats – and, hopefully, we’ll get you some memberships.”

For information about class times, prices and other details, go to www.kzmma.com or call 703-426-KICK.

In-Person Public Hearing on the McLean Community Center’s FY 2026 Programs

Wednesday, March 20, 6:30 p.m.

The governing board and staff of the McLean Community Center seek **input from residents** of Dranesville Small District 1A at a Public Hearing on Programs for FY 2026 (July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026).

This is an opportunity for residents to suggest classes, events, performances and youth and teen activities.

Residents are encouraged, but not required, to call the center to be placed on the speakers’ list or may submit written comments to feedback@mcleancenter.org.



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mcleancenter.org

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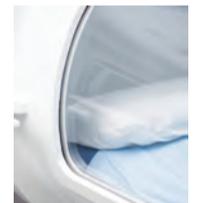
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Equality Virginia: Finally, Marriage Equality is Codified in Virginia

Gov. Youngkin signs HB 174 which updates the Virginia Code to affirm marriage rights.

On March 8, Equality Virginia Advocates, the public policy and advocacy arm of the Commonwealth's leading advocacy organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) equality, applauded the signing of HB 174, a bill that updates the Virginia Code with an affirmative right to marriage for same-sex couples. Since marriage equality became the law of the land in 2015, the Virginia Code has not been updated to reflect that change, even though marriages for same-sex couples have been legal in the commonwealth for nearly a decade. Marriage equality is exceedingly popular in Virginia, with more than 70 percent of public support as of 2021. Gov. Glenn Youngkin signed the bill into law Friday, March 8, 2024.

"Two years into his term, Governor Youngkin has shown leadership and inclusivity, and has finally listened to his constituents with his signing of HB 174. The bill passed through the general assembly with support from both parties, at a time when more than 70 percent of Virginians support marriage equality," said Narissa Rahaman, executive director of Equality Virginia Advocates. "This change to the Code is a positive step forward, and shows how effectively LGBTQ+ couples, interracial couples, and our neighbors have been in sharing their stories and experiences relating to marriage in Virginia. Tonight, we honor the couples who never were able to enjoy this right, the currently married couples who can rest easier following this legal update and all those who will be able to get married here in Virginia for generations to come.."

HB 174 does the following:
1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 20-13.2 as follows:

§20-13.2. Marriage lawful regardless of sex, gender, or race of parties.

No person authorized by §20-14 to issue a marriage license shall deny the issuance of such license to two parties contemplating a lawful marriage on the basis of the sex, gender, or race of such parties. Such lawful marriages shall be recognized in the Commonwealth regardless of the sex, gender, or race of the parties.

Religious organizations and members of the clergy acting in their religious capacity shall have the right to refuse to perform any marriage.

A 2021 poll from the Public Religion Research Institute found that 71% of Virginians support the right of same-sex couples to marry. This percentage has only increased since the question began being asked of voters. In 2006, 53% of voters supported the marriage ban.

Sine Die

By SEN. ADAM EBBIN

"Sine die" is the language that marks the end of the regular session of the Virginia General Assembly. The term, originating from Latin, means "without fixing a day for future action or meeting," and it is the customary phrase uttered by the Clerks of the Senate and House of Delegates at the conclusion of the annual legislative session.

The term Sine die refers to the fact that the General Assembly is not scheduled to meet again until next year. The exception being, of course, the single day next month — April 17 — that we will reconvene to act on vetoes and amendments from the governor on legislation that we passed during our 60-day session.

While the words Sine die represent a finish line for this year's session, it marks the beginning of the final chapter of the legislative process. All told, Gov. Glenn Youngkin received 1,046 bills from the General Assembly this year. As of this writing, he has vetoed eight bills, amended 12, and signed 52 bills into law. The governor must act on all legislation by midnight on April 8, which is 30 days after adjournment of the General Assembly.

I was encouraged to see the governor's signature of HB 174 carried by Delegate Rozia Henson

Jr. (D-Woodbridge), which codifies the legal right to marriage between two consenting adults in Virginia, regardless of the sex, gender, or race of the parties. I introduced SB 101, the identical Senate version of the legislation, which received bipartisan support in both the Senate and House of Delegates and which awaits gubernatorial action.

Much will be speculated in the coming weeks about Gov. Youngkin's potential actions on individual bills, and on the state budget. At a hastily-convened press conference outside the Capitol last week, the governor announced his displeasure with the budget passed by the General Assembly. The governor's chief complaints include: (1) removal from the budget of the proposal to sell state-backed bonds to finance the relocation of two professional sports teams to Alexandria; (2) prohibiting the governor's effort to repeal Virginia's corporate polluter tax, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI); and (3) the blocking of the governor's fiscally irresponsible tax-giveaways to the wealthiest Virginians.

The governor's vetoes thus far present an unfortunate preview of



Adam Ebbin

the actions he could take on bills that await his consideration. In particular, I can only express concern and bewilderment with the governor's veto of SB 47, carried by Senator Barbara Favola (D-Arlington), and HB 46, carried by Delegate Elizabeth Bennett-Parker (D-Alexandria), which would better protect family members of individuals who are temporarily prohibited from possessing firearms because they

are subject to a protective order or have been convicted of an assault and battery of a family or household member. I hope that the governor will heed the voices of the vast majority of Virginians and not stand in the way of additional state-level protections against gun violence in the coming weeks.

I look forward to updating you on the status of the budget and more than 1,000 bills, including 16 of mine, as we advance toward the April 8 deadline for the governor to act on legislation.

It is my continued honor to serve the residents of the 39th Senate District.

Submit a Letter to the Editor

To submit a letter to the editor, email editors@connectionnewspapers.com or via the following form <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/>

Ideally, letters will be original, about local issues and less than 300 words. Please submit letters by noon Friday before publication week, although letters received on Mondays can be considered. Letters must include your first and last name, home address and a phone number. Letters are routinely edited for libel, length, grammar, good taste and accuracy.

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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NEWS BRIEFS

Volunteer for Earth Day at Sully Historic Site

Calling all volunteers, join Fairfax County's largest official Earth Day Event on Saturday, April 20, at Sully Historic Site in Chantilly, Virginia.

Earth Day Fairfax is a daylong extravaganza featuring games, entertainment, exhibits, workshops, vendors and activities geared toward increasing our understanding and enjoyment of the world around us. The event attracts nearly 5,000 people from across Fairfax County annually. Volunteers are needed to fill shifts throughout the day in a variety of capacities, including:

- ❖ Set-up attendants
- ❖ Check-in greeters
- ❖ Nature and recreation activity attendants
- ❖ Guest assistance

If you are looking for volunteer hours, why not be a part of something huge. This is a great opportunity for youth and adult volunteers to earn service hours and help thousands of our neighbors have a wonderful experience at Earth Day Fairfax 2024.

All volunteers must be 15 years of age or older. Multiple shifts are available to accommodate scheduling needs. For additional detail in individual volunteer opportunities and to sign up, visit the Earth Day Fairfax volunteer webpage. https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/opp_details/185571

VIEW THE EARTH DAY FAIRFAX FLYER

The Sully Historic site is located at 3650 Historic Sully Way in Chantilly. For additional details, please contact Duston.Meyers@fairfaxcounty.gov

Donate Menstrual Supplies

Support local women, shelters and non-profits by donating new and sealed packages of tampons, pads, liners and menstrual cups through March 29.

Period poverty is defined as the lack of access to safe and clean menstrual products and hygiene facilities.

There are several drop-off locations throughout the county, including all Fairfax County Public Library branches.

Drop off locations:

https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/providence/2024-feminine-supplies-drive?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

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.

JOHN HUDSON INTERNSHIP PROGRAM ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The Fairfax Area Disability Services Board established an intern program for college students and recent graduates with disabilities. The John Hudson Internship Program provides participants with on-the-job experience, professional development, and training opportunities. Applications are due by Friday, April 12, 2024.

Any college student, law student, graduate student, or recent graduate who self-identifies as an individual with any type of disability is invited to apply. You will not be required to disclose your specific disability; however, your application for this program will signify that you consider yourself a person with a disability. This is a full-time, paid internship (40 hours/week). The start and end dates are flexible, but interns should plan on starting work in the beginning of June and working until the beginning of August.

For more information and to apply visit John Hudson Internship Program | Family Services (fairfaxcounty.gov). For questions, contact Ann Kim at 703-324-3745.

MCC GOVERNING BOARD HOLDS PUBLIC HEARING

The McLean Community Center Governing Board is asking residents of Dranesville Small District 1-A, who pay a real estate tax surcharge to support the center, to share their ideas for future programs and services they would like to see offered and/or improved upon in the planning for the FY2026 fiscal year. The Public Hearing on FY2026 Programs will be held in person at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20, at the center. All meetings of the board are open to the public. MCC is located at 1234 Ingleside Ave. The public hearing is the first step in planning

for the FY2026 budget cycle, which begins July 1, 2025, and ends June 30, 2026. MCC's program areas include the Robert Ames Alden Theatre and The Old Firehouse Center.

- Tax district residents who wish to provide feedback about FY2026 Programs may do so by:
1. Attending the hearing and speaking. Residents are encouraged to call MCC at 703-744-9348, TTY: 711, to have their names placed on the speakers' list; however, speakers are not required to sign up in advance to speak. If a speaker's comments exceed three minutes, he or she will be asked to provide comments in writing. Speakers' residency will be verified before their comments are recorded.
 2. Attending the hearing and submitting comments in writing while there. They will become part of the official record.
 3. Submitting comments in writing without attending the meeting. Residents can send comments by mail, email (feedback@mcleancenter.org) or deliver them in person to MCC both before the meeting and up to seven days afterward (Wednesday, March 27).

For more information, call the center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, or visit mcleancenter.org.

CRISIS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Do you know someone facing a "no heat" situation? The Crisis Assistance Program helps households overcome energy emergencies that cannot be met by other resources. An energy emergency is determined when a household has no heat or is in imminent danger of being without heat. The open application period for the Crisis Assistance Program closes on March 15. Learn more and apply for the Crisis Assistance Program at Common Help's website or by calling 855-635-4370

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Seahawks Are Champions!



Jordan Scott #20 slams in this for two of his 23 points for South Lakes.



Carter Crumity #24 inbounds the ball for Patriot while Jordan Scott covers the inbound.

South Lakes Wins State Basketball championship.

By WILL PALENSCAR



Isaiah Vick #23 scored 5 points in Patriot's loss to South Lakes in the VHSL Class 6 Boys State Final.

PHOTOS BY WILL PALENSCAR

The Patriot Pioneers and South Lakes Seahawks met for the Virginia Class 6 State Championship, held on the campus of Virginia Commonwealth at the Stuart Siegel Center in Richmond on March 9th. Patriot entered the game with 23-4 record, while South Lakes entered the game with a 25-2 record.

South Lakes outscored Patriot 15-8 in the opening quarter. South Lakes would take a 33-23 at halftime despite Patriot shooting 75% of their field goal attempts. In the 3rd quarter Patriot was outscored 15-14 and South Lakes would take a 48-37 lead with a quarter to play. In the 4th quarter Patriot failed to convert on a field goal attempt or 3 point attempt going 0/10 and 0/2, while South Lakes shot 83% of their field goal attempts going 5/6 and converting 7/10 free throws enroute to a 65-39 win, avenging a 83-72 loss on December 19th to Patriot and their first Virginia State Championship. Patriot ends the season as runners-up for the second consecutive year. Patriot was led by Tey Barbour who scored 11 points and the only Pioneer in double figures. Desmond Hopkins added 9 points all from the charity stripe. South Lakes was led by Jordan Scott's 23 points, Brian Kennedy's 16, and Sol Vita added 10 points.



Jordan Scott #20 attempts to block the shot of #23 Isaiah Vick.



The South Lakes Seahawks and coaching staff celebrate their Class 6 Basketball championship.



The South Lakes Seahawks defeat the Patriot Pioneers 65-39 to win the high schools first basketball VHSL State Championship in Richmond, Virginia.

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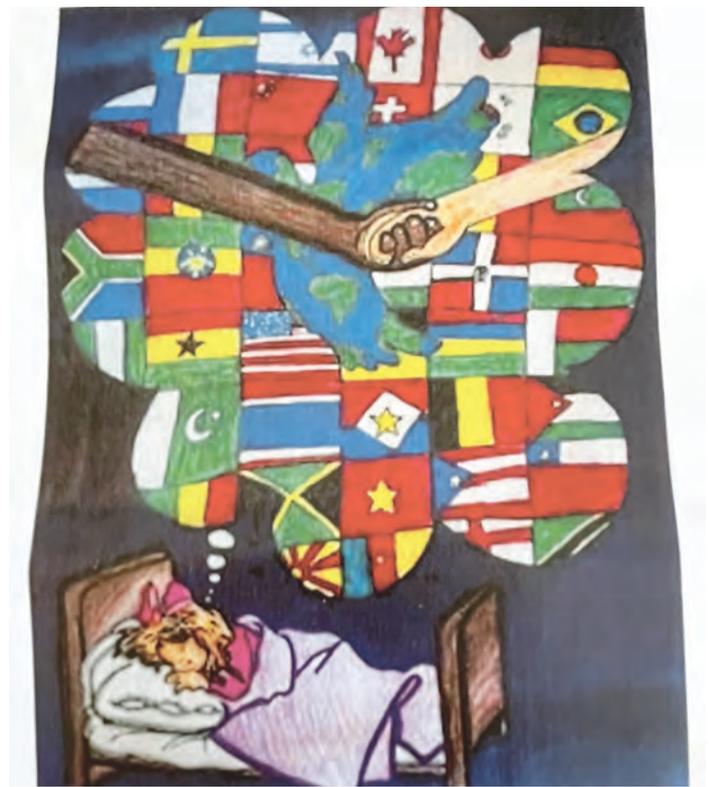
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Volunteers for the 2024 Student Peace Awards of Fairfax County.



First place winning entry of the District Lions Club 2023 Peace Poster Contest, by student artist Meklit Betremariam, 7th grade, Holmes Middle School, Alexandria (Mount Vernon), as seen on the program for the 2024 Student Peace Awards of Fairfax County

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Student Peace Awards

FROM PAGE 3

Special guests included U.S. Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-VA), Fairfax County School Board representatives Ryan McElveen, At-large; Robyn Lady, Dranesville District; Sandra Buck Anderson, Springfield District; and School Board Chair Karl Frisch, Providence District and Richard E. Rubenstein, Professor Emeritus of Conflict Resolution and Public Affairs at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University.

Connolly, a senior member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the President Emeritus of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly said that every day, he “faces the prospect of voting on peace or war.” He makes decisions about the deployment of U.S. troops, the military coalitions the U.S. has formed, conflicts in other parts of the world, and what, if any, responsibility the United States has concerning those conflicts.

“It makes the word peace more meaningful but also more elusive. I was here a year ago; I cannot tell you that we’ve made real progress toward peace. The world seems to be a more dangerous place,” Connolly said. He questioned what happens in the absence of peace and what humans can do to other humans, not to depress the students but because “that’s our challenge.”

Connolly told the student peace award recipients that they contribute to humanity’s overriding hope that all can live in peace, and that matters. Using the metaphor of medieval cathedrals, Connolly reminded the students that those who built medieval cathedrals considered the structures the epitome of human expression and aspiration with



Fairfax County School Board Representative Robyn Lady, Dranesville District



Fairfax County School Board Chair Karl Frisch, Providence District



U.S. Rep. Gerald E. Connolly



Margaret Fisher, co-founder of the Student Peace Awards of Fairfax County



Members of Edison Minds Matter at Edison High School accept their awards joined by Fairfax County School Board representatives.

their god. Since the buildings took centuries to construct, many people never lived to see what the edifice would be. “But they believed in their contribution to that edifice, and that’s what you’re doing today,” Connolly said.

“You have to believe that every time we strike a little blow for peace, it matters ... What each of you has done is build your niche, to that big overriding hope for humanity that we can live in peace,” Connolly said. “Every building block matters and it may not always seem that way.”

The U.S. House of Representatives recognized the 2024 Fairfax County Student Peace Awards Recipients and entered the names of this year’s winners into the Congressional Record.

Guest speaker Rubenstein congratulated the students on their work and putting themselves in the position of other people, considering their thoughts and what people feel. He hoped some students would consider going into “conflict resolution” as a career and developing analytical skills to decide whether they are helping to resolve conflicts

or temporarily creating a truce.

Rubenstein discussed conflict, stating that people are discovering that conflict is not about hostile behaviors or misunderstanding each other but “systems generating conflict.” He used the example of incarceration; people who are incarcerated are denied their rights and human needs, so conflict is inevitable. According to Rubenstein, there is a concept called “structural violence.”

Rubenstein’s comments led him to the Israel-Hamas war and conflict in Gaza. Rubenstein identified conflicts as having shared re-



Jenna Naffe, a senior at King Abdullah Academy, receives her award. Naffe, a Palestinian-American student, later walked out of the Peace Awards reception during guest speaker Richard Rubenstein's address as he spoke about the Israel-Hamas war and Gaza conflict. Others followed and exited as well.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



School Board representative Sandra Buck Anderson, Springfield District, Sofia Canizalez, FCPS teacher Michael Hardy, and chair of the Fairfax County School Board, Karl Frisch, Providence District.

sponsibility, people not giving one party or the other "total blame and the responsibility for the violence."

Rubenstein asked, "Who are the good guys and the bad guys in Gaza? Right? In the situation where Hamas made a horrific attack on people still traumatized by the Holocaust. They had to see that attack as a reminder, a recapitulation of the threat of a campaign of almost extermination of all of them years ago,"

Rubenstein said. "And how can you not see that the Hamas attack didn't just come out of nowhere? There was what Gaza would call structural violence on a large scale in Gaza for years, at least since 2006. (Footsteps heard.) "So what we have in that case of conflict is not one good guy and one bad guy. What you have in that conflict is, always, is always, shared responsibility," said Rubenstein.

"People who don't understand
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that the other side is traumatized by the violence; people who don't understand that they can't secure their own survival by denying the basic needs of the other side. And in the case of (pause), "We got some people walking out."

During Rubenstein's speech, Peace Award recipient Jenna Naffe, a Palestinian-American at King Abdullah Academy, walked out, as did other people.

Herndon Friends presented 27 recipients, 21 individuals, and six organizations with Peace Awards.

After the Friend's reception that recognized all the recipients, first-year Fairfax County School Board Representative Robyn Lady said, "I think this afternoon's awards were fantastic, and as a former public educator, it reminds me that often it's the students who teach us."

More about this year's awards can be found at www.fairfax.studentpeaceawards.org.



Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Jurisdiction	Fed Struc Id	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
PRINCE GEORGE	14124	641	MOODY ROAD	WALLS RUN	2/26/2024
TAZEWELL	18429	19	GOV.G.C.PEERY HWY	BLUESTONE RIVER	2/29/2024
SPOTSYLVANIA	30675	2302	WILLOW RIDGE WAY	STREAM	2/21/2024

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

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

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

The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT's Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730.

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Jazz Great Ella Fitzgerald Ties to Lorton

Recognizing influential women in local and national history.

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

With a voice described as “earthy” and “youthful”, still familiar to many today, jazz singer Ella Fitzgerald has been described as “worth hearing in every phase of her career.” In 2023, “Rolling Stone” named her 45th in their list of the 200 “greatest singers of all time.” We remember the accomplishments of this stellar female entertainer during March Women’s History Month.

Born in Newport News, Virginia in April 1917, she was to become internationally known. She would give performance tours around the world, in places such as Australia, Norway and Panama after her rise to fame in the U.S.

Moving with her family as a toddler to Yonkers, she would eventually move to Hollywood, but it was in New York where she broke into music. Her mother died when Ella was 15, and she began busking on the streets of Harlem at the age of 16, in 1933. Though previously a good student, her grades began to slip and she got into trouble by skipping school and aligning with numbers runners. She was sent to a girls reformatory school for a time.

At the age of 17, in November 1934, she won one of the earliest amateur nights at the famed Apollo Theater. She sang with bands playing in Harlem for the next several years. Then her 1938 version of the nursery rhyme song she co-wrote, “A-Tisket, A-Tasket” brought her public acclaim, becoming a major hit on the radio and also one



Fitzgerald steps off prison bus to the Lorton Jazz Festival; she performed at the festival five times between 1959 and 1968.

of the biggest-selling records of the decade.

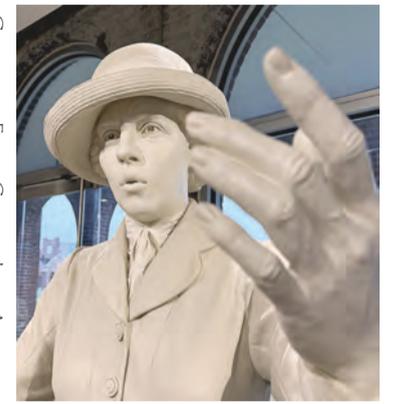
Known as the “First Lady of Song” and the “Queen of Jazz,” in 1959 while performing in a D.C. nightclub she was first invited to sing at the summer jazz festival held at Lorton Prison; an event held exclusively for prisoners and prison staff. As early as 1955, the prison was described as “500 [in-carcerated residents] above safe operations.” Chaplains serving at the reformatory believed in the “redemptive and connective power of music.” They organized summer

concerts held on the prison’s ball field, visiting D.C. nightclubs to invite musicians to participate. Fitzgerald was to sing there four more times between 1961 and 1968, the date of the last festival held there. Over the years, the annual Lorton Jazz Festival drew other big names, including Louis Armstrong, Count Basie and Frank Sinatra during the same time period, but Fitzgerald was the first and most frequent famous performer.

Fitzgerald adapted her style several times over the 60 years of her career, from the swing era with



Jazz great Ella Fitzgerald in 1968, at the age of her last Lorton Jazz Festival performance.



Statue of Lucy Burns, a leader in suffrage movement in the U.S., seen at the Lorton museum dedicated in her honor.



The Lucy Burns Museum on the site of the former prison grounds commemorates the role of women in achieving suffrage in the U.S. and the prison where suffragists were imprisoned for their fight for the vote.

big bands, to be-bop, to a series of song books featuring known composers, to blues, and rock and roll. She was known for singing “scat,” a vocal improvisation using wordless nonsense syllables, creating an instrumental sound with voice. She sang a glass shattering note in a Memorex cassette tape commercial, which when played back on tape also broke another glass, as viewers were asked “Is it live, or is it Memorex?” Although she popularized scat in the mid-40s, in recent years rap artists use her scat techniques to set the rhythms for songs, before coming up with their words.

Fitzgerald died in 1993 at the age of 79, a musical titan; the win-

ner of 14 Grammy Awards, the National Medal of Arts, the NAACP’s inaugural President’s Award, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Visitors to the Lucy Burns Museum, located on the grounds of the former Lorton Reformatory where Fitzgerald delivered her concerts to appreciative prisoners, can see historic photos of the times and life at the prison. The Museum memorializes the work of many other dedicated women. Women who were instrumental in gaining the right to vote for women in the United States. For more information on the museum, see <https://www.workhousearts.org/lucy-burns-museum>.



The Lorton Prison ball field as it appears today, within the site of a new housing complex, shed of its prison function but not its role in history.



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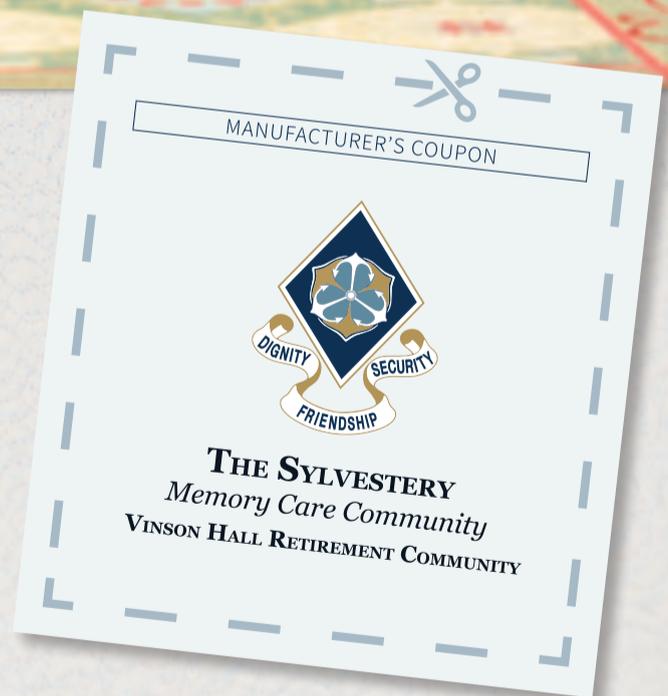
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Whether returning from a group outing to a local theatre or a trip to the grocery store, residents love coming home to The Sylvestery, where they know their needs are taken care of. Discover the personalized care at Vinson Hall Retirement Community. Contact us today to learn more about Memory Support and our continuum of care.



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The stories will encompass a variety of styles and genres.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BONNIE GARDNER
Bonnie Gardner will perform.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BONNIE GARDNER
Jessica Robinson at last year's storytelling festival.

A Powerful Event that Touches All the Emotions

Women's Storytelling Festival is March 14-17 in Fairfax City.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

It's fitting that Fairfax City's annual Women's Storytelling Festival happens during Women's History Month. And this year's event begins this Thursday, March 14, and runs through Sunday, March 17.

Some 21 participants will share a wide range of stories in a variety of styles and genres, and people may hear them both online and in person. Virtual-only tickets are \$45, and in-person tickets for the entire festival ticket are \$65. And if not sold out in advance, one-day, in-person-only passes will be available at the door for \$35/day.

Fairfax City Cultural Arts Manager Megan DuBois calls the Women's Storytelling Festival (WSF) "one of the warmest events I've ever been to. You enter as strangers but leave as friends. From historic stories to fantasy adventures to personal tales, you can find something that makes you go, 'Yes, that happened to me, too.'"

A special, virtual-only showcase will premiere March 14; and in the three days following, in-person performances will be held at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive. All the stories are intended for mature audiences, and ticket holders for both the online and in-person events will be able to watch the festival videos for one month after the festival concludes.

For storytelling schedules, tickets and more information, go to <https://www.betersaidthandone.com/womens-festival/>.

"It's a gift to have this caliber of a festival in our own backyard, here in Northern Virginia," said returning storyteller Bonnie Gardner of Vienna. "You'll hear true, personal stories, traditional stories, fairytales – maybe including fractured or retold ones, historical stories, poignant stories, side-splitting stories, and so on.

"The festival is full of so many amazing women storytellers, and you'll leave thinking about the stories for days to come. I've

always been amazed at the sheer amount of talent the WSF brings together in one room. From nationally known legends of storytelling to emerging artists, the tellers are all performing at the top of their game. The WSF curates an incredible cast."

Hosting the event is the nonprofit Better Said Than Done, which was launched in 2011 to bring the art of storytelling to Northern Virginia. And during the upcoming festival, besides storytellers from Virginia, participants are coming from all over the U.S., including California, Oregon, Massachusetts, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. Some are newer to storytelling, while others have been performing for more than 30 years.

"This is live, up close, personal," said storyteller Megan Hicks. "I loved listening to my favorite musicians on the radio and on my stereo when I was a kid. But when I got to see them live, I was transported – and from my seat in the audience, it appeared that the performers had come to life in ways not possible in a recording studio. Storytelling is like that, only more so."

Fairfax's Jessica Robinson, Women's Storytelling Festival producer and Better Said Than Done founder, noted that this event will be the fifth annual. "The festival debuted in March 2020, days before Virginia shut down due to the pandemic," she said. "Then 2021 was entirely virtual. In 2022, we returned to in-person but kept the virtual option for the many people who chose to watch from home. And the opening night's showcase will include additional storytellers from across the country."

"When I watched the video of the first festival during the pandemic, I thought it was awesome to have a festival of all-women storytellers," explained storyteller Ronna Levy. "I'm honored to be part of this festival and to be telling stories alongside some amazing women storytellers."

Also praising the event, storyteller Penelope Whitney said, "A good storyteller actually changes your own life for a moment as

you follow along. Your heart beats faster, you catch yourself holding your breath, and your own heart hopes, breaks open, and is healed."

Storyteller Rosemary Cipriano said a storytelling festival is unique because "one moment you're laughing at something wild that happened to someone, and the next, you're getting misty eyed as someone describes an experience that touches you. Stories have a way of bringing people together and reminding us just how similar we all are as we walk through life."

"As a woman, I love hearing from other women about their experiences and seeing life through their perspectives," added storyteller Robin Schulte. "I feel enlightened,

seen, understood. There's a nurturing, a celebration, a sisterhood."

All in all, said Robinson, "I've been a storyteller for 17 years, and I can honestly say, the Women's Storytelling Festival is what I'm most proud of creating. And [it offers] some of the best, damn storytelling I have ever seen. 2024 is going to be another amazing weekend of stories, and I cannot wait to watch and enjoy it."

❖ The stories will feature diverse experiences and cultures, and the event is open to people of all gender identities. To learn more about the festival's storytellers, visit <https://www.betersaidthandone.com/womens-festival/2024-storytellers/>.

— BONNIE GARDNER CONTRIBUTED TO THIS STORY.

Career Fair At Chantilly High

FROM PAGE 6

Friends Nawal Mahmud and Sanjana Sudheer, both seniors, came to the event together. "I was looking for a job for either after school or summer," said Mahmud. "I looked at some lifeguarding jobs and one teaching and tutoring little kids about music. I liked the lifeguarding because it was really flexible [regarding work hours]." As for the fair, she called it "an opportunity for teens to look for jobs if they don't know where to start."

Sudheer said she and her friend visited the same tables. "I also liked lifeguarding because they said they'd work my schedule around other things," said Sudheer. "And I liked this event because it was in a small area [the school cafeteria], but with a lot of places you could visit."

An insurance agent, Casey Whitmarsh taught some 100 students in two sessions how to prepare for job interviews and the impact of social media. "I love doing this," he said. "It's an important skill set

for anybody applying for a job. The fear of the unknown really impacts people. So if they know in advance what to expect in an interview, it empowers them and builds their confidence."

He said the students appreciated the information and considered it valuable to them. "When I opened my agency, I wanted to give back and engage with the community," said Whitmarsh. "And I'm all about educating."

Fairfax High sophomore Matthew Saracino said he learned how to look good in an interview and on social media. "I didn't think I'd like this class, but he kept my interest the whole time," said Saracino. "I learned you should research your employer beforehand and know what questions they're going to ask before they ask them, so you can practice and prepare your answers. I want a job in retail, like a cashier, either during summer or after school. The job fair made me aware of my options."

ENTERTAINMENT

FORB'S ANNUAL

NATIVE PLANT SALE

Online ordering for FORB's (Friends of Riverbend Park) 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 56 species 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

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

NOW THRU MARCH 23

Workhouse Wonderland Exhibition and Fundraiser Event. At Workhouse Arts Center, McGuireWoods Gallery, Building W-16, Lorton. Event Saturday, March 23, 7:30-10 p.m. "Every adventure requires a first step," says the Cheshire Cat. Join in a whimsical night at Collect 2024 -Workhouse Wonderland! Enjoy Wonderland activities, libations, and treats, and be part of why "we're all mad here." The Collect exhibition features 50+ original creations by the acclaimed community of artists at the Workhouse. Artwork on display can be won in an exciting raffle at the end of the evening.

MARCH 9 TO APRIL 14

"Every Brilliant Thing." At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. Workhouse Arts Center Performing Arts, announces its newest production, Every Brilliant Thing, a heartfelt one-person play that celebrates the little things that make life brilliant. "Every Brilliant Thing" is an interactive solo performance piece that explores the resilience of the human spirit and the capacity to find joy in all the little things. Showtimes are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are on sale now and range from \$25 to \$35. For more information, visit the website (www.workhousearts.org).

MARCH 16-17

Traveling Players Presents Thrills & Chills: A Festival of Two Plays: Dracula: A Comic Thriller— 1 p.m. and Jane Eyre— 7 p.m. At Traveling Players Studio, in Tysons Corner. Tickets are now available for Traveling Players' Thrills & Chills play festival, which runs weekends March 9-17 at their Studio in Tysons Corner Center. Performed by Traveling Players students, the festival will breathe new life into intrepid heroines and memorable monsters, with modern twists on beloved novels. Visit travelingplayers.org or call 703-987-1712.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 13

Film, "Nanny." 5-7:45 p.m. At Johnson Center Cinema at GMU, Fairfax. The Visiting Filmmakers Series is pleased to welcome award-winning filmmaker (and Film at Mason professor) Nikyatu Jusu to campus for a free public screening of her psychological horror film, Nanny, followed by a post-screening discussion hosted James Bah, Film at Mason student and President of GMU's Black Filmmakers Association. Nanny is the first horror film to win the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival. This event is free and open to the public, but registration is required. Seating is limited, so



Virginia Opera's Madama Butterfly can be seen March 16-17, 2024 at GMU Center for the Arts in Fairfax.

reserve your place today!

MARCH 14-17

2024 Women's Storytelling Festival.

In Fairfax City and Online. The 5th Annual Women's Storytelling Festival (WSF) is hosted by Better Said Than Done. Showcasing a wide range of storytelling styles, the 2024 festival features 21 storytellers who will be performing spoken word stories, intended for a mature audience. Ticket holders, whether in-person or virtual, will be able to watch the festival videos for one month after the festival concludes. In-person performances will take place at The Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, from Friday March 15 – Sunday March 17, with a special virtual-only showcase premiering on March 14. For schedules, other details, and tickets, visit <https://www.bettersaidthandone.com/womens-festival/>

MARCH 15-17

Super Pet Expo. At Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. Hours: Friday March 15, 3 p.m.-8 p.m.; Saturday March 16, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sunday, March 17, 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. Super Pet Expo encourages visitors to meet their forever pet at the Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, March 15-17, where nine rescue groups will exhibit. They are: Akita Rescue Mid Atlantic Coast, Inc; Forever Haven Animal Rescue; K-9 Caring Angels; Katies Kats Island Rescue; Margaret's Saving Grace Bully Rescue; Nalani Horse Rescue; Only Maine Coons Rescue; Shenandoah Shepherd Rescue and Virginia German Shepherd Rescue. Visit <https://www.superpetexpo.com/>

FRIDAY/MARCH 15

St. Patty's Party – The Old Firehouse 5th and 6th Grader Parties. 7-9:30 p.m. At the Old Firehouse, McLean. Old Firehouse 5th & 6th grader parties are themed and decorated accordingly. Free catered food and beverages will be distributed to participants. Parties feature a DJ, an open dance floor and a variety of activities.

SATURDAY/MARCH 16

Shenandoah Conservatory and Friends "Slavic Dreams." 3:00 p.m. At Reston Community Center's Center Stage, Reston. Violinist Akemi Takayama and her musical colleagues perform a concert celebrating their history.

MARCH 16-17

Virginia Opera: Madama Butterfly.

At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Composed by Giacomo Puccini. Saturday, March 16 at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, March 17 at 2 p.m. Performance Sponsor: Woodleigh Chase.

MARCH 16-17

"The Many Disguises of Robin Hood" By Brian Guehring. 2 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. In merry ol' England, the townspeople are overtaxed and unfulfilled. Lucky for them, the mysterious outlaw, Robin Hood, is outsmarting the rich with clever disguises and returning their funds to the poor. Frustrated by these tricks, the sheriff, his daughter, and the prince scheme to capture Robin Hood and maintain control of the taxes. Are Robin Hood and the band of outlaws ready for their riskiest deceit yet? Produced by special arrangement with The Dramatic Publishing Company, Inc., of Woodstock, Illinois.

SATURDAY/MARCH 16

String Theory Presentation. 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Presentation by Dr. Howard Jeffrey Bender on String Theory, including how it influences consciousness and personality, the origin of the universe, and an explanation of Dark Matter.

SUNDAY/MARCH 17

NTRAK Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will have N gauge model trains on display and running at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5; seniors and military (active and retired) \$4. <http://www.fairfax-station.org>, <http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR>, 703-425-9225.

SUNDAY/MARCH 17

St. Patrick's Day with Symphonic Chorus. 4 p.m. at Providence Presbyterian Church, Fairfax. The Fairfax Choral Society invites you to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with the Symphonic Chorus. The Symphonic Chorus will present

"May the Road Rise to Meet You."

SUNDAY/MARCH 17

Irish Dance Performance. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a performance by the Foley Academy of Irish Dance as they present classic and modern dance routines!

THURSDAY/MARCH 21

Film, "Kenyatta: Do Not Wait Your Turn." 5-7:45 pm. At Johnson Center

Cinema, GMU, Fairfax. The Visiting Filmmakers Series is pleased to welcome filmmaker Timothy Harris to campus for a free public screening of his new documentary, followed by a post-screening discussion. Executive produced by Al Roker, *Kenyatta: Do Not Wait Your Turn* tells the story of Malcolm Kenyatta, a self-described "poor, gay, Black man from North Philly," currently a Pennsylvania State Representative, during his historic run for the Pennsylvania Democratic nomination for the United States Senate. This event is free and open to the public, but registration is required.

FRIDAY/MARCH 22

Oil Painter Denise Shamoun Phalan.

11 a.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. McLean Art Society is honored to host local artist, Denise Phalan, who will share her personal sketch books that serve as an important component in her process of oil painting, creating mixed media and collage. Ms. Phalan earned an MFA in drawing and painting from The Catholic University of America in Washington DC, is a member of the Oil Painters of America and Austin Plein Air. Her studio is located at The Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton VA. She has received numerous awards for her paintings and mixed media works.

SATURDAY/MARCH 23

Mr. Vaudeville. 2 p.m. At Reston Community Center's Center Stage, Reston. Mr. Vaudeville finds himself in a predicament of theatrical confusion that creates a hilarious afternoon of magic, mayhem and vaudeville comedy.

SATURDAY/MARCH 23

Fiesta Del Sol: Latin American & Caribbean Festival. 5-10 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Enjoy the tastes and sounds of Latin America and the Caribbean with live bands, quality artisan exhibitors, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and sumptuous food. Learn how to dance the salsa, meringue or bachata from the best of dance instructors throughout the evening.

SUNDAY/MARCH 24

Easter Egg Hunt/Craft and Bake Sale. 11:30 to 1 p.m. At Clifton Presbyterian Church, Clifton. The

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 19

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Employment

Transaction Network Services Inc. in Reston, Virginia seeks Software Engineer. Design software systems. Requirements: MS in Comp Sci/Comp Engg/Electrical Engg/IT + 1 yr exp. Email resume to TAG@tnsi.com. Must reference job title/REQ #R323.

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Employment

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Legals

An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg

Obituary



MARY ALICE SWANN
(Age 82) of Reston, VA,

Passed away peacefully on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, with her family at her side. Beloved wife of the late John A. Swann; mother of Dennis W. Williams, Mary C., Odell L., Sr. (Charmin) and the late George F.T. Swann. She is also survived by three grandchildren, Casey, John, and Odell Jr.; three great-grandchildren, Elizabeth, Jayden, and Kamryn; three sisters, Betty Shellman, Phyllis Bunch, and Sonya Clay (James); two sisters-in-law, Elizabeth Bishop and Pela McFee (Terry); other relatives, loved ones and friends.

Viewing and visitation will be held on Friday March 15, 2024 from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. at Heritage Fellowship Church, 2501 Fox Mill Road, Reston, VA 20191. A second viewing and visitation will be held on Saturday March 16, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. till time of service 11:00 a.m. at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, 24337 Old Carolina Road, Aldie, VA 20105.

Interment: Mt. Pleasant Memorial Park, Aldie, VA

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THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Gains, Gaps & Goals: The Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County

Join a presentation from the University of Virginia on the status of women and girls in Fairfax County. The presentation will be followed by a panel discussion, audience Q&A, and networking with light refreshments after the event.

Gains, Gaps & Goals: The Status of Women and Girls in Fairfax County

FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2024

2-5 p.m.
Government Center Board Auditorium
Event will also be live streamed on Channel 16.

MEET THE PANELISTS:

Melanie Akwule is founder & CEO of MINWO Inc., an economic development tech company that works with innovation ecosystems to provide culturally informed business development support. Utilizing her background in product management and data science, her company's platform uses Artificial Intelligence to create uniquely tailored entrepreneurial experiences for the businesses within customers' ecosystems. Since starting her technical career working for GE as a technical product manager in their Data Science Product division, Melanie has focused on unlocking value by transforming data from underutilized assets to actionable insights for her customers.



Hunter Gunn, LCSW, is the senior director of Community Health at Inova Cares for Women and Children. She is a social worker with over 25 years of experience working with myriad populations and social issues.



Her specialty areas include child welfare, juvenile justice, forensics, mental health, special education, death and dying, maternal and child health, and chronic disease. She currently oversees management of the Women's and Children's Programs in Inova's Community Health Service Line, which includes four women's clinics and six children's clinics in Northern Virginia.

Salima Hemani: As founder and CEO of SZH Consulting LLC, a management consulting firm specializing in the science and art of organizational development and effectiveness, Salima Hemani provides customized, research-driven solutions to Fortune 500 companies, government agencies, and various private and non-profit organizations to enhance their organizational health. Prior to launching SZH Consulting, Salima held senior leadership positions at global companies including Accenture, Northrop Grumman, Marriott International, and BAE Systems where she helped inform the strategic direction of talent management and organizational development functions. She has served on the board of directors for the International Coaching Federation DC and as the mentor/adviser for the Virginia Tech Executive MBA program.



Jaime Hirschfeld: Since July 2022, Jaime Hirschfeld has been director of Client Sales and Services at Flex-Professionals, where she spearheads the client-centric aspects of the business, driving business development and overseeing activities aimed at generating revenue. Prior to this role, she served as director of revenue development for a software company specializing in public libraries, contributing to community engagement, enhancing marketing impact, and optimizing fundraising initiatives. Before



venturing into the software industry, she dedicated a decade to providing training, technical assistance, and grant support to community health centers and other federal grantees.

Monica Jackson is an experienced advocate for women and girls in Fairfax County. She has a background in early childhood education and has played a key role in supporting the development of educators, caregivers, and high school students. As an active Advisory Board member of the Fairfax Child Care Council and the Virginia Small Business Council, Monica has demonstrated her commitment to advocating for policies that promote the well-being of children and support small businesses in the community. She has also been invited to share her expertise with the FarmWise Committee, working to enhance access to nutritious food for families in Fairfax County.



Rida Karim serves as the student board member on the Fairfax County School Board, representing over 180,000 students. Through her position, she has dedicated herself to uplifting student voices and creating positive change in their educational experiences. Rida is passionate about empowering young people, advocating for equity, and amplifying the voices of students. Her sense of purpose lies in facilitating access to new opportunities for students, and she is dedicated to advocating continuously for progress. Rida firmly believes in the extraordinary potential within every student and pledges to work toward enabling them to make a positive impact on the world.



A Shoe Has Dropped



By **KENNETH B. LOURIE**

Well, you asked for it. By virtue of reading this column regularly, I am here to tell you that the scan results came in. Indeed, it will be a, as titled on my 2/28/24 column "Rocky Road Ahead" (since I'm between a rock and a hard place), "a spot of bother," as the Brits' say. Treating the thyroid cancer damages the kidney (has damaged the kidney), not treating the cancer sort of stops the damage to the kidneys - which is a huge thing because I am perilously close to becoming a dialysis patient. However, stopping the cancer medicine enables the cancer to then go untreated. (I can't see how that's good thing.) And as of this morning, the immediate future seems to be not to restart my cancer medicine. Which is sort of a problem because the results on the scan indicated some tumors grew while others were stable. (Typically, when on the medication, the tumors have been stable.) Now what? I suppose I might get some answers later this week when I meet with the nephrologist (kidney specialist) for the first time. But I think I know what the outcome/upshot will be. Given the levels on this week's lab work (along with the scan showing simultaneous growth/movement of the tumors in my lungs), which had multiple indicators that my kidneys are suffering (down to 25% of normal - and there's no way to reverse the decline), the immediate future looks bumpy indeed. There's a famous sports' line that applies here: "You can't stop him/her, you can only hope to contain him/her." I hope I can maintain them (the kidneys) because should the kidneys continue their decline, it will be "Katie bar the door," as we say in New England, which means trouble, and trouble means d, d, d, dialysis.

At least my oncologist and the nephrologist are talking; trying to coordinate a path forward that offers me some hope and quality of life. (My oncologist has always been concerned with my 'quality of life') The problem is, my wife and I have started reading online about my situation: patient being treated for thyroid cancer with side effects damaging the kidney is not unusual. In fact, it reads to be downright predictable. Predictable in that the doctors know the side-effect consequences of treating thyroid cancer. Unfortunately, there may not be much they can do to slow down the negative impact. It doesn't seem likely that the thyroid cancer will go into remission by itself. I guess I'll have to be happy with the knowledge that the doctors know what's happening and why and try not to be miserable that they may not be able to do much about it. To invoke Joseph Heller: it's a bit of a "Catch 22." And to invoke Alan Arkin's reply: "That's some catch, that catch 22." (Meaning: Damned if I do, damned if I don't.)

Still, it's probably keeping me alive by stopping the cancer medicine and not making a bad situation worse. And while the medicine is adversely affecting the kidneys, I must hope the slow-moving cancer will be - while not on any medication, as slow-moving as it has been since late Feb. 2009. But, to quote the Brits again: "It's early days." However, I wouldn't say it's a preliminary finding. Hardly. Nor would I say it's cast in stone but it's rocky from where I sit. And though the recliners that I'll likely be sitting in at the dialysis center are themselves comfortable, the reason I'm sitting there is quite uncomfortable: my body is incapable of performing a major bodily function. So much so that I'll need help from a machine multiple hours and days per week. Quality of life? Well, dialysis sure beats the alternative. However, until I'm in that chair for all those hours and days, I will refrain from going down any rabbit holes. Heck, I haven't even been officially diagnosed/referred yet. And not that I believe in miracles, but I remember a very comforting bit of encouragement I regularly received from my late brother, Richard, all those years ago and during various intermittent medical stops along the way while being treated for non-small cell lung cancer - and not dying: when invariably I had to change my regimen for one health reason or another: "Whatever they've tried with you, you've always done better than they expected. You're the exception that proves the rule." And that will be my attitude going forward: to think positive about the negative. As one of The Stooges said years ago: "Rome wasn't built in a day. And neither was Milwaukee." I must be patient (pun intended) and take it one day at a time. As Yogi Berra so famously said: "It ain't over till it's over."

I'm just afraid, quite frankly. I've survived so much longer than the original "13 month to two-years" prognosis (15 years and counting, hopefully still counting) I was given at the beginning. I had no idea treating the cancer would sort of lead me down the garden path so that one day, if I lived long enough, I might have kidney problems - due to the very medicine I was taking to treat the cancer (what I refer to as my underlying disease). But now, at a much older age than I was in 2009 - with a weakened immune system to boot, somehow, I must try to "keep on keepin' on." I suppose it's possible. Not sure if it's probable though. As the doctor in Miles City told Augustus McRay ("Lonesome Dove") when Gus refused to allow the doctor to amputate his leg: "I assure you sir, the alternative is grim."

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

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 17

Clifton Betterment Association, partnering with the Clifton Presbyterian Church will host an Easter Egg Hunt/Craft and Bake Sale at the Clifton Presbyterian Church. All kids welcome, no need to be a church member. The Bunny will be there.

ENJOY EGG-CELLENT SPRING CELEBRATIONS AT FAIRFAX COUNTY PARKS!

Spring is in the air and the Fairfax County Park Authority is gearing up for a season of family-friendly fun with all sorts of egg hunts and spring celebrations at several locations throughout the county. Enjoy festive activities for all ages in the park - the perfect setting for creating lasting spring memories:

Spring EGG-stravaganza at Lake Fairfax Park on March 23 from 3:30-5 p.m. Cost \$8.

Baskets & Bunnies at Burke Lake Park on March 30

Amusements tickets, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Cost \$10 (online ticketing open until March 28. Limited day-of sales).

Egg Hunt Ticket (1-4 years). Choose times between 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Cost \$5 (online ticketing open until March 28. Limited day-of sales).

Bubbles and Bunnies at Cub Run Rec Center on March 30, 9-10:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.-12:30

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"Every Brilliant Thing" can be seen now through April 14, 2024 at Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton.

p.m. Cost \$20.
Easter Egg Hunt at Colvin Run Mill on March 30. Choose times between noon to 3:45 p.m. Cost \$8.
Mini Golf Egg-plorations at Oakmont Rec Center on March 30. Choose times between 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cost \$15.
Egg-speriments at Hidden Oaks Nature Center on

April 6, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Cost \$10.

SATURDAY/MARCH 30

"Empowering Women for Their Future."

2-4 p.m. At Cabell's Mill, 5235 Walney Road, Chantilly. Sponsored by the Fairfax County Women in NAACP. This event promises to be an inspiring gathering celebrating the contributions of women throughout history and exploring ways to empower women for the future. Guest speakers who will share their insights and experiences:

Jatrice Martel Gaiter: Executive Vice President, External Affairs for Volunteers America

Angela V. Harris: Award-winning Coach, Technologist, and Philanthropist

Jneva Norfleet: Program Analyst for the Federal Bureau of Investigation

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!
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.



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Falls Church, 22046
\$2,000,000

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McLean, 22101
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