

# THE CONNECTION

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

Seeking  
Housing for  
the Homeless

PAGE 3

Change the  
Name of Burke?

PAGE 8

Honoring  
Vietnam  
War Veterans

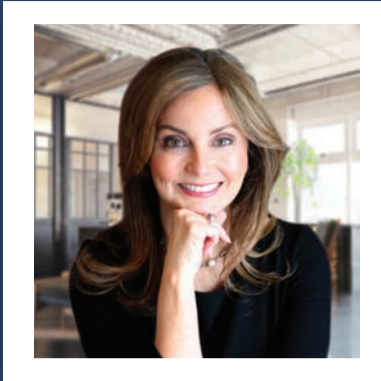
PAGE 4



SAR color guard members (from left) are Jim Cordes, Larry McKinley, Rick Abbott and Forrest Crain as Fairfax County Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution; Fairfax Resolves Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution; VFW Post 8469 and American Legion Post 177 honor veterans on National Vietnam War Veterans Day, March 29.

OPINION, PAGE 10 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 20 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 22

PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



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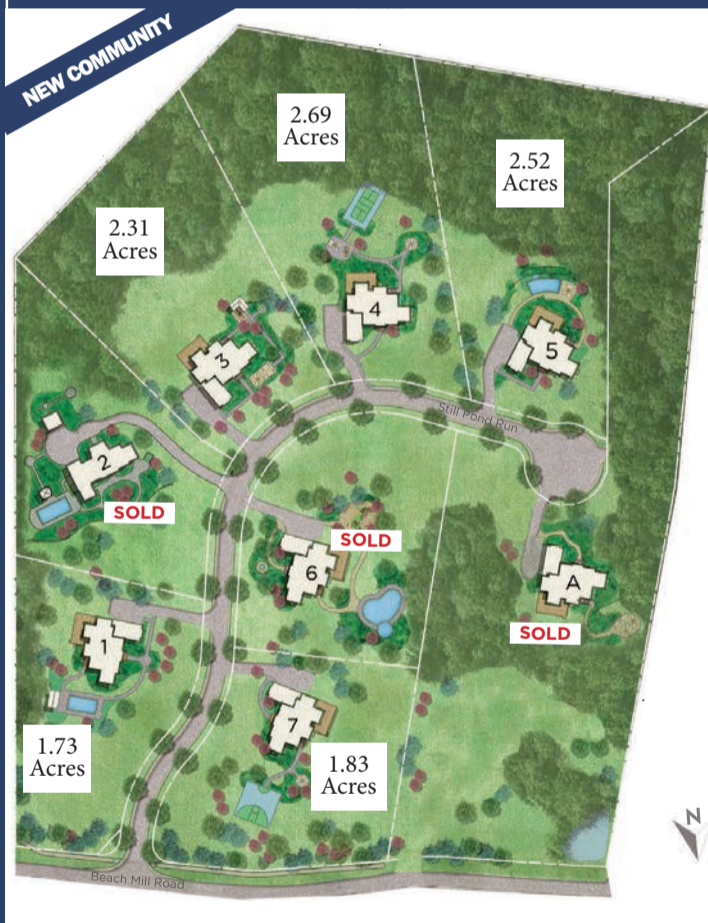


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# NEWS



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The Reston Town Center North encampment. On the right, one can see a few of the encampment's other tents.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County North County Human Services Center, 1850 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston, is the new temporary overflow shelter opening site. Pitched encampment tents are yards from the center's rear parking lot.

## Unsheltered Homeless Persons at Reston Encampment

### Addressing future encampment closure.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**R**eston Strong, which supports Fairfax County's largest tent encampment, arranged interviews with four unsheltered people experiencing homelessness living in an encampment in Reston Town Center North.

The interviews came days after Supervisor Walter Alcorn (Hunter Mill District) announced at a news briefing that the encampment would be "winding down." Alcorn called the pending closure process a "humane" plan.

It will not be a sudden and aggressive sweep or a chaotic shutdown with police entering, as occurred last year at sites across the United States, including the closure of the encampment in McPherson Square in Washington, D.C.

Instead, Fairfax County presents a steady strategy, beginning with its readiness to post no trespassing signs along the encampment's perimeter, alerting those who call their tents there home.

Additionally, the nonprofit Cornerstones, which operates the nearby 70-bed Embry Rucker Shelter, is designated to open "a new temporary overflow shelter during the coming weeks," according to Alcorn. The shelter will be located at 1850 Cameron Glen Drive, adjacent to the encampment and within the nearby North County Human Services Center. "We have a lot of folks that need temporary shelter," Alcorn said.

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

A woman parks a shopping cart full of her possessions in front of the Fairfax County North County Human Services Center, 1850 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston, on Friday, March 29.

Maura Williams, MA, executive vice president of housing and community programs at Cornerstones, Inc., said, "Our team of skilled staff will be right there, on-site, offering compassionate wrap-around case management support to unhoused neighbors utilizing this new opportunity. Our goal is to assist the temporary overflow shelter guests in resolving urgent needs and work with them to secure longer-term, affordable housing solutions that will ultimately support their ability to regain stability and self-sufficiency."

The housing solutions are the result of the March 14, 2024, approved Memorandum of Agreement between the Fairfax Coun-

ty Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), which takes effect in May 2024, adding 300 new supportive rental assistance vouchers available to Fairfax County residents, 100 a year for three years.

The agreement's funding is \$20 million. Tom Fleetwood, director of the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development, says, "This funding is so important — it provides critical support services along with rental assistance needed for people to be successful in their new homes."

"This just kind of blows my mind that the

state stepped up and in that level, but we're very appreciative," said Alcorn. The program prioritizes individuals experiencing long-term or repeated episodes of homelessness and housing instability that frequently lead to crises, hospital visits, or contact with the criminal justice system, in addition to those leaving state psychiatric hospitals.

While Alcorn could not provide the demographics of the encampment population, data on encampment residents' interaction with the criminal justice system, or any deaths due to hypothermia, he agreed to look into it. He mentioned that the neighboring senior living facility erected a fence around its property as a buffer from the encampment.

Reston Strong founder Sarah Selvaraj-D'Souza said she anticipates the campground's population rising now that the county's winter hypothermia shelter program closed on March 31. Reston Strong has provided the people in the encampment with food, supplies, and garbage collection for years. They have set up 20 new tents and prepared supplies, anticipating 40 people at the encampment.

Selvaraj-D'Souza said yes when asked whether any Fairfax County Public School students had been at the encampment and lived there — an 18-year-old South Lakes High School senior who dropped out.

"Unsheltered homeless persons" is a term the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Point-in-Time Count regulations use to refer to those "living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans such as tents, vehicles, parks, sidewalks and the like.

SEE HOUSING FOR HOMELESS, PAGE 16  
THE CONNECTION ♦ APRIL 3-9, 2024 ♦ 3



Veterans standing with the memorial wreath are (from left) David Gundry, Mike Fant, Cherie Fuchs, Link Spann, James Johnston, John Weaver, Ahsan Nasar and Mac McCarl.



SAR color guard members (from left) are Jim Cordes, Larry McKinley, Rick Abbott and Forrest Crain.

# Fallen Vietnam War Veterans Are Remembered

**Honoring their ‘unwavering courage, resilience, dedication to duty.’**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Each year, Americans recognize their military veterans on the Memorial and Veterans Day holidays. But few think about them on National Vietnam War Veterans Day, March 29 – or even realize it exists.

However, military organizations in Fairfax City haven’t forgotten. And last Friday, March 29, they gathered at the Veterans Amphitheater outside City Hall to honor and remember them. These groups are the Fairfax County Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR); Fairfax Resolves Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution (SAR); VFW Post 8469 and American Legion Post 177.

“We are privileged to honor all Vietnam Veterans and their families today,” said DAR Regent Janice Dixon. “And we want to individually remember the 147 Fairfax County residents who died in Vietnam and are named on the plaque on the Veterans Monument on the lawn of [Fairfax City’s] historic courthouse.”

Former Fairfax Mayor David Meyer, a chaplain with the SAR’s Fairfax Resolves, gave the invocation, saying this prayer was also for his Vietnam veteran father-in-law, Air Force Col. Charles Collins, who died last year. “We gather today to remember those persons who faithfully served our nation in Vietnam and the Greater Southeast Asia area, more than half a century ago,” he said. “For these brave men and women who bore the burden of battle, we acknowledge our debt.”

But, said Meyer, this debt isn’t paid just by appreciation, but by “supporting those veterans still with us and their families. Many veterans struggle with PTSD, addiction and the diagnosis of cancer that hangs over them like the Sword of Damocles. May all of us be unceasing advocates for active justice that heals and comforts them in

each phase of later life.”

Acknowledging Vietnam veterans’ strength and fortitude, he also prayed that “their wisdom, gained slowly but steadily with each passing year, be imparted to a new generation of citizens who inherit the invaluable legacy of freedom, democracy and constitutional government.”

Then the SAR color guard presented the colors and everyone attending said the Pledge of Allegiance.

“On this solemn occasion, let us pause and reflect on the profound sacrifices our Vietnam veterans have made for our nation,” said SAR Fairfax Resolves President Jon Rymer. “Their sacrifices in the jungles and rice paddies in Vietnam were a testament to their unwavering courage, resilience and dedication to duty. They faced unimaginable horrors and hardships, yet [continued] to defend our freedoms and the ideas upon which this country was founded.

“Many of our Vietnam veterans returned home to a nation divided by the war, and they faced prejudice and misunderstanding. But they carried on with dignity and honor. The experience forever shaped their lives, and many of them continue to serve our communities in countless ways. Today, we stand in awe of their bravery and sacrifice.”

“We’re eternally grateful for their service, and we pledge to never forget the lessons learned from that tumultuous period in our history,” continued Rymer. “Let us use this day to honor Vietnam veterans – both those who returned home and those who made the ultimate sacrifice. And let us reaffirm our commitment to seeing that our veterans and their families receive the care and respect they so richly deserve.”

Speaking next, VFW Post 8469 Commandeer Mac McCarl said National Vietnam War Veterans Day was first observed in 2012.

SEE VIETNAM VETERANS DAY, PAGE 6



From left are Vietnam veterans John Weaver, James Johnston and David Gundry.



Jim Cordes reads names of the fallen while (from left) DAR members Janice Dixon, ret. Army Col. Cherie Fuchs and Suzy Mulligan listen.



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**MCLEAN VILLAGE**



Jon Rymer



Eric Parkhurst



David Meyer



Mac McCarl

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

# Honoring Their ‘Unwavering Courage, Resilience, Dedication To Duty’

FROM PAGE 4

“Today we join thousands of communities throughout the nation thanking and honoring Vietnam veterans and their families.” (Combat units withdrew from South Vietnam on March 29, 1973.)

American Legion Post 177 Commander Eric Parkhurst said this day honors the 9 million people who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces from Nov. 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975. American advisors were sent to support South Vietnam in 1955 and U.S. involvement eventually escalated. The first combat death was reported in 1959, with direct combat happening between 1965 and 1975.

Parkhurst noted that the Vietnam veterans’ commemoration makes no distinction between those serving in Southeast Asia then or stationed elsewhere. He said they were all called to serve and had no choice where they were sent. “All were seen in the same way

by a country that could not separate the war from the warriors,” said Parkhurst. “Each person serving during this period earned and rightly deserves our profound thanks.”

Before the names of Fairfax County’s fallen Vietnam veterans were read, Dixon explained that “When you say their names, they are not forgotten.” Those attending who were their relatives were recognized and applauded, and Dixon thanked them for the sacrifices they made that “enabled [their] loved ones to serve.” In addition,



Dressed as a Continental soldier, Rick Abbott reads some of the names.

attendees who served then were also applauded and given a commemorative challenge coin.

As of Jan. 24, 2023, said Dixon, “Sadly, 1,553 Vietnam War veterans are still considered missing in action, and their families await word of their fate, as we continue our diligent work to fulfill our promise and bring them home.” Then, as each fallen veteran’s name was read, a yellow flower was placed into a memorial wreath. Afterward, attendees added flowers in re-



Janice Dixon

**“We want to individually remember the 147 Fairfax County residents who died in Vietnam.”**

— DAR Regent Janice Dixon

membrance of anyone who served during that war’s timeframe.

Dixon said that, over the past 12 years, 27,000 ceremonies total have been held “in towns and cities across the country to thank and honor 3.9 million Vietnam veterans – a little over half of the 6.3 million Vietnam veterans living today.”

Meyer then gave a closing prayer, thanking God for Friday’s gathering and remembering those who’ve died. “We hold these persons in our hearts as a treasured remem-

brance,” he said. “May this season of rebirth and new life give us, the living, the healing, wholeness and hope for each new day.”

Following the ceremony, three local veterans discussed what brought them there. Burke’s John Weaver, a VFW member, grew up in Fairfax City and attended in memory of his father. “He was in the military and came here to establish a missile site on Popes Head Road in 1956, and that’s where we lived in Fairfax City,” said Weaver. “He was in the Army and fought in WWII and the Korean War. And I served in the Army in Vietnam.”

Similarly, Fairfax resident James Johnston said, “I came here to honor all Vietnam veterans, especially my dad, who served there in 1967. I also wanted to remember a lot of my schoolmates from college – University of Maryland’s Munich, Germany campus – who served in Vietnam. I enlisted in the Army in 1966 and was in Vietnam in the Signal Corps.”

Fairfax City’s David Gundry served in the Vietnam War with the Mobile Riverine Force on the Mekong River. “It was five ships that housed

the 9th Infantry so they wouldn’t have to build a fort in the mud,” he explained. “I was in the Navy as an electronics technician. Then I worked in the repair facility at Camp Tien Sha in Da Nang and at a mobile one outside Tanmay.”

“When I came back from the war, people asked, ‘Where you been?’ That’s it,” said Gundry. “So it felt good to see this ceremony today.” After all, he added, choking up, “Somebody has to remember – and there’s so few who do.”



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# Residents Defend Keeping Burke Name

Little interest expressed in 'Fenton Project.'

By SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

**B**urke resident David Martosko explained his historical research, and the motivation behind his desire to change the name of Burke at an open meeting he called on March 27 at Pohick Regional Library. On the rainy evening, 40 Burke residents showed up to listen and view his 45 minute presentation.

"My independent document research has uncovered some unsettling things about Silas Burke, the town's namesake," wrote Martosko in an email to the Connection. "The worst of the documentation I found shows that Silas Burke oversaw slave auctions while he was a Fairfax County judge and a school commissioner."

His professional level slides included representations of the historical documents on which Martosko based his suppositions about Silas Burke's actions and activities. Martosko said he proposes renaming "Burke to 'Fenton,' to honor the first of many children whom Silas Burke bought. He paid \$206 for Fenton in 1826, when the boy was likely 6 years old."

Once audience members had an opportunity to speak, it was clear from their comments that a strong majority did not support Martosko's name change effort, which he calls the "Fenton Project." Participants speaking out echoed an abhorrence with slavery, recognizing it was a too common practice in Virginia during the era in which Silas Burke lived. Several, including residents Arthur Benckert and local historian Sally Segal, spoke to cite specific reasons for their objection to the project, including: it's a waste of time to change the name in a process little used anywhere in the country [request to a U.S. Geological Survey Board]; the name change would require changes to home and business addresses, driver's licenses, deed recordings, etc. at considerable expense; failure to recognize the current close-knit, racially diverse community; better to face the injustices of history than to erase them; and the effort fails to consider the identity and connection to the Burke name felt by the present community.

Others objected to the proposed alternate community name: Fen-



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Historic marker noting the house completed in 1824 as the resident of the the Burke's after their marriage.



CONNECTION FILE PHOTO (2019)

The Burke House on Burke Lake Road, as it appeared in 2019 after renovation and sale of the property to a senior living company.

ton. Speakers said that the Fenton name was commonly used during the Confederacy period, and may have its own negative associations; there is little known about the enslaved boy of that name found in the record and what became of him; and that it sounds too close to the current drug scourge, fentanyl.

Corazon Foley, a local historian, political activist, and recent candidate for Supervisor, suggests the less sensational means of promoting history is through use of historical markers. She also suggests keeping the community name to honor George Howard Burke, who owned one of three grocery stores in downtown Burke, important in Burke's development after the Civil War.

Martosko is a retired reporter who previously worked for conservative media, including Rupert Murdoch's "The Daily Mail" as political editor until 2020; and with Tucker Carlson's "Daily Caller" in 2011. He seemed undeterred by the negative reception voiced in the meeting regarding his project, indicating he plans to hold another public meeting in May, and to use his media acumen to continue to draw interest to the project from the press, including a planned 300 word letter to editors. Asked what he would do if the majority of Burke's residents did not support the change, he said he "was not worried about the majority today;" that people would "get it over time."

The Burke community takes its name from the prominent 19th century judge, sheriff, businessman, plantation farmer, and school board member, and state militiaman, Lt Colonel Silas Burke. He served as chief justice of Fairfax County's court and as a director of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, influencing the placement and naming of Burke station on the line.

Tax records indicate he held up to 14 enslaved people. He died at the age of 57 in 1854, well before the Civil War. Although local historians suggest he is a "bit of an enigma," the Burkes are listed as one of the nine notable families of the area by the Burke Historical Society (<https://burkehistoricalsociety.org/history-of-burke-virginia/notable-people-in-burke-history>). His home, Woodbury, later called Top O' the Hill, has been preserved and sits in the center of the Burke community.

Learn more about Martosko's proposal on his website, <https://www.fentonproject.org/>



# Fairfax Man Charged: Second-Degree Murder

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

One man is dead, and another is in jail, following what Fairfax County police are calling a “domestic-related fatal shooting.” In custody is Waisuddin Quraishi, charged with killing Mohammad Zekria.

Last Friday, March 29, at 8:37 p.m., officers responded to the 10400 block of Viera Lane, in the Fairfax Village Apartments in Fairfax, for a report of a possible domestic-related shooting.

According to police, while filing a domestic-dispute report with county police, “A woman indicated that her husband, Waisuddin Quraishi, 50, had [allegedly] shot someone. She stated that she and her family were directly threatened by her husband and that he may be in possession of a weapon.”

After receiving this report, of-

ficers began searching the area and found Mohammad Zekria, 37, of Fairfax, inside a vehicle in the 3300 block of Willow Crescent Drive – about .3 of a mile from Viera Lane. Police say he’d sustained “multiple gunshot wounds to the



Quraishi

upper body [and] was pronounced deceased at the scene.”

Detectives from the Police Department’s Major Crimes Bureau then responded to the scene and determined that Quraishi had allegedly shot Zekria. They say

both men knew each other.

Hours later – early Saturday morning, March 30, around 2:22 a.m. – Virginia State Troopers located Quraishi walking alongside I-495 and Braddock Road. They apprehended him and took him to the county’s Adult Detention Center. There, Quraishi was charged with second-degree murder and

use of a firearm in the commission of a felony. He’s being held without bond and has a July 10 court date.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call the Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 2. Tips may also be submitted anonymously via Crime Solvers by phoning 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

ROUNDUPS

## Online Presentation to Protect Seniors from Scams

Join Fairfax County police next Tuesday, April 9, at 11:30 a.m., for a one-hour virtual presentation aimed at safeguarding seniors against scams. The program will offer invaluable insights into recognizing and preventing fraudulent schemes targeting older adults. Led by experts in the field, this interactive session equips participants with practical strategies to detect, avoid and report scams effectively.

Attendees will learn how to empower themselves and their loved ones with the knowledge to navigate the digital world securely. Staying informed will help protect them against financial exploitation. Seniors are encouraged to register at <https://bit.ly/4a6Giu9> to take a proactive step toward safeguarding their financial wellbeing.

## Car Seat Inspections


Parents may get their children’s car seats inspected on Thursday, April 11, from 5-8:30 p.m. outside the Sully District Police Station. It’s at 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. Inspections are done on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants should install the child safety seat so the inspection can be performed. The seat will be properly re-installed if necessary, and parents will be taught how to install the seat properly. Everyone is eligible. Another car-seat inspection is scheduled for April 25, at the same place and time.

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## Keep the Town Name of Burke, Va.

**M**y parents and I came to Burke in 1961 when I was two years old and I grew up here. My mom still lives in our old home place and has for over 63 years, and wanted me to speak on her behalf.

I remember when Keene Mill Road was two lanes and part of it was a dirt road. As far back as the mid -1960s, we used to take walks to Silas Burke's grave. It was all forest and fields back then. The population of Burke in 1960 was 150 people, and we knew about a third of them. They were the old timers of Burke; they have almost all passed away now. But they taught me about the history of Burke and who Silas Burke was.

I learned many years ago that Silas Burke owned slaves, which did not surprise me. I do not defend Silas Burke for owning or selling slaves. I would like to think all of us would say this was certainly wrong. But I am concerned about changing the name of Burke for two reasons.

First, as Mr. Martosko has said, he is not trying to rename everything or every place that is named for Burke, but if the town's name is changed, make no mistake, I think Burke landmarks would eventually follow. And certainly,

if the name is changed, our post office would have to change its name to Fenton, which would mean thousands of you would instantly have incorrect addresses. Think of it. Thousands would have to get and pay for new driver's licenses, change financial documents, business accounts, insurance, pensions, and there could be confusion from businesses, wondering why you didn't inform them that you moved.

And think of the deeds to your homes and property. Deeds are legal documents kept as county records. Virtually overnight all your home deeds (some 14,000) would have address errors, which would have to be corrected. This would be a mess for the county, and I don't know how it would be done. Perhaps owners might have to pay a real estate professional or perhaps a lawyer? Whatever the fix would be, changing the name of the town could cause Burke residents financial burdens and I hope not legal problems. These things need to be carefully considered.

My second reason for not changing the name Burke, is because the fact is for nearly 200 years this area has been named Burke or Burke's Station — simply because Silas Burke owned much of the land here, served his community

as a judge, a sheriff, a farmer, was a soldier in a Virginia militia well before the civil war, and, yes, he was a slave holder, and we need to remember that and remember those who labored here in bondage.

The town's name is Burke — names are important! They identify our community, they give gravity to the places we live, they tie us to our history — some of which was good and some that was shameful. But it is still the history of this land. This is not like changing the name of a sports team.

In closing, one of the things that has crossed my mind is that when my time is up, I don't want my obituary to say that I grew up and spent most of my life in Fenton. Because it isn't true! For six years I went to Burke Elementary School when it was the only school around.

When I was five, I caught my first fish in Burke Lake.

So I ask all of you: avoid problems, remember our Virginia history, and keep this town Burke Virginia, U.S.A.

**Arthur Benckert**  
**Myrna Benckert**  
Burke VA

## Houses of Worship Can Develop Affordable Housing

*This article is abbreviated, see the full information at <https://apah.wpenginepowered.com/build/houses-of-worship/>*

SOURCE: APAH

Many faith communities struggle with oversized and aging facilities along with declining membership and revenues. The congregation may possess significant, underutilized real estate assets that could be repurposed to expand its mission, plus provide financial resources for updating and right-sizing worship and support spaces, like Central United Methodist Church in Arlington.

Unity Homes at Ballston, in partnership with Central United Methodist Church, will be a mixed-use project with 144 affordable apartments co-located with a church and childcare center, located across the street from the Ballston-MU Metro Station in Arlington County. Done well, affordable housing development can allow a congregation to grow mission, energy and financial resources. Dozens of houses of worship have produced new affordable housing complexes around the country and hundreds more are considering this path. Below is a short list of the key steps to achieving a successful affordable housing project.

**1. Discernment and Education** — The first and most important step is for the congregation to discern its calling. What does your

community — both members and neighbors—most need? How will new development nourish your congregation's faith journey? A third-party spiritual consultant may be helpful in this phase — and perhaps an ongoing spiritual coach throughout the process.

During this period, the congregation's leaders and/or a Discernment Committee should become educated about the community's needs and challenges. Meet with local elected officials, non-profit housing organizations and human services professionals. Read studies on community needs and challenges. Invite the community to help you discern for whom could your land and buildings be of service.

Prepare a Vision Statement through this discernment process—what is the ideal scenario in a redevelopment and what is the minimum necessary in order to proceed — as measured in money, mission outcomes and/or new facilities for the congregation. You will regularly return to this Vision Statement as the project evolves.

**2. Quick Feasibility and Appraisal** — Contact an experienced, reliable, mission-minded affordable housing developer and ask them to conduct a no-cost, no-obligation feasibility study of your site's zoning, massing options, market and financing capacity. If there aren't any housing developers in your community, contact one

of the national intermediary organizations, like Enterprise Community Partners ([enterprisecommunity.org](http://enterprisecommunity.org)) for a referral. Can you fit a six-bedroom group house for persons with disabilities on your site? Or, if you rebuilt the aging worship space, could you build a new first floor church topped with 200 units of affordable housing? Where would funding come from? What steps are required for the proper zoning and permits?

Pay for a commercial Appraisal of the market value of your property, "as is" and as rezoned/redeveloped for the highest and best use feasible for the site.

**3. Build your Team: Internal and External** — If the congregation has discerned the call and

identified its vision, and the initial feasibility study indicates a path to achieving that vision, then it is time to recruit a committed and experienced internal team to guide the multi-year real estate process. Ideally, the Development Committee includes persons skilled in real estate, banking, finance, design, legal and construction. If you do not have those skills within the congregation, think about recruiting pro bono, third party volunteers to join your committee—not individuals working "on spec" for future paid work, but folks who are ready to volunteer their time for no compensation.

With the help of your Commit-

SEE HOUSE OF WORSHIP,  
PAGE 17

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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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# MEET THE CANDIDATES

# McLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER 2024 GOVERNING BOARD ELECTION

The Governing Board and staff of the McLean Community Center strongly encourage all qualified residents to vote for members of MCC's 2024-2025 Governing Board.

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McLean Community Center

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## ADULT CANDIDATES FOUR POSITIONS OPEN



**TAREK ATIA**  
tarekmclean@gmail.com

I am a longtime McLean resident seeking to use my passion for the arts to benefit my community. If elected, I will collaborate with fellow board members to advance MCC's critical mission. Throughout my career, I have leveraged my diverse experience as a journalist, entrepreneur and teacher to drive cultural engagement at home and overseas, most recently as director of a major arts and culture center at the American University in Cairo. An alumnus of Churchill, Cooper, Langley and UVA, and father of two adult sons, I am currently writing a book called "Ten Days in America's Next Great City."



**JONATHAN "SLADE" BROOM**  
slade.broom.mcc@gmail.com

I moved to McLean in 2013 with my wife, Katie. Our three children perform at the Alden Theatre and enjoy the Old Firehouse and the MCC summer camps. I volunteer in our community, primarily coaching McLean Little League. I bring two decades of public service experience. I have honed skills in international negotiations, managing large federal budgets and delivering aid in emergency situations. At CFPB, I protect consumers from financial harm, improve processes and manage organizational change. As a board member, I will focus on expanding family-focused and sensory-friendly events, listening and finding collaborative solutions and providing responsible financial management.



**MATT COLSIA**  
matt.colsia@gmail.com

As a dedicated member of the MCC Governing Board, I've championed accessibility, modernization, and fiscal responsibility. With 26 years of Army service and deep involvement in our schools and community organizations, I bring a unique perspective and unwavering commitment to service. My vision is to foster a thriving, inclusive community center that enriches the lives of residents. I'm excited to shape MCC's 50th anniversary celebration and beyond, ensuring it remains a beacon of learning, growth, and unity. With your support, I will continue to lead with integrity, advocate for your needs, and tirelessly work towards a stronger, more vibrant community.



**MIKE DRABYK**  
mdr022@verizon.net

My name is Mike Drabyk. As a McLean resident for more than 25 years, I have watched my family grow and thrive. The benefits of being here include the McLean Community Center, the Old Firehouse and events like McLean Day. My family and I have an annual tradition where I play the carnival games at McLean Day for prizes for my wife and family. I want to do my part so others can continue enjoying this local experience as well. I ask for your vote for the McLean Community Center Board. Thank you.



**DOUG JEFFERY**  
dougjefferyvirginia@gmail.com

I moved to Northern Virginia in 1997. I attended Chantilly High School and later the University of Virginia. In 2019, my wife and I decided to make McLean our home. Since then, we welcomed our first daughter, now nearly 2, and are expecting our second this spring. I have worked for a large financial services firm in Tysons Corner for 16 years and am a CFA Charterholder. As a father and finance professional, I will make sure that the MCC produces an inclusive and family-friendly environment and that it uses its resources prudently. I am excited to serve our community!



**RONALD KEESING**  
keesing@alumni.stanford.edu

As a 20-year resident, I feel fortunate to live in McLean. I've raised two daughters who received world-class educations here. Our family has spent countless hours enjoying local performances, events, classes, parks and the library. I believe the quality of life we've enjoyed is only possible through decades of responsible, non-partisan, inclusive leadership. Now, I'd like to give back, continuing that tradition while serving on the MCC Governing Board. I believe I have much to offer, particularly through my expertise in technology and ethics. I'm excited to continue MCC's important work bringing arts, events and education to our diverse community.



**LISA MARIAM**  
lisamariamcc@gmail.com

It has been an honor to serve on the McLean Community Center Board for the last three years. I helped guide MCC through strategic planning and chaired the 50th Anniversary Committee. I look forward to continuing to support McLean traditions and exploring new opportunities to engage residents of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. With over 20 years of experience in nonprofit programs and administration, I bring a broad community perspective to represent the residents of our special tax district. I'll prioritize increasing awareness of MCC, being responsive to community needs and interests and bringing people together to strengthen our community.



**MICHAEL MONROE**  
michaelmonroemclean@gmail.com

It would be an honor to serve McLean and I was thrilled to be asked to do so. I live, work and raise my three children here in the Langley pyramid. My finance experience over the past 20 years and relationships in multiple industries, including Hollywood, can help drive amazing activity and efficiency at MCC. I'm a graduate of Leadership Fairfax and the Political Leaders Program through UVA Sorenson, have a master's in real estate from Georgetown University and a bachelor's from James Madison University. I'm a life member of Sharon Lodge #327. I'd appreciate your vote.



**PETER PIN**  
peterpin59@gmail.com

It is my pleasure to submit my application for candidate for the MCC Governing Board. As a resident of McLean for 24 years and Northern Virginia for 40, I have a deep commitment to the wellbeing of our community. Having served for over 30 years as a leader in the business community, I hope to bring my spirit of innovation and collaboration along with my skills in leadership and communications to create and advance a wonderful agenda for the community. I thank those that have been here before me and look forward to serving you.



**PEGGY RICHARDSON**  
fabulous5@comcast.net

My name is Peggy Richardson, and I would be honored to serve on McLean Community Center's Governing Board. I've lived in the area for over 20 years and have always enjoyed being an active member of my community. Having served on several different volunteer boards such as the Women's Civic Alliance and the Arlington Community Foundation, I'm confident that my 25-plus years of experience spearheading fundraising campaigns and coordinating philanthropic events would directly benefit MCC and its constituency. As a board member, I would ensure that the programs represent the needs and wants of all the McLean community.

## YOUTH CANDIDATES ONE POSITION OPEN LANGLEY HIGH SCHOOL BOUNDARY AREA



**ANASTASIIA DUDNIK-DUBINIAK**  
anastasiadudnikdubiniak@gmail.com

I am Anastasiia Dudnik-Dubiniak, a freshman at Langley High, and I am running for the MCC Board. My candidacy is rooted in genuine desire to enhance McLean's liveliness, vibrance and responsiveness to the diverse needs of its residents. I aim to create a lively and welcoming community, uniting us all by organizing inclusive and engaging events, such as cultural festivals, movie nights, outdoor activities, parties, fundraising events and promoting teen nonprofit startups. With my fresh perspective and dedication, I intend to amplify the voices of teens, fostering a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere for McLean youths.



**SONYA THOTT**  
sonya4mclean@gmail.com

Hello McLean! I'm a junior at Langley High School. I love to be involved in my community through events, fundraisers and cultural experiences. My ambitions to incorporate cultural diversity and inclusivity within our community are at the core of why I'm running, and I've showcased my culture via dance and music by performing at Capital One Hall. I'm an officer in Langley's Student Government Association, which helps me organize events and learn to be an efficient and welcoming leader. With my experiences and ideas in mind, I hope to enhance MCC's inclusivity statement and support the betterment of the community.



**LUKE UNDERSTEIN**  
mega.888@outlook.com

I am running for board member because I want to make a difference in our community and promote MCC's outreach, growth and innovation as a cultural resource for residents of McLean. I am familiar with the interests of young people in McLean, and I will bring the perspectives of my peers to aid the decisions of the board. I will also make strong contributions to the committees I serve, because I have good communication and organizational skills and I am very detail oriented. So, I am asking for your vote to represent the Langley district.

## YOUTH CANDIDATES ONE POSITION OPEN McLEAN HIGH SCHOOL BOUNDARY AREA



**AANYA JAIN**  
aanyajmcc@gmail.com

Hello, I'm Aanya Jain and I'm running for MCC Governing Board. I was born in McLean and MCC has played a pivotal role in my active involvement within my community. I was exposed to summer activities and plays sponsored by MCC (and let's not forget McLean Day)! I realized the importance of community engagement and advocacy and am part of Raising Student Voices and Debate clubs, which strengthened my skills in diplomacy, advocacy and teamwork! By serving on MCC's Board, I'll strive to promote the magnificent programs MCC offers to those of all backgrounds and will represent my fellow Highlanders!



**AARON STARK**  
aaronstark72@gmail.com

My name is Aaron Stark. I'm a junior and the president of the class of 2025 at McLean High School. I've had extensive experience working alongside the MCC and other McLean-based service programs, including the MCC's Youth Ambassador Program and the Safe Community Coalition's Youth Advisory Council. I've spent nearly all my life growing up in the area, so I figured it was about time to start giving back. As a member of the Governing Board, I would work to add resources and activities for older teens. Vote Aaron Stark for the MCC Governing Board!

For more information on the election, visit [mcleancenter.org](http://mcleancenter.org) or email [elections@mcleancenter.org](mailto:elections@mcleancenter.org).

# 6 Percent ‘Across the Board’ Raise?

Sole school board member challenges top FCPS staff salary increases.

By SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

**M**ount Vernon District school board member Mateo Dunne, seeks to call attention to the inequities inherent in how the Fairfax County Public School system plans to spend the money it receives in this FY-25 budget cycle.



Mount Vernon District School Board Member Mateo Dunne.

PHOTO FROM DUNNE WEBSITE  
people who are deserving but are paid below the market.”

What is the smart way to set salaries? Dunne argues the modern way is to examine pay by category of employee, within the metro region, to assure equal pay for comparable jobs. The goal is salaries that are internally equitable and externally competitive.

He says not all school employees are underpaid, or underpaid by the same amount. Raises should create pay at, or as close to, the market as possible.

Dunne says the school’s proposed six percent across-the-board salary increase would give large sums to those already earning the top salaries, perpetuating the salary shortfalls of those earning less than their peers in the region. Instead, he says FCPS should “spend in smart ways that solve salary problems, not ways that perpetuate the problems. My priority is the folks working in the schools: principals, teachers, instructors, cafeteria workers and bus drivers. The

Mateo said that some salaries in high demand areas need to be above market to attract needed employees. Teacher jobs in special education, Title 1 schools, and some math and science areas are traditionally hard to fill. As an example, he cites special education in FCPS, where a third of the teachers now are provisionally

## Salary Comparisons

Joe Biden	U.S. President	\$400,000
Michelle Reid	FCPS Superintendent	\$399,836*
John Roberts	Chief Justice U.S. Supreme Court	\$277,700
Marty Smith	FCPS Chief of Staff	\$273,561*
Lloyd Austin	Secretary of Defense	\$221,400
Kamala Harris	U.S. Vice President	\$157,532

26 FCPS SENIOR STAFF POSITIONS EARN OVER \$200,000\*  
\* OBTAINED BY FOIA AND SHARED WITH THE CONNECTION

certified or long-term substitutes, putting special education at risk. He argues “we could end the crisis by paying correctly.”

Dunne is the only school board member who did not vote in favor of the Fairfax County Public School’s advertised budget, by abstaining. He shares his abstention was not out of disagreement with the priorities or amount of re-

quested funds, but with the source of funding and the methods that would be used for distributing workforce compensation. Dunne said he strongly supports school superintendent Dr Michelle Reid, and that FCPS “is lucky to have her.”

But Dunne said that Reid “doesn’t need to be paid more, nor does her top staff.” He will intro-

duce a motion at the April 9 school board budget work session to exclude the top 25 highest paid staff members from salary increases. If passed, the motion would allow more funds to adjust salaries that are out of sync with market comparisons. If the motion does not pass, Dunne says we will know from the vote where each school board member stands on the issue.

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PHOTO/SM CAROLINE REN, CIVIL AIR PATROL

Cadet Senior Airman Gabriel Che, Cadet Senior Master Sergeant Taiyo Lloyd, Cadet Captain Ronald Zhang, and Cadet Second Lieutenant Sully Mills at the CyberPatriot National Competition March 18.

# Burke CAP Team Competes at CyberPatriot Finals

**Cadets take 1st in state, national semi-final.**

BY CADET CAPT. RONALD ZHANG  
SPECIAL TO THE CONNECTION

Civil Air Patrol cadets from Burke Composite Squadron competed in the CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Education Program. The team, nicknamed Cyber Monkeys, was one of the 13 All Service teams who competed in the CyberPatriot XVI National Finals held from March 15-18 in North Bethesda.

CyberPatriot is a program of the Air & Space Force Association. It is designed to attract students to careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) including cybersecurity-specific fields. The Northrop Grumman Foundation is the presenting sponsor.

The Team Captain for the Cyber Monkeys is Cadet Capt. Ronald Zhang, a sophomore at Lake Braddock Secondary School. The Assistant Team Captain is Cadet Second Lieutenant Sully Mills, a junior at Lake Braddock Secondary School. The other members are Cadet Senior Airman Gabriel Che, a senior at Langley High School, and Cadet Senior Master Sergeant Taiyo Lloyd, a sophomore at West Springfield High School.

“CyberPatriot is an amazing opportunity for those interested in working in the cybersecurity industry as well as a great extracurricular opportunity for middle and high school students,” says Cadet Senior Airman Che.

The CyberPatriot teams competed in increasingly difficult challenges that required them to learn more about computer systems and network infrastructure. These included systems such as Linux, Windows, Windows Server, and Cisco networking.

“CyberPatriot is a learning experience like no other and has enabled me to see cybersecurity-computer science as a future career path,” says Cadet Senior Master Sergeant Lloyd.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



PHOTO/MIKE TSUKAMOTO, AIR & SPACE FORCES ASSOCIATION

The Cyber Monkeys compete in the National Finals. Shown are Cadet Senior Airman Gabriel Che (back left), Cadet Senior Master Sergeant Taiyo Lloyd (front left), Cadet Captain Ronald Zhang (center), and Cadet Second Lieutenant Sully Mills (right).

The Cyber Monkeys competed in two qualifying rounds and placed first for both the State Round and the National Semi-Final Round among all Civil Air Patrol teams, qualifying them to compete in the National Finals.

“CyberPatriot is one of the best opportunities around if you have any interest in computers or cybersecurity. It makes you stand out and the experience and what you learn is fantastic,” says Cadet Second Lieutenant Mills.

At the national championship, the Cyber Monkeys competed against 12 other teams from the All-Service Division which includes High School JROTC, Civil Air Patrol, and United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps teams. While the team did not receive an official award from CyberPatriot, their cybersecurity skills put them in contention thanks to their hard work and support from technical mentors across the country.

“CyberPatriot focuses on learning and teamwork,” said Cadet Capt. Zhang. “The growth year over year is more important than the performance in any particular round.”

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# Supervisors Uplift Trans Visibility

Health crisis looms for trans students.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**A**t the last meeting of the Fairfax Board of Supervisors, in a vote of 9-0, supervisors pledged an alliance with the county's transgender and non-binary residents, proclaiming Sunday, March 31, Transgender Day of Visibility in the county, affirming the board's commitment to inclusion and acceptance of all under One Fairfax.

Transgender students and adults in Fairfax County feel particularly vulnerable due to the rising wave of recent proposed legislation in the Virginia General Assembly to restrict their rights and freedoms. They have seen bills targeting them introduced in the 2024 General Assembly, all of them introduced by Republicans: forced outing in schools (H.B. 670), healthcare age restrictions (S.B. 671), sports bans (S.B. 68), and more. No proposed anti-transgender legislation passed in the Virginia General Assembly where Democrats are in the majority in both the House of Delegates and state Senate.

Amidst an increase in bullying and hate crimes against transgender individuals, Rev. Emma Chattin of the Transgender Education Center in Burke welcomed the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors proclamation recognizing March 31 as Transgender Visibility Day. Chattin said that transgender people are a small sliver of the population and are often left wondering why everyone is so frightened and threatened by them, "even to the point of, I don't know, leaving the room whenever we enter."

Last Tuesday, Supervisor Pat Herrity, walked out of the Board Auditorium in the County Government Center moments before the remaining nine Democratic supervisors stood in solidarity during the board's regular meeting.

Chattin said that states are proposing and enacting anti-trans laws, and hate crimes and incidents in schools have quadrupled. She explained how the human impact and consequences of anti-trans rhetoric and policy must be acknowledged. Every act of visibility for trans people, "even in Northern Virginia, carries with it a risk of life and livelihood," Chattin said.

She noted that transgender women of color in the community face additional intersectional obstacles of prejudice regarding safety and housing, employment, and health care. The Transgender Education Center supports individuals transitioning and communities preparing for transitioning individuals.

Dranesville District Supervisor James N. "Jimmy" Bierman Jr., read the Proclamation on behalf of the other eight supervisors. He said the transgender community is experiencing continuing challenges, struggling against marginalization and discrimination, yet it is "resilient and continues to contrib-

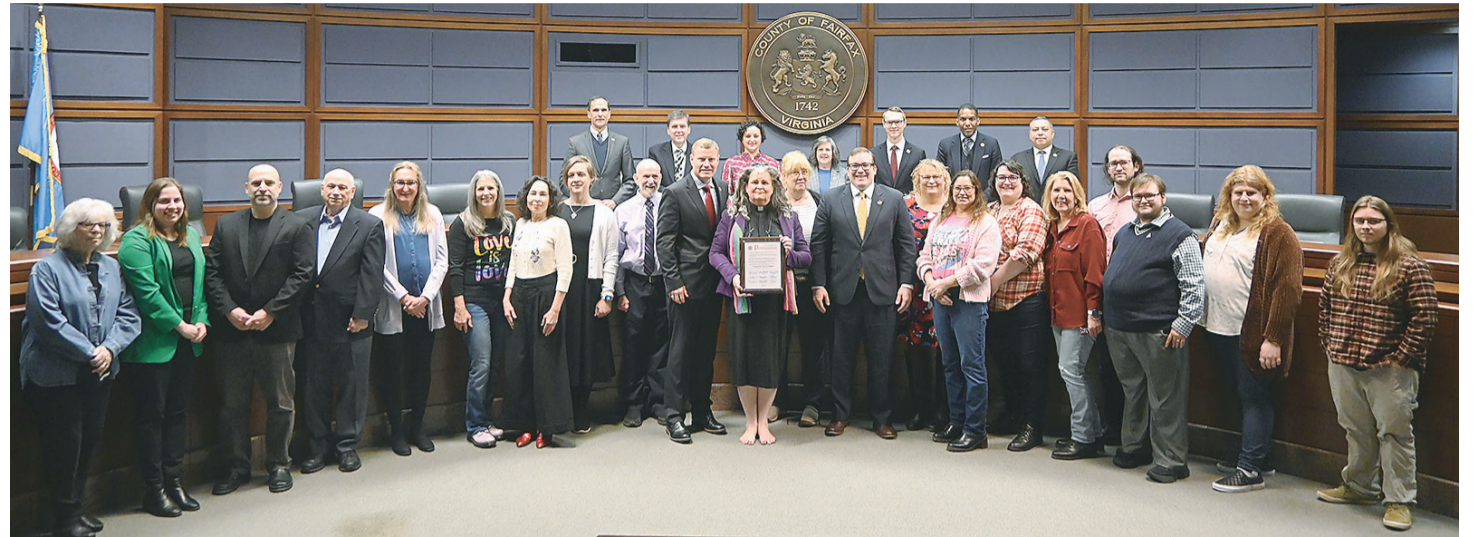


PHOTO BY FXCO, MARCH 19, 2024 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**PROCLAMATION — To designate March 31, 2024, as Transgender Visibility Day. Requested by Chairman McKay and Supervisors Bierman, Walkinshaw, Lusk, Alcorn, Jimenez, Storck, Palchik and Smith. (Center) Rev. Emma Chattin of the Transgender Education Center in Burke accepts the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors proclamation recognizing March 31 as Transgender Visibility Day.**



PHOTO BY FXCO

**Chairman Jeff McKay, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors**



SCREENSHOT FXCO VIDEO

**Rev. Emma Chattin of the Transgender Education Center in Burke**



SCREENSHOT FXCO VIDEO

**Supervisor James Bierman, Dranesville District**



SCREENSHOT FXCO VIDEO

**Supervisor Rodney Lusk, Franconia District**



SCREENSHOT FXCO VIDEO

**Supervisor Dalia Palchik, Providence District**

ute to the betterment of society."

"We affirm and restate our commitment to building a culture of inclusion and acceptance of transgender individuals," Bierman said.

Providence District Supervisor Dalia Palchik tracked the Fairfax County Youth Survey statistics given to all FCPS students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 each fall. Palchik said that more than half of Fairfax County's transgender students are depressed, and nearly half have considered suicide. Palchik confirmed that the LGBT community stands out higher than any other demographic among FCPS students for depression, attempting suicide, and contemplating suicide.

"To me, it is a moral imperative, also a public health imperative, that we band to-

gether," Palchik said.

Franconia District Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk praised the school-age members in the community who have embraced and shown support and understanding for transgender people. Lusk illustrated the importance of the proclamation, contrasting it with when he was in college. Lusk stated that he was a member of a committee that collaborated with the Gay and Lesbian Student Union. Lusk called its president and asked if he would meet him on the center's grounds. "The answer he gave me was shocking," Lusk said.

The president of the Gay and Lesbian Student Union told Lusk he could not do so. When asked why not, he said student community members had been chasing him

and throwing bricks and rocks at him. That was enlightening for Lusk. The first-hand account aided Lusk in comprehending the struggles and hardships those in that situation can face.

"I just want to say how important this proclamation is, and we are here with you. We acknowledge the difficulty of your experience, and we're going to stand in solidarity," Lusk said.

Chairman Jeff McKay discussed the board's moral responsibility to stand up for everyone it represents, not just those it likes or agrees with. "But stand up for all people in our community, especially those persecuted relentlessly by people who think that shows strength when in reality, it shows a tremendous amount of weakness to walk out on people and not stand up for them."

McKay referenced the March 12 Washington Post story ["In states with laws targeting LGBTQ issues, school hate crimes quadrupled"].

"The cover story was about statistics that were showing a quadrupling of reported incidents of hate crimes against K through 12 students who go to schools in states that have anti-LGBTQ laws. And so the effect that some of these state houses are having, sadly, is the effect that some of those elected officials want, which is to persecute people without regard for human life and without regard for dignity."

# Six Stress Reduction Tips for Caregivers

## April is National Stress Awareness Month.

Stress doesn't just affect your mood — it can have long-term health impacts as well if you don't take steps to manage it constructively. For individuals who face the stressful task of caring for a family member with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia-related illness, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America is offering six stress reduction tips for caregivers as part of National Stress Awareness Month.

"Family caregivers often find it challenging to make time for themselves, but being proactive about addressing caregiver stress and self-care is not selfish; it's essential and it benefits both the caregiver and the person for whom they are caring," said Jennifer Reeder, LCSW, Alzheimer's Foundation of America's Director of Educational and Social Services. "Failing to manage stress increases the risks of caregiver burn-out, depression, and many other mental and physical health issues. Caregivers need to take care of themselves so they can provide the best possible care for their loved ones."

Family caregivers of people with Alzheimer's and related dementias are at greater risk for anxiety, depression and poorer quality of life than caregivers of people with other conditions, and provide care for a longer duration of time, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

AFA offers these stress reduction tips for family caregivers:

- ❖ Be adaptable and positive. Your attitude influences stress levels for both you and the person you're caring for. If you can "go with the flow," and avoid fighting the current, that will help you both stay relaxed—con-

versely, becoming aggravated or agitated will increase the chances that your person will as well. Focus on how to adjust to the situation in a constructive way.

- ❖ Deal with what you can control. Some things are totally out of your control. What is in your power is how you respond and react to these outside factors. Concentrating on finding solutions can help make the problem itself a little less stressful.

- ❖ Set realistic goals and go slow. Everything cannot be resolved at once, nor does it need to be. Don't hold yourself to unrealistic expectations. Prioritize, set practical goals, do your best to achieve them, and take things one day at a time.

- ❖ Mind your health. Inadequate rest, poor diet, and lack of exercise can all exacerbate stress and cause other health problems as well. As best you can, make it a priority to get sleep, eat right, drink plenty of water and find ways to be active. You cannot provide quality care to a loved one if you don't take care of yourself.

- ❖ Exercise, yoga, meditating, listening to music or even taking a few deep breaths can all help relax the mind and reduce stress. Find something that works for you and do it regularly.

- ❖ Share your feelings. Disconnecting from your support structure and staying bottled-up increases stress. Whether it's with a loved one, trusted friend or a professional, don't be reluctant to talk about your stress, because that can actually help relieve it. AFA's Helpline has licensed social workers available for caregivers seven days to provide support or even just listen.

AFA's Helpline, staffed entirely by licensed social workers who are specifically trained in dementia care, can provide additional information and support for families. The Helpline is available seven days a week by phone (866-232-8484), text message (646-586-5283), and web chat ([www.alzfdn.org](http://www.alzfdn.org)).

### All Organic Food

Experience Senior Living with two area locations, says it will feature a fully certified organic menu. Locally, The Reserve at Strathmore Square in Bethesda, Maryland; and The Reserve at Falls Church in Falls Church, Virginia are currently under development.

"We are committed to making organic, healthy and delicious culinary experiences a priority at The Reserve Collection," says Phill Barklow, ESL President. "We are focused on sourcing locally and utilizing USDA certified organic ingredients."

The Reserve Collection caters to seniors seeking onsite luxury amenities such as salt-water pools, rooftop lounges, high-end beauty salons, and pickleball courts, to name a few.

### More Affordable

Two APAH projects are nearing completion, adding more than 220 new affordable homes in the region.

Ilda's Overlook Senior Residences, created through a partnership with Erickson Senior Living, will deliver 80 affordable apartments for independent adults ages 62+ in the Braddock District of Fairfax County. Ilda's Overlook held its grand opening last month.

Unity Homes at Ballston, in partnership with Central United Methodist Church, will be a mixed-use project with 144 affordable apartments co-located with a church and childcare center, located across the street from the Ballston-MU Metro Station in Arlington County.

### Join the Unity Homes at Ballston Interest List

Unity Homes at Ballston will be a mixed-use project with 144 affordable apartments co-located with a church and community service center.

For a century, the Central United Methodist Church (CUMC) of Ballston has served the Arlington community with worship and community services. The church has housed an early childhood education center and provided weekly food distribution. In the new Ballston Station building, CUMC will continue this mission with a new sanctuary space, early childhood education for approximately 90 children, and a commercial grade community kitchen on the first two floors of the new building. Residents will enjoy 2,500 square feet of community rooms, a business center, laundry facilities, and a landscaped courtyard and terrace.



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*I was taken back by how friendly and welcoming the staff was. Everyone I saw looked really happy to be there. The community was stunning and clean. This gave me peace of mind, knowing that our friend is being attended to and cared for in the best way possible.* —Jean, Google Review, 2023

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FAIRFAX



PHOTO COURTESY OF CORNERSTONES, INC.

Metal fencing with “Private Property, No Trespassing” signs has recently been installed around the adjacent senior living facility, separating it from the encampment.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

It is a short walk down the hill to 1850 Cameron Glen Drive, adjacent to the encampment and the new temporary shelter at the North County Human Services Center.

# Housing For Homeless

FROM PAGE 3

## UNSHELTERED HOMELESS PERSONS WHO CALL “THE HILL” HOME

Four unsheltered homeless persons at the encampment agreed to speak with The Connection and share their insights. They had heard rumors and snippets of information that the county’s hypothermia program ended the next day, no trespassing signs were poised to be posted along the encampment’s perimeter, and Cornerstones was preparing to open a new temporary shelter on the adjacent parcel in the building at 1850 Cameron Glen Drive as early as the first weeks of May.

Cornerstones staff would offer support services and aid to them and other unsheltered homeless persons to resolve urgent needs. Even better, staff could help them toward possibly securing affordable housing solutions through 300 new supportive rental aid vouchers for Fairfax County residents. The four voiced initial skepticism about the success of getting a voucher; three said while it is not something they want to do forever, they prefer living outdoors and not being in a shelter.

LT, 29, says, “Nobody really wants to be here. It’s just how things happen sometimes. I was a union member and ironworker. I want to get out of here and make sure that when I do, I’m in place physically and mentally to be able to take care of myself.” LT is tall, well-dressed, and exceedingly well-spoken.

LT’s mental and physical health concerns have made it impossible, though, for him to continue working, further complicating his living conditions. “It’s just a big cycle that keeps repeating itself.”

LT prefers the campground over a shelter because of its safety and autonomy. He can keep his possessions in his tent, whereas shelters have limited room, and keeping things is only sometimes possible.

“I’m more reluctant to go down to the [new temporary] shelter because I’ve had

experience with other shelters that were not good in the past. I’ve found that being out here, I’ve been able to get stuff done with little assistance. I recently got my food stamps turned back on,” LT says.

He voices frustration with those who judge and stereotype individuals who are experiencing homelessness, labeling them drug addicts or claiming they’re angry.

“We’re human beings; unfortunately, problems like that can happen anyway. Everybody out here is somebody’s kid, somebody’s father.” LT struggles to retain his composure.

Pop, 65, says he’s been at the encampment for five months and never entered the hypothermia shelter because he arrived with his 15-degree sleeping bag and eight comforters and staked the tarp covering his tent. He would fill out the paperwork if Cornerstones could assist him in acquiring a subsidized apartment on his limited Social Security income.

Health issues arose when Pop was employed before the pandemic, and he told his friend Missy that he would not go to the shelter if he had to sleep six inches apart from another person and catch COVID or the flu.

“So I’m out here, and I don’t mind.” He came from Richmond when the pandemic hit, lived in Herndon with his sister, then got an apartment.

Rental voucher funds apparently dried up. Pops said he used part of his \$12,000 yearly Social Security benefits for a time to cover the rent but couldn’t continue and took his items to a storage unit. “I’m probably just going to abandon it ... I grew up where if I couldn’t afford to pay for it [in cash], I couldn’t afford it.” He doesn’t have any credit cards.

The areas around Pop’s tent are raked clean, the inside of his tent is tidy, and Pop sits in the opening on watch for people coming up the hill. With his long beard, sparkling eyes, and warm smile, he’d be a great Santa.



Supervisor Walter Alcorn



Tom Fleetwood, director of the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development



PHOTO COURTESY OF CORNERSTONES, INC.

Maura Williams, executive vice president of housing and community programs at Cornerstones, Inc.

**“Our goal is to assist the temporary overflow shelter guests in resolving urgent needs and work with them to secure longer-term, affordable housing solutions that will ultimately support their ability to regain stability and self-sufficiency.”**

— Maura Williams, Cornerstones

AC, who speaks Spanish and has worked at many local restaurants and retail outlets, will look into the vouchers but also has other options.

He inquired if the county intends to close the campsite since they do not want individuals from the campground walking around the local neighborhoods and businesses, inferring to what have been negative encounters. When told the land will be built with a new library, homeless shelter, and other places, AC says, “That sounds good because they are too small.”

AC said he had been working at a local restaurant until rain entered his tent, soaking his uniform. It stank, and he couldn’t go to work with “stinky clothes,” as his job demanded face-to-face encounters with the public.

AC wondered whether he would be eligible for a voucher since his identification says he is Herndon. When he learned that it was acceptable, AC seemed thrilled. He said he’d share the knowledge with the other Spanish-speaking persons in the campground.

Washington says he, too, wants to remain in his tent, having previously lived in shelters. Staying in a tent rather

than a shelter is safer and healthier, even in freezing temperatures, he says. “You’re basically sick the entire time you’re there in a shelter because everybody’s sneezing, sniffing, and coughing; people’s clothes are wet from being outdoors.”

If Washington could get an apartment, that would be great, but realistically, he doesn’t see that happening soon. However, 300 new vouchers could make a difference, Washington says. Asked if he’s going to “go down the hill” to the new temporary shelter when it opens to learn more, Washington says, “I guess I’m going down.”



# OPINION

## Houses of Worship

FROM PAGE 10

tee, and possibly a consultant, conduct a Request for Proposals for an experienced Developer/Partner, including the organization that conducted the initial Feasibility Study.

**4. Secure approvals.** The Developer/Partner will lead the effort to secure zoning/entitlement and financing approvals. The initial stages of securing approvals should ideally require no cash or collateral from the institution, although the congregation should be prepared to sign a binding agreement—Joint Venture or Purchase and Sale Agreement—that commits the congregation if the Developer secures the anticipated approvals. Most housing projects are funded with the Housing Tax Credit, which may require a competitive award, and sometimes takes a year or more to secure.

As owner of the underlying real estate, the congregation should both be prepared to adapt as circumstances change, but also have the opportunity to terminate the agreement if the project no longer meets your minimum expectations as identified in your Vision Statement.

**5. Design and Construction** — Make sure your Development Committee stays involved throughout the design process if the project involves the delivery of new facilities for the congregation. Consider hiring your own architect and/or Interior Designer to design the new facilities in a way that best meets your current and future con-

gregational needs. Building a new housing complex can take up to three years. Be prepared for displacement and inconvenience for the congregation. Identify a relocation plan and alternative facilities for the duration of construction.

**6. Operations** — The housing finance tools require sophisticated, long term compliance and oversight. Be prepared to operate the facility in accordance with the financing requirements for at least thirty years. Your Developer/Partner should provide a property management team that is skilled in compliance, customer service and property maintenance. Identify who is responsible for maintaining the congregation's facilities and where responsibilities are shared with the housing provider.

Think ahead about services for residents.

**7. Celebrations:** This is a very long journey, requiring four years or more. Plan to celebrate accomplishments at every stage. Don't forget to thank everyone—neighbors, public officials, team members, and, ultimately, residents. Celebrate what you have built, who you are serving, how it nourishes your faith community.

For more from APAH, see <https://apah.wpenginepowered.com/build/houses-of-worship/>

For houses of worship that may be considering redevelopment, here are seven stages of development that may be helpful.

received at MCC by the deadline to be counted. Residents may request ballots in person at MCC, online at [mcleancenter.org](http://mcleancenter.org), by phone at 703-744-9348, by email at [elections@mcleancenter.org](mailto:elections@mcleancenter.org).

In-Person voting for Governing Board members will be conducted in the voting tent from 4-8 p.m. at T.G.I.F. Carnival Rides on Friday, May 17, and from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. on McLean Day, Saturday, May 18 at Lewinsville Park. The park is located at 1659 Chain Bridge Rd.

Four adult positions and two youth positions are open this year. The adult candidates who receive the three-highest vote counts will serve three-year (3) terms. The adult candidate who receives the fourth-highest vote count will serve a one-year, unexpired term. Youth candidates, one from the McLean High School boundary area and one from the Langley High School boundary area, will serve one-year (1) terms. Youth candidates do

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 18

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### BULLETIN BOARD

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

#### 15 DRANESVILLE SMALL DISTRICT 1A RESIDENTS QUALIFIED TO RUN FOR SEATS ON THE MCLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER'S 2024-2025 GOVERNING BOARD

McLean Community Center has certified 15 residents of Dranesville Small District 1A to run for seats on the MCC Governing Board. Ten adults and five teens will compete to become members of the volunteer board that provides oversight of MCC through policy guidance, strategic planning and financial stewardship. MCC programs and facilities include the Robert Ames Alden Theatre (The Alden) and the Old Firehouse Center. MCC is located at 1234 Ingleside Ave. Only residents of Dranesville Small District 1A are eligible to vote during the election. Residents may vote during Absentee Voting from Wednesday, March 27, through Monday, May 13. Absentee Voting ends at 5 p.m. on Monday, May 13, and all absentee ballots must be

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

# Helping Seniors Age Safely and Successfully

## Home for Life 2024 Expo is slated for April 12.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

All in one place, seniors can learn how to stay strong and healthy, prevent falls, keep themselves safe, use technology, and connect with volunteers to obtain transportation, home repairs and other services. In addition, they can obtain information about subjects including estate planning, nutrition, lifetime learning, long-term care, medical house calls and decluttering.

These topics and many more will be explored during the second annual Home for Life 2024 Expo on Friday, April 12, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Hosted by the Fairfax Village in the City's Advisory Board, it'll be at the Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd. in Fairfax.

The event is free and open to the public, and registration is not required. "The idea is to help promote successful aging so people can live safely in their homes and age in place," explained Village Coordinator Jason Scadron. "Our goal is to help them meet representatives from local agencies, plus service providers, so they'll be able to do so. At the same time, we'll help provide them with a sense of community and connectedness."

Experts will speak about pertinent subjects, and exhibitors will offer a wealth of information on a variety of subjects that seniors will find useful. Attendees may come and go as they please and choose which presentations they wish to hear and which exhibitors' tables they want to visit. And Scadron says this year's event will be even bigger and better than last year's.

This time, it'll use the Sherwood Center's entire performance space for the exhibitors, instead of just half, like last year. That's because there'll be 10 more exhibitors in it, for 35 total, as well as a café section so attendees may take a break to sit down and enjoy coffee, tea, water, freshly baked items and other snacks while chatting with their friends.

Also new this year will be the Fairfax City Fire Department's brand-new Life Safety Education Trailer. It'll be parked outside the Sherwood Center; and inside, fire Lt. David Arrington will demonstrate how to put



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

**Estate planner Andrea Bryk, left, of the Bryk Law Firm, and wealth-management advisor Christy Plunkett-Barese, of Bastion Wealth Group, at last year's expo.**

out both kitchen and grill fires, plus how to turn off the electrical power and main water valve in a home. City Police and Human Services representatives will be there, too, as members of Fairfax City's Community Response Team.

When people enter the Sherwood Center, they'll receive a schedule with the names of the event's four speakers and their topics, plus a list of all the exhibitors and their contact information. That way, the schedule will also become a resource for seniors later on, as needed.

The speakers will be in the center's rehearsal space, and attendees will have more time this year to walk through the exhibit hall before the first speaker begins. At 10:30

a.m., Village Advisory Board Chairman Anita Light will welcome everyone and introduce Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read, who'll make opening remarks. John Iver, COO of the event's main sponsor, Premium Care USA, will also speak briefly.

Exhibitors include both the City and county libraries, there to help seniors and those with disabilities access technology. And Scadron and Village Advisory Board Vice-Chair Carolyn Sutterfield will be on hand to discuss the Village program.

The speakers' schedule is as follows:

- ❖ 11 a.m. - "Social Connection: A Matter of Life and Health,"  
Speaker: Carolyn Cukierman, chair of the Social Connections Committee of Fairfax

County's Coordinating Council on Aging and Adults with Disabilities.

- ❖ 11:45 a.m. - "Staying Safe at Home,"  
Speaker: Patti Klein, executive director, Rebuilding Together, Arlington/Fairfax/Falls Church.

- ❖ 12:30 p.m. - "Declutter Today, Thrive Tomorrow,"

- Speaker: Mary Ann Gallotta, professional organizer, Sparking Joy with Mary Ann.

- ❖ 1:15 p.m. - "Dementia 101: It Takes a Village,"

- Speaker: Jennifer Denk, director, community education, Insight Memory Care Center.

Scadron stressed that this event is open to everyone in the county. He also said the Village Advisory Board started working on the 2024 Expo as soon as last year's ended. "About 150 people attended in 2023 and, this year, we've enriched it to make it even more fun and satisfying," said Scadron. "And now that people are more aware of the Village, we anticipate an even greater turnout."

If the parking lot is full, people may park at nearby Van Dyck Park and walk on the path to the Sherwood Center, or park in the Christian Science Church lot across the street. For more information about the speakers and exhibitors, go to <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/human-services/fairfax-village-in-the-city-advisory-board>.

Fairfax Village in the City is a City-supported program supporting Fairfax City residents who wish to stay independent while remaining in their homes. It's for adults 55 and older, including those with disabilities, and also aids them in obtaining access to resources offered by Fairfax County and local nonprofits.

Vetted, City-based volunteers provide personal services such as check-in calls and visits, yardwork, technology help and transportation to appointments. The program also enhances connections between neighbors and offers opportunities for social interaction.

Last year, the Village had 40 participants and 30 volunteers. Now, after nearly two years in operation, it has 90 participants and 46 volunteers. And, said Scadron, "The members who've received services are very pleased with them."

"I'm proud of the Village, and it's exciting to see it grow," he continued. "It feels good to help people. The dedicated, committed people on our Advisory Board, plus word of mouth, are getting out the message that our program works and makes sense. And seniors are becoming more accepting of the idea that it's OK to ask for help."

### BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 17

not have to attend these schools to serve on the board. For more information on the MCC Governing Board Elections, call MCC at 703-790-0123/TTY: 711 or visit: [mcleancenter.org](http://mcleancenter.org).

#### WEDNESDAY/APRIL 24

Senior Safety Summit. 10 a.m. to

12 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean.

#### OPENING REMARKS:

Fairfax County Police Department, Chief Kevin Davis

Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department, Chief John Butler

President, McLean Citizens Association, Linda Walsh

McLean Community Center Executive Director, Betsy May-Salazar

#### BRIEF INTRODUCTIONS:

FRD Policy Advisor, Marlon R. Murphy

FPCPD Community Engagement and

Equity Bureau, LT Deanna Weand

FRD Station 29 Tysons, BC 402, Battalion Chief Matt Cox

FPCPD Commander McLean District

Station, Captain Derek Gray

McLean Citizens Association Public

Safety Liaison, Patrick Smaldore

PUBLIC SAFETY TOPICS TO BE PRESENTED:

Community Risk Reduction (30 Minutes)

Search and Rescue - Missing Persons (10 minutes)

Financial Crimes against Senior Citizens (10 minutes)

Romance Scams

Business Scams

Crime Prevention and Safety (10 minutes)

Questions and Answers

#### MORE THAN 500 USE SOBERRIDE ON

#### ST. PATRICK'S DAY

More than 500 persons in the Washington-metropolitan area used the free safe ride service, SoberRide, on St. Patrick's Day (March 17) as opposed to possibly driving home drunk.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 22

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)

# THEATRE

## A Musical Fairytale Featuring Actors and Puppets

### Centreville High presents 'Cinderella: Enchanted Edition.'

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**A** treat for all ages, "Cinderella: Enchanted Edition" will soon burst onto the Centreville High stage. It's the school's Cappies show and will feature a classic tale, well-loved songs – and puppets.

"The cast members have been working hard to bring these wonderful, iconic characters to life," said Director Patrick McGee. "Our actors are talented, not only in their scene work, but in finding the little moments that make their characters shine."

The curtain rises Friday, April 12, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, April 13, at 2 and 7 p.m. (the Cappies performance); and Sunday, April 14, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$15, adults; \$10, students, at the door and via [www.theatrecentreville.com](http://www.theatrecentreville.com).

"This was the first animated movie I saw, as a toddler, and I grew up with the '90s television version starring Brandi and Whitney Houston," said McGee. "The Enchanted Edition of the show is based on that version."

And since he studied puppetry in college, along with theater, he incorporated it into Centreville's production. "The audience will first see a book cover opening and a shadow-puppet screen, and we'll end the show the same way," said McGee. "We have hand puppets of mice, plus a dove and a cat named Charles – who both turn into footmen for Cinderella's carriage."

There's a cast and crew of more than 40, and McGee said this musical's characters, songs and dances "allow the actors, as well as the technicians, the chance to further develop their skills and really blossom. The audience will like this enchanted fairytale that has the nostalgia of the '90s, while being a familiar story that people ages 3-103 will enjoy."

Portraying Cinderella is sophomore Madelyn Regan. "Cinderella's hardworking, hopeful, imaginative and determined to make the best of what she has and, hopefully, have a better future," said Regan. "She lives with her evil stepmother and stepsisters, and her closest friends are the animals in the house. She's fascinated by the world around her and what she experiences whenever she's outside."

"I love her songs and how her confidence grows throughout the story," continued Regan. "And I love how the Fairy Godmother helps her pursue her dream, but that Cinderella has to find it within herself, first."

Her favorite song is "The Prince is Giving a Ball," because "it's so high energy, and you learn the stories of everybody in the marketplace as they interact," she said. "I hope everyone will enjoy our show. We have lots of fun special effects, like fog and puppets, and the energy of everybody in the cast and crew is definitely infectious."

Senior Gabriel Amiryar plays the king. "He thinks he has all the power in the world when, truly, he's clumsy and unorganized," said Amiryar. "He's easily frazzled but has good intentions. I love this role; it's a more serious one than I've played before. I've enjoyed exploring the king's character and his fun lines. And I also like his relationship with his son and his wife – he loves them and wants the best for them both."

Amiryar especially likes the song, "A Lovely Night," sung by Regan as Cinderella, her stepfamily and the



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Andre Jones and Madelyn Regan as the Prince and Cinderella. The curtain rises Friday, April 12, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, April 13, at 2 and 7 p.m. (the Cappies performance); and Sunday, April 14, at 2 p.m.

female ensemble. "It's so lively and fun," he said. "And some of the ensemble members are singing as chipmunks and mice, so their voices are bubbly and high-pitched. It's an upbeat and happy song."

He said people will like "how true to the story this show is and how magical it feels while you're watching it. 'Cinderella' is a feel-good story, and we do it justice. We also have some really cool tricks and magic that'll wow the audience."

Portraying the Fairy Godmother is freshman Sienna Nguyen. "She's a motherly figure to Cinderella, but with cool sass – a chill mom," explained Nguyen. "She's always trying to take up the entire space. She's big and loud and almost embarrassing at times, but in a funny way. She acts as the mom Cinderella never had – one with unconditional love and care."

Nguyen, too, is enjoying her role "because it's so iconic. Playing her and bringing back the nostalgic movie I saw as a child is so exciting to do. I just love her humor and line delivery – when I pump sass into her lines, they change from mildly funny to gut-busting. And it's fun being in a comedy and doing something so outlandish."

"It's Possible" is her favorite number. "I get to sing with Cinderella and the ensemble; and at the end of the song, there's such great harmonization," said Nguyen. "And it's the act-one closer, so it ends with a bang."

She said the show's characters will especially appeal to the audience, but that's not all. "The set has lots of moving pieces and transforms into other things, which is unique," added Nguyen. "This entire year, we've focused on achieving dreams, and this play's lesson is that it's never too late to have a dream come true."

Junior Elliot Carreon has three roles – the king's understudy, an ensemble member and a puppet mouse. "Being a mouse is really fun," he said. "You see about

SEE CINDERELLA, PAGE 23

## Here's What's Happening at MCC!

APR  
4

**Presented by The Alden**

Foreign Language Film  
Thursday, April 4, 1 p.m.  
Free admission

APR  
7

**Presented by The Alden**

Family Hula Dance Workshop  
Sunday, April 7, 1-2:30 p.m.  
\$15/\$12 for seniors and students  
\$10 MCC district residents



APR  
7

**Presented by The Alden - Chamber Music Series**

The Borisevich Duo  
Sunday, April 7, 2 p.m.

\$10/\$7 for seniors and students  
\$5 MCC district residents

APR  
7

**Presented by The Alden**

(the) Unruly Theatre Project  
w/Honolulu Theatre for Youth  
Sunday, April 7, 4 p.m.

Free admission

APR  
8

**Presented by The Alden and Seniors in Action**

Hula for Retirees Workshop  
Monday, April 8, 1 p.m.

Free admission

APR  
10

**Seeking Diverse Blood Donations**

American Red Cross Blood Drive  
Wednesday, April 10, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS to schedule an appointment.

APR  
12

**Presented by The Alden**

Lightwire Theater:  
"The Ugly Duckling"  
Friday, April 12, 6 p.m.

\$15/\$12 seniors  
\$10 MCC district residents

APR  
13

**Reduce, Resuse, Recycle**

McLean Earth Day - Act Locally  
Saturday, April 13, 9 a.m.- noon

Free, registration is required.



The McLean  
Community Center  
[mcleancenter.org](http://mcleancenter.org)

Home of The Alden Theatre  
[aldentheatre.org](http://aldentheatre.org)

1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean, VA 22101  
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[@mcleancentervva](https://www.instagram.com/mcleancentervva)



# ENTERTAINMENT



“Agatha Christie’s Murder on the Orient Express” will be featured March 23-April 13, 2024, at the Little Theatre of Alexandria. <https://thelittletheatre.com/performances/>

## 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](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts).

### SCHEDULE

April 5: Francesca Hurst – Solo Piano  
April 19: Sylvan Waters Duo – Harp/Brass

## 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](http://www.workhousearts.org)).

## MARCH 23 – APRIL 13, 2024

**Agatha Christie’s Murder on the Orient Express.** At The Little Theatre of Alexandria. Adapted by Ken Ludwig. It’s 1934, just after midnight, and a snowstorm has stopped the opulent sleeper train in its tracks. A wealthy American businessman is discovered dead, and the brilliant and beautifully mustachioed Hercule Poirot must solve the mystery before the murderer strikes again.

## MARCH 25 TO APRIL 19

**Mason Exhibitions.** Mason Exhibitions presents two exhibitions on George Mason University’s Fairfax Campus. Faces & Figures: Identity Through Printmaking in South Africa at Gillespie Gallery in the Art and Design Building from March 25—April 19 with an opening reception on Tuesday, April 2 from 5 to 7 p.m. and Roots & Reflections: Contemporary Chinese Artists in DC at Buchanan Hall Atrium Gallery on display through April 19.

## APRIL 1-30

**Young at Art Exhibit for 55+ Plus Age Group.** At RCC Hunters Woods, Reston. This free exhibit, for two-dimensional art only, will take place from Monday, April 1 to Tuesday, April 30. A reception and presentation of awards is planned for Thursday, April 13th in the Community Room from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. This will be an opportunity to view the art and present several fun awards. At 2:15 p.m., you are invited to attend a performance by violinist Miles Stiebel at the CenterStage.

## THURSDAY/APRIL 4

“The Salesman” Film. 1 p.m. (Iran and France; Directed Asghar Farhadi)  
Shown in Farsi with English subtitles. From the director of “A Separation,” a married couple perform in Arthur Miller’s 1949 play “Death

of a Salesman” on stage. When the wife is assaulted, her husband attempts to determine the identity of the attacker, while she struggles to cope with post-traumatic stress. Winner of a Cannes Film Festival and Oscar award.

## APRIL 4-21

“The Nance.” At 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 and 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. This witty, Tony Award-Nominated play, filled with music, dance, and comedy sketches, introduces us to Chauncey Miles, a gay burlesque performer at the Irving Place Theater. The Nance recreates the naughty, raucous world of burlesque’s heyday and tells the backstage story of Chauncey and his fellow performers. At a time when it was easy to play gay and dangerous to be gay, Chauncey’s uproarious antics on the stage stand out in marked contrast to his offstage life. Visit [www.1ststage.org](http://www.1ststage.org) or call 703-854-1856.

## APRIL 5-7

“STOMP” At Capital One Hall, Tysons Corner. STOMP is explosive, provocative, sophisticated, sexy, utterly unique and appeals to audiences of all ages. The percussive hit also brings new surprises, with sections of the show now updated and restructured and the addition of two new full-scale routines, utilizing props such as tractor tire inner tubes and paint cans. Visit [capitalonehall.com](http://capitalonehall.com).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 6

**Trout Fishing in America.** 8 p.m. At Reston Community Center’s Center Stage, Reston. Trout Fishing in America is the longstanding, four-time Grammy-nominated musical partnership of Keith Grimwood and Ezra Idlet.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 6

**Mutts Gone Nuts.** at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts,



Founder’s Day will be held Saturday, April 6, 2024 at Lake Anne Plaza in Reston.

Fairfax. Prepare to be bow-wowed! Canines and comedy collide in Mutts Gone Nuts when husband and wife duo Scott and Joan Houghton return to the Center for the Arts and unleash their troupe of four-legged friends for a dog-thrilling extravaganza like no other. The show includes some of the most talented dogs in the world doing barrel tricks, dancing, magic, and jump rope routines! The talented furry lineup even includes a Guinness World Record holder for the highest jump by a dog at 75 and 1/2 inches and a world champion frisbee dog.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 6

**Founder’s Day.** At Lake Anne Plaza, Reston. 12 to 4 p.m. Reston Museum will celebrate the 20th Anniversary of Founder’s Day, which began as a celebration of Reston’s founder Robert E. Simon Jr.’s 90th birthday. The event has continued every year since, showcasing how Reston’s community continues to live the legacy established by Simon. Lake Anne Plaza will be filled with the music of performers, a community clean up, book fair, and family-friendly activities. Learn more at [restonmuseum.org/event-details/founders-day-2](http://restonmuseum.org/event-details/founders-day-2).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 6

**Bluebells at the Bend Festival.** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. This family-friendly event offers fun for all ages, including:  
Wildflower Walks: Immerse yourself in the breathtaking beauty of spring as you stroll through fields of vibrant bluebells and other wildflowers, guided by knowledgeable experts.

Live Music: Enjoy performances as you take in the sights and sounds of nature in full bloom.

Up-Close Encounters: Get up close and personal with live animals and learn fascinating facts about the creatures that call Riverbend Park home.

Creative Kids’ Crafts: Spark your little ones’ imagination with hands-on crafts and activities designed to inspire creativity and wonder.

## Check out the Bluebells at the Bend Festival on Saturday, April 6, 2024, at Riverbend Park in Great Falls.

Exciting Exhibitors: Explore a variety of exhibits showcasing local organizations, artists and environmental initiatives that celebrate the beauty and importance of nature.

Delicious Food: Indulge your taste buds with a delectable selection of food offerings that are sure to satisfy cravings and fuel your adventure.

Tickets are \$10 per person online until April 5, and \$12 per person on the day of the event.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 6

**Get Healthy Vienna! Expo.** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Vienna Community Center, Vienna. The Vienna-Oakton community is abundant in businesses that meet the health, wellness, fitness, and social engagement needs of local residents. On April 6, the Vienna Business Association (VBA) will showcase a cross-section of these businesses and organizations at the 2nd Annual Get Healthy Vienna! Expo 2024. It will feature up to 50 exhibitors who will share information about the services and products that their businesses or organizations provide. This year’s Expo will feature a Kids and Families Zone, which will include children’s activities and demonstrations throughout the day. There will be a special appearance by various Superheroes, courtesy of the Vienna Singing Princesses, face-paintings, and health-related activities for kids. Moreover, an adult section will include a robust variety of health and wellness providers, and special presentations throughout the day.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 6

**Into the Woods: A Spring Celebration at Frying Pan Farm Park.** At 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. 11 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and noon. Celebrate the cherry blossoms’ arrival and join them in the woods of Frying Pan Farm Park for a

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# ENTERTAINMENT



The 2024 Spring Garden Market at River Farm takes place April 12-13, 2024. <https://ahsgardening.org/about-river-farm/events-programs/springgardenmarket2024/>

nature-filled experience. Into the Woods is a free, fun-for-all-ages, self-paced tour that promises to ignite your sense of wonder and discovery. Visitors can enjoy:

**Unique Natural Wonders:** Discover the magic of Frying Pan Farm Park's woods, where the combination of spring sunshine and rare soil creates a vibrant ecosystem.

**Self-Paced Exploration:** Embark on a nature-filled adventure at your own pace, starting from the main park entrance. Follow the trail near the historic meetinghouse and prepare to be amazed at every turn.

**Interactive Stations:** Along the trail, encounter stations designed for wildlife appreciation, fairy house building and craft-making. Let your creativity soar as you engage with the natural world around you.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 6

**Get Healthy Vienna! Expo 2024.** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At The Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, Vienna. Connections to Wellness – this year's theme – features a cross-section of more than 50 Vienna-Oakton area businesses and organizations that support an integrated approach – fitness and movement, emotional health and mindfulness, social engagement and purpose, and overall physical health – to help individuals of all ages achieve wellness through a healthy lifestyle and connections. Presented by The Vienna Business Association.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 7

**Chamber Music Series – The Borisevich Duo.** 2 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Back by very popular demand, this dynamic husband-wife duo not only make beautiful music together, but they enrich their performances by sharing insight and music history with the audience.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 7

**Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey Siegel – Three Great Romantics.** At 7 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax.

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## MONDAY/APRIL 8

### “Confessions of a Good Samaritan.”

5 p.m. At GMU's Johnson Center Cinema, Fairfax. The Visiting Filmmakers Series invites you to a free screening of Confessions of a Good Samaritan, followed by a Q&A with the filmmaker, Penny Lane, and Dr. Lisa Eckenwiler, Professor and Chair of GMU's Department of Philosophy. In the film, director Penny Lane's decision to become a “Good Samaritan” by giving one of her kidneys to a stranger launches her on an unexpectedly funny, intimate, and provocative personal quest to understand the nature of altruism.

## MONDAY/APRIL 8

### Enjoy Viewing the Solar Eclipse.

Don't miss out on the unique opportunity to view a solar eclipse with the Fairfax County Park Authority. The Park Authority has prepared extraordinary eclipse viewing activities at locations throughout the county on Monday, April 8. Join them for a safe viewing experience that will include both pre- and post-eclipse activities, games and demonstrations.

April 8 viewing event locations include:

Ellanor C. Lawrence Park (2-4 p.m.)  
Burke Lake Park (2-4 p.m.)  
Historic Huntley (1:30-4:30 p.m.)  
Turner Farm Park (1:30-4:30 p.m.)

Event admission is \$10 per person.

Each location will have a limited number of eclipse-viewing glasses, and sun-spotting scopes will be available to view the eclipse thanks to donations from the Fairfax County Park Foundation. Participants are encouraged to bring portable chairs and blankets.

## APRIL 11-12

### American Daffodil Society Convention.

At Hyatt Regency Dulles, 2300 Dulles Corner Blvd., Herndon. Thursday, April 11, 2 p.m.-7 p.m. | Friday, April 12, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Daffodils signal the true arrival of Spring! Blooming en masse there is little that rivals the spectacle, but get closer and you

will see the utter miracle, the vast variety, and sheer beauty of these springtime arrivals. The American Daffodil Society (ADS) offers the opportunity to the general public to capture a glimpse of thousands of blooms during their 70th Anniversary ADS Convention. Stunning varieties, many centuries old, and others so innovative and new that they have not yet been named will enthrall you. From the popular yellow trumpets to blooms that measures ¼ inch across and colors of pale yellow to white and rose, collections and individual blooms will be exhibited. This will be a show/convention not to be missed.

## ARTSCREEN:

### A FREE FILM SERIES

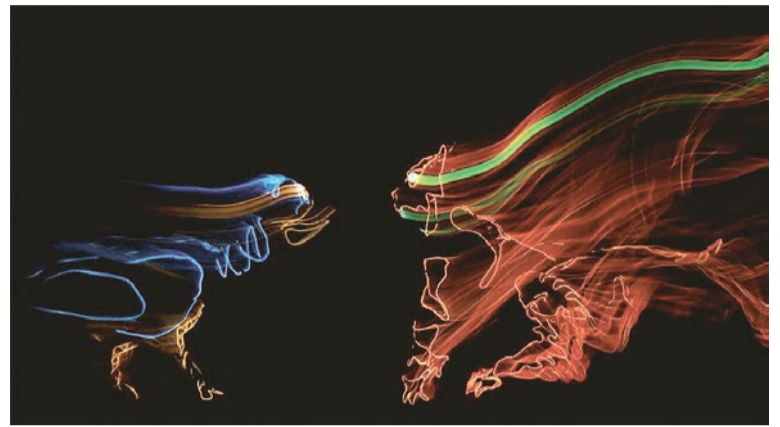
### CELEBRATING THE ARTS

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.

## FRIDAY/APRIL 12

**“The Ugly Duckling.”** 6 p.m. At The McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Semi-finalist on NBC's “America's Got Talent” and winner of TruTV's “Fake Off,” Lightwire Theater will bring its production of “The Ugly Duckling” to The Alden in McLean. Lightwire utilizes light, technology and music to tell captivating stories. Using cutting-edge puppetry, technology, music and dance, the beloved story of “The Ugly Duckling” will be told in complete darkness with light from electroluminescent wire defining the various characters. Their unique brand of storytelling uses only LED wire, larger-than-life puppets and a dramatic music score to convey deep meaning and



“The Ugly Duckling” can be seen Friday, April 12, 2024 at the McLean Community Center.

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By Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows

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Langley High School will present “Guys and Dolls” on April 12-15, 2024.

theatrical excitement. Visit the website, [aldentheatre.org](http://aldentheatre.org).

## APRIL 12-15

**“Guys and Dolls.”** At Langley High School, McLean. Immerse yourself in the vibrant world of New York City, filled with love, laughter, and catchy tunes. Langley's talented cast and crew are ready to transport you to the golden age of Broadway! Follow the intertwining tales of high-rolling gamblers, captivating and unlikely love stories. Will the charismatic Sky Masterson win the heart of straight-laced missionary Sarah Brown? Can Nathan Detroit organize the perfect craps game while dealing with his own romantic troubles? Ticket link: <https://www.etix.com/ticket/v/15635/langley-high-school-theatre>

## SATURDAY/APRIL 13

**2024 Horse Expo.** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Calling all horse enthusiasts to the Annual Horse Expo at Frying Pan Farm Park Equestrian Center! This featured event is for experienced riders, beginners, and anyone who loves horses or hopes to become a rider. Frying Pan Farm Park has been hosting horse shows and serving the local horseback-riding community for more than 50 years. Come by and enjoy a purely authentic equestrian experience. Enjoy amazing equestrian demonstrations; see a variety of horses in the Parade of Breeds; gain insights from expert speakers; explore a wide range of businesses offering horse-related products and

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 23

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				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Let us know about an upcoming event

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## Employment

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## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 18

WRAP's 2024 St. Patrick's Day SoberRide campaign began at 12:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 17, 2024 (St. Patrick's Day) and continued until 12:00 a.m. Monday, March 18, 2024 as a way to keep local roads safe from potentially impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk period.

## SOBRIETY CHECKPOINTS SCHEDULED

The Fairfax County Police Department is committed to ensuring the safety of our community by conducting sobriety checkpoints across district stations throughout the year. These checkpoints, hosted by DUI squad and district stations, will take place between 11 p.m. and 2 a.m. The primary goal is to identify and remove impaired drivers from the streets, contributing to safer roadways.

### SCHEDULE:

- 4/13/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Little River Tpke and Woodland Rd
- 4/20/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Arlington Blvd and Graham Rd
- 5/3/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Telegraph Rd and Franconia Rd
- 5/17/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Richmond Hwy and Jeff Todd Way
- 5/25/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Ox Rd and Clara Barton Rd
- 6/1/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Route 50 and Rugby Rd
- 6/7/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Richmond Hwy and Furnace Rd
- 6/28/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Leesburg Pike EB and Fairfax County Pkwy
- 7/6/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Braddock Rd and Ox Rd
- 7/12/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Burke Lake Rd in front of Lake Braddock High School
- 8/3/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Little River Tpke and Minor Ln
- 8/9/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Clifton Rd and Burns Way
- 9/6/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Richmond Hwy and Shannon's Green Way
- 10/26/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Leesburg Pike WB and Westpark Dr
- 11/9/24 - 11 p.m.-2 a.m. at Leesburg Pike and Fairfax County Pkwy

## MCLEAN NEWCOMERS AND NEIGHBORS

The club was founded in 1969 to create new friendships, provide opportunities for socializing and acquaint residents with the community. It sponsors many group activities including: Anything with food, Armchair Traveler, Book Club, Bunco, Canasta, Crafty Ladies, Genealogy, Golf, Let Us Lunch, Mah Jongg, Mah Jongg NY Style, Movie Lovers, Museums/House and Garden Tours, Nature Walks, Restaurant Critics, Sing for Fun and Tech Forums. Application forms may be mailed to: Membership McLean Newcomers and Neighbors, P.O. Box 6166, McLean, VA 22106. Visit the website: [www.mcleannewcomers.org](http://www.mcleannewcomers.org).

## SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthy-mindsfairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthy-mindsfairfax) or [www.nami-north-ernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html](http://www.nami-north-ernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html).



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# Cinderella

FROM PAGE 19

eight of us at a time with the stepfamily and the Fairy Godmother. It's great being behind the actors onstage and giving a personality to the mouse itself. My mouse likes to attack the other mice for fun, but they're in on it. We're operating hand puppets, and they're so cute."

Carreon especially likes the song, "The Stepsisters' Lament," saying, "The way Kelly Simpkins and Antonella Foschi sing it and do their choreography, they bring so much to their characters and are really fun to watch."

He said audiences will love this production of "Cinderella" because "the cast is brilliant, and everyone likes being their characters – you can tell by the way they play them. People will really enjoy the music, too."

Heliya Jafari, a freshman, is the assistant stage manager and works on tech crew. Regarding the set, she said, "Audiences will see an olden-times marketplace – with bread, cheese, meat, etc. – that looks magical. It's like a busy, noisy and lively bazaar. I know the effort and time that went into creating these scenes,



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

From left, Antonella Foschi, understudy Vanesa Barraza (the stepsisters) and Isabella Viale (the stepmother) rehearse a scene.

and the audience will enjoy taking it all in. It's to be savored."

Later in the story, the main set will transform into the castle ballroom. But mainly, said Jafari, "People will see the village where the marketplace is. And the two sides of the stage will have constant scenes – one is the stepfamily's house, and the other is a room in the castle."

Everyone in the 16-person crew helped build the set. "Our set head, Katie Powderly, designed the set, and it's really color-ful and pretty," said Jafari. "I work on the soundtrack, and I'm thinking of going into sound for a career, so I'm enjoying it." Besides the set and story, she added, audiences "will really like the singing because it's just so good."

## ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 21

services; and indulge in delectable treats from food trucks. Pony rides are also available (Preregistration is required). Admission to the Horse Expo is free, pony rides are \$10 per rider.

### SATURDAY/APRIL 13

**Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's Spring Native Plant Sale.** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Morven Park Parking Lot, 17195 Southern Planter Lane, Leesburg. Thousands of beautiful spring blooming flowers, shrubs, trees, vines and ferns will be for sale from four native plant nurseries: Watermark Woods, Nature by Design, Seven Bends Nursery, and Hill House Farms and Nursery. Experts will be on hand to help you choose the right plants for your garden. Want to learn more about native plants. They'll have an 11 a.m. Intro to Native Plants presentation, with information, pictures, plants and giveaways.

### SUNDAY/APRIL 14

**T-TRAK Model Train Show.** 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia T-TRAK members will hold a tabletop N gauge model train display at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. Admission: museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5; senior 65+ and military (active and retired), \$4. For more information on the museum events, <http://www.fairfax-station.org>, <http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR>, 703-425-9225.

### SUNDAY/APRIL 14

**McLean Art Society Partners with Virginia Chamber Orchestra.** 4 p.m. The McLean Art Society is thrilled to participate in the Virginia Chamber Orchestra's premier performance at Capital One Hall in Tysons, featuring works of Beethoven, Mozart, Vaughan Williams and Mendelssohn with guest artist, Brian Ganz, regarded as one of the leading pianists of his generation. This unique hybrid event combines classical chamber music with local art in a manner that will gratify the senses through aural and visual stimulation. Guests are encouraged to arrive early to view original art by talented local artists — including



The McLean Art Society Partners with the Virginia Chamber Orchestra to present Brian Ganz on Sunday, April 14, 2024 at Capital One Hall in Tysons Corner.

watercolorists, oil painters, and sculptors — with art available for purchase. Artists will be on site from 3-4 p.m., during intermission, and after the performance to meet concertgoers and share the inspirations for their works.

### THURSDAY/APRIL 18

**Green Expo.** 7-9 p.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. More than 30 local exhibitors will be on hand with information about green landscaping ideas, composting, recycling, energy efficiency, solar power, water conservation and more. The popular "Ask Me Anything" sessions are back this year featuring local experts who will make brief presentations and then take questions from attendees regarding sustainable practices. For more information, visit [www.viennava.gov/GreenExpo](http://www.viennava.gov/GreenExpo).

### FAIRFAX COUNTY FARMERS MARKETS READY FOR 2024 SEASON

The opening of the 2024 Farmers Market season is fast approaching and the Park Authority, along with dozens of local food producers, will have tons of fresh and

### healthy foods waiting for you at all 10 markets located throughout the county.

This year, you can expect to find locally grown produce, delicious baked goods and prepared foods at the farmers markets. Additionally, enjoy a variety of family-friendly activities from musical performances, games, and don't forget to bring your food scraps to support our community composting efforts!

The 2024 season begins April 17 with the McCutcheon/Mount Vernon Market. Check out our full market schedule for the latest times and locations.

#### WEDNESDAYS

McCutcheon/Mount Vernon  
April 17-Dec. 18, 8 a.m. - noon  
Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria

#### Oakmont

May 1-Nov. 6, 8 a.m.-noon  
Oakmont Recreation Center, 3200 Jermantown Road, Oakton

#### Wakefield

May 1 - Oct. 30, 2-6 p.m.  
Wakefield Park, 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale  
THURSDAYS  
Annandale

## Oh Brother,



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

My late brother Richard attended, along with my wife, Dina, the first Team Lourie meeting with my oncologist back in late Feb. 2009 when we first learned that I had non-small cell lung cancer stage IV. He also attended my first appointment with my endocrinologist 10-plus years later when after a somewhat delayed, but much-needed biopsy, I received an updated/corrected diagnosis: papillary thyroid cancer stage IV. Unfortunately, Richard did not attend last week's meeting with the nephrologist. If he was alive, he most definitely would have attended. If there ever was an event/situation since his death in Dec. '22, where I felt his loss, it was during this initial meeting with the kidney doctor. The doctor who very well may control what medicines I take, what foods I eat, and what lifestyle I'm able to live for the rest of my life. A 'rest' which at present seems unlikely to satisfy my presumptive life expectancy and/or compare favorably to the age when my parents died: age 87 (father) and mother (age 86). I'll be age 70 this coming Sept.

This first meeting with the nephrologist was extremely informative. It was an opportunity for all parties to get acquainted since it seems, medically speaking, we'll be somewhat involved from here on out. Never had I quite felt the weight of my brother's loss than when we're sitting in an examining room and encouraged to ask the nephrologist questions. Which we (Dina and I) did. Had my brother, Richard, been in attendance, there might have been a few more difficult questions asked of the doctor – by him. Nevertheless, his positive attitude, his encouragement and good humor would have been welcome, especially given the rock (stage IV papillary thyroid cancer) and a hard place (chronic kidney disease, stage IV) where I find myself trapped. It will be very challenging to navigate my future healthcare decisions, more so than ever before. Cancer alone was difficult enough. Now, as if we needed any complications, my health status is complicated by the relationship between my thyroid cancer medicine and my kidney disease: in short treating the thyroid cancer damages the kidney, and not treating the cancer – so as not damage the kidney, allows/enables the thyroid cancer to do what it does when left untreated: grows, moves and m, m, metastasizes.

Given the conundrum of sorts caused by my present conditions, I could use most everything my brother would offer; compassion, understanding, support, keen insights, and love. As my life exists now, with both my parents and my lone sibling deceased, the weight of my situation falls almost entirely on my wife, Dina. Up until recently, she (and I) had my older brother to rely/fall back on when any need might arise. Now we don't. And as serious as we thought/knew my previous medical history was fraught, this one may be "fraughtier." Though I may be older and wiser, I may also be sicker, or perhaps I should say, have fewer and more complicated options. The kind of 'complicated options' which really spell trouble (with apologies to Robert Preston) right here in Burtonsville, Md. Not everybody outlives a cancer diagnosis. I know of many individuals who have succumbed to this disease since my diagnosis. As for that Feb. 2009 non-small cell lung cancer stage IV diagnosis, lots of time has passed, but I haven't. Moreover, fifteen-plus years ago I was originally given a "13 month to two years" prognosis, I was shocked of course, as I was basically asymptomatic. Somehow, I outlived it, but I'm not sure I have as much left in the tank to counter the threat this time around. 'Wiser' is helpful, but I don't think 'older' is. Though medical care evolves as well, (back in my early days, there was no such option as immunotherapy), cancer is the big dog on or off the porch. Though being diagnosed with cancer is not the killer it used to be, in some cases; mine in particular, cancer is very much in charge, especially if it's left untreated.

Still, it's not as if Dina and I aren't up to the task, it's more that a task of this substance and severity require all hands-on deck. Having my go-to resource unavailable permanently presents all sorts of personal, medical, logistical, emotional, financial, and legal issues for us to navigate. And how can we navigate them without the one person who we could depend on and trust to initiate, follow through, and weather any storm, expected or otherwise as this train goes down the track? If Richard were still alive, this train would never run out of track. Without him still alive, I wonder – and worry, how I'll even make it onto the train – euphemistically speaking (I'm not exactly F.D.R.).

However, we're still early days. I just hope there's a few late nights left as well.

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



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