

THE CONNECTION

CENTREVIEW ❖ Chantilly ❖ Great Falls ❖ Herndon ❖ McLean ❖ Oak Hill ❖ Oakton ❖ Reston ❖ Vienna

Bridge Over Troubled Crosswalk

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Heartbreak as Fire Leaves 2 Children Dead

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Valor Awards

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The healthcare spotlight highlighted the contributions of major health service providers. Drawings from students at the Reston Children's Center. From left: Chairman Jeffrey McKay; Dr. Debra O'Bierne, Medical Services Director, Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board; Sonia White, Inova Fair Oaks Hospital/Inova Health Systems; and Keith Morrison, Director of Emergency Preparedness, Reston Hospital Center/HCA Healthcare

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STUDIO 151 PHOTOGRAPHY/SAMANTHA MARSHALL

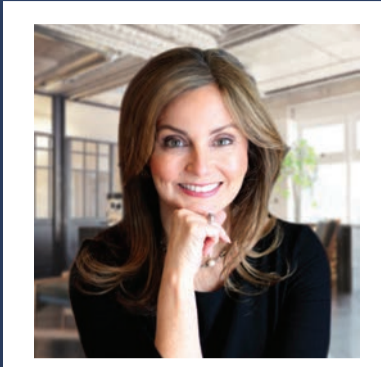


Debut of Community News In Brief Not So Brief

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APRIL 17-23, 2024

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DIANNE VAN VOLKENBURG



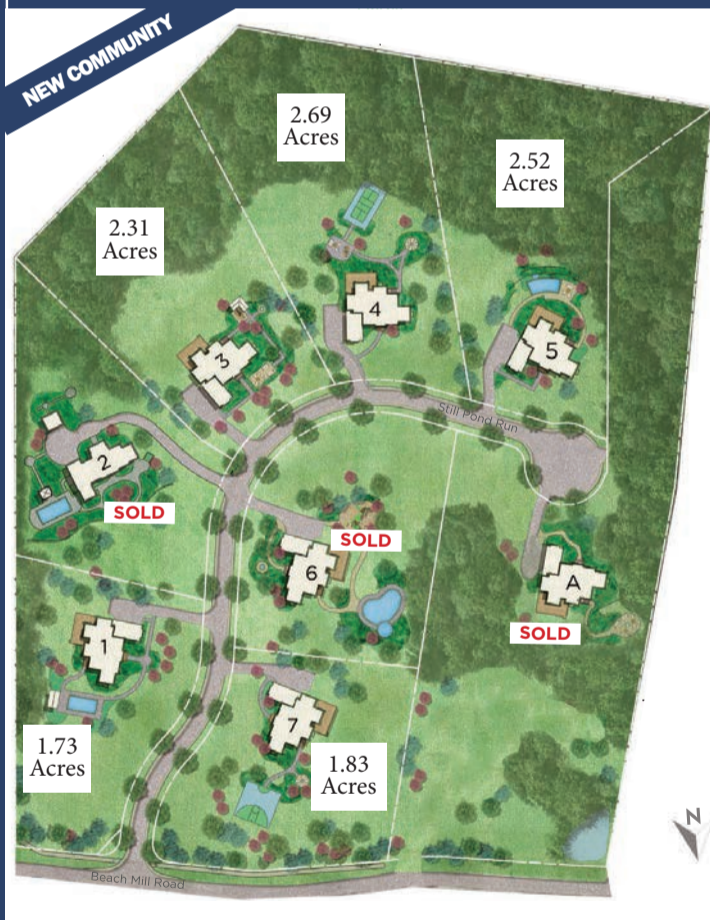
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PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANK RIVERA

Flames rage inside the house prior to firefighters' arrival. A Ring camera across the street captured this photo.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANK RIVERA

Firefighters spraying water inside the house to quell the flames.

'This Evil Fire Changed Everything in an Instant'

6-year-old was found shielding his little brother.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION



William Brice

It's not the natural order of things – children aren't supposed to die before their parents. And although doctors at Children's National Hospital told Reina and Jamey Brice their young sons, William, 6, and Zachariah, 3, showed signs of brain death, they kept hoping for a miracle.

Saturday, around 11:30 p.m., sitting side by side, Jamey's arm around his wife, the couple posted a video update on their boys, who were rushed to the hospital last Wednesday, suffering from severe smoke inhalation after their house caught on fire.

"We're so grateful for all the prayers being lifted up; we're overwhelmed with gratitude," said Jamey. "Unfortunately, tonight we didn't get the outcome we wanted. Both boys have undergone their first test and didn't show any signs of [brain] responsiveness."

"It is the darkest night we've ever faced in our marriage, and it is definitely the most impossible situation we've ever faced together," he continued. "In our family, we surrender to God's will and trust His sovereignty, and we've done our best to raise these kids to have a relationship with God. And if God really wants them home with Him, we know they'll have everlasting life."

But, said Jamey, he and Reina are heartbroken because they really wanted to have more time with their two youngest sons. "We know God has big plans and purposes for them, and William has already accepted Jesus as his lord and savior – he's been baptized – so we know he's going to heaven," said Jamey. "Zachariah isn't quite old enough to make that choice, but we believe he'll be going right there with William."

Stressing that "a prerequisite for a miracle is an impossible situation," he said, "We're still holding onto hope and faith that tomorrow's a new day. They could possibly wake up in the morning, or their second test will be around 3 p.m. So we ask you to keep praying. We appreciate the donations and the offers of support. But our biggest need right now is for God to bring them back."

Jamey also noted that he and his wife have seen church members "all over" praying – even people who haven't gone to church in a while – because of their boys. However, he added, "I wish it were happening under different circumstances. This is, by far, our toughest time, and we couldn't imagine going through this alone."

He then shared some information the firefighters told him about William and Zachariah. "We learned today that, when they were found, William was actually covering and protecting Zachariah," said Jamey. "We knew that to be his character because that's just who [William] is, and he's a hero."

He said they had no soot or burns on them – "all of their injuries are due to excessive smoke inhalation and brain swelling. But even as they were being carried out of the house, the team said there was a light around them, and they were the only thing they could see in the darkness."

Calling the fire "evil," Jamey said, "It came from nowhere and changed everything in an instant." Voice breaking and on the verge of tears, he then told everyone listening to "Hug your kids a little bit longer, because you just never know."

He said he and Reina did their best to raise William and Zachariah in a Godly home, teach them good habits and boundaries and set them up for success. "If anybody can bounce back and make it through, it's them," said Jamey. "Everything hinges on God either waking up these boys or [having them] show some responsiveness. We're really just standing by for a miracle."

Community Mourns Tragic Death of Two Young Children

Fire destroys their home in Little Rocky Run.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

In today's polarized world, people are often divided about many things. But after a devastating fire last week destroyed a family's home in Little Rocky Run and sent two young children to the hospital in critical condition, people far and wide came together to pray for them.

The boys, William, 6, and Zachariah, 3, were trapped upstairs by the flames and were rescued by firefighters. They weren't burned; but the heavy smoke filled their lungs, preventing oxygen from reaching their brains. Paramedics performed CPR on each child for at least 45 minutes before they were airlifted to Children's National Hospital in Washington, D.C.

The next day their dad, Jamey Brice, updated friends and family members on the boys' condition, on Facebook, and urgently beseeched them all to pray for his children. "Everyone please pray immediately!" he wrote.

"We were told this afternoon that both William and Zachariah have symptoms consistent with brain death. It is not the final prognosis, and they will both be further tested. This is mission critical now, and the only thing we ask is to pray and get everyone you know to pray. We don't want any money, items or clothes. We just want our boys."

Tragically, however, after two tests confirmed neither boy had any brain activity, they were removed from life support on Sunday and succumbed to their injuries. Monday morning, their parents wrote the most agonizing post of their lives:

"We are devastated by these horrific events and heartbroken that we lost our amazing sons. We have peace in knowing they are both with Jesus and have heard, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' We also have peace knowing that we got more days with them on earth, as we learned they should have been lost in the fire that day.

"Our heart aches because we want them here. But we have a strong hope knowing that we will see them



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMEY BRICE

Back row, from left are Seth holding Zachariah, Reina and Jamey Brice; and in front, from left are William and Logan, on Easter.

again and will do our best to share their legacy of love, joy and encouragement for everyone they met."

The house belongs to Brice's parents, who neighbors say have lived there for 30 years. (Although it bears a Clifton address, it's geographically in Centreville). Jamey, a Centreville High grad, his wife Reina, and their four boys – including middle-schooler Seth, and Logan, 8 – all lived together. Seth attends Liberty Middle School, and Logan and William, Union Mill Elementary.

When the fire began, last Wednesday, April 10, Jamey was at work at Life Time Fitness in Centreville, where he's a personal trainer. Reina was also at work and, since it was a school holiday for Eid al Fitr, she took Seth with her, while Logan, William and Zachariah stayed home with their grandparents.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue hasn't yet revealed what caused the fire or where, specifically it began, but the two-alarm blaze on Whetstone Manor Court started around 9 a.m. According to fire officials, "Units arrived with heavy fire [showing] and reports of two trapped occupants."

SEE FATAL HOUSE FIRE, PAGE 4



PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANK RIVERA

Firefighters and paramedics rushing one of the boys to an ambulance.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

The aftermath of the fire at the Brice family home in Little Rocky Run.

Fatal House Fire In Little Rocky Run

FROM PAGE 3

Logan had managed to escape and immediately called 911 from outside the house. Meanwhile, the grandparents tried desperately to reach the two little ones but the rapidly spreading and intense flames made it impossible.

They, too, made it out, as did the family's two dogs, but firefighters had to rescue William and Zachariah from the top of the stairs. Both were unconscious, and firefighter paramedics began CPR at once. In a later TV interview, Jamey Brice praised them for "not giving up and performing as many rounds of CPR as they did."

Frank Rivera has lived across the street from the family for 28 years, and that's where he and his wife raised their own children, who grew up with Jamey. Rivera works from home and was first alerted to the fire when he heard the sirens from the first-responding fire engines.

"I opened the door, looked out and saw the first fire engine pull up," he said. "Two or three firefighters jumped out and ran to get a hose hooked up and quickly started spraying water on the house." Rivera said several more firetrucks and ambulances soon arrived and attached a hose to a second hydrant to continue fighting the blaze.

"The grandmother sustained some burns and was taken out on a stretcher to the first ambulance," he said. "Logan went with her, and the grandfather stayed. Then a few minutes later, I saw the firefighters bring the boys out. They had them on the lawn and did CPR on them for a long time. They were still doing it as they put them in the ambulance." Afterward, they were flown to the hospital.

By then, said Rivera, more than 40 firefighters, plus fire marshals and battalion chiefs, had rushed to the scene, and many of them remained for seven or eight hours, checking for hotspots. The fire department reported the fire was fully out by 11:30 a.m.

When Rivera later checked his Ring camera outside his own home, he said it showed smoke coming from the Brices' house around 9:06 a.m. "Then around 9:12 a.m., you could see the flames," he said. "There was fire everywhere. The main part of the house, on the left side, was fully engulfed in fire. I was concerned for the family."



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMEY BRICE

Back row, from left are Seth, Reina and Jamey holding Zachariah; in front, from left are Logan and William.

"We've seen the kids growing up, and the Brices are a great, close-knit family," he continued. "The kids were always outside playing. I helped Jamey put up the basketball hoop so they could play basketball in their driveway. Growing up, Jamey and his friends would play football in my front yard because the side of my house had a big, open area next to the pipestem. And before they got their basketball hoop, his kids played soccer in my yard, too."

The morning of the fire, Rivera said he initially didn't realize the gravity of the situation. Once the grandparents got outside, he said, "They were standing there looking at the house, so I thought they were OK. I also thought the kids were in school – I didn't realize it was a holiday."

"But the [youngest boys] were trapped on the second floor. It shocked me that they were still in the house, and it was crushing to see the firefighters bring out their limp bodies." Later learning that William and Zachariah were still fighting for their lives, Rivera said on Saturday, "We're hoping things work out for the best; we'll have to wait and see."

As word of the family tragedy spread, many churches – including Love Church in Gainesville, where the Brices regularly attend – held 'round-the-clock prayer vigils. And their relatives, friends and fellow church members flocked to the hospital, at the Brices' invitation, to lay hands on the boys at their bedsides and fervently pray for their recovery.

Jamey also provided updates on Facebook, continually asking for just one thing – prayers from anyone and everyone. Hundreds of people responded to each post and shared them with others. One post in particular – containing an impassioned plea from the Brices, plus photos of them sleeping with their children in their hospital beds – received 2,200 responses, more than 500 comments and was shared 1,300 times.

People's messages were heartfelt, and nearly every one of them mentioned prayers. Jennie Bush, for example, wrote, "We're praying for William's and Zachariah's healing for their little bodies and brains. We're also praying for your family's continued strength and perseverance and for all

How to Help the Brice Family

A family relative, Brianne Lopez of Manassas, started a GoFundMe account for the Brices. On it she wrote, "A devastating fire [led] to their home being destroyed and their two youngest children being airlifted to Children's Hospital with severe smoke inhalation injuries."

As of press time, 2,100 people had contributed nearly \$200,000. The Website for this page is:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-the-brice-family-recover-from-house-fire>.

And while no amount of money can make up for the loss of their children, the funds will be needed to help purchase clothing and other necessities as they try to rebuild their lives.

As Lopez wrote, "Reina and her family have been an incredible source of support for anyone going through a difficult time, have always kept their doors open to anyone in need. Please share and donate, if you can, for this incredible family who needs all the help and support they can get at this time."

In addition, Love Church in Gainesville is accepting donations of clothes, shoes, toys and other household items the Brices lost in the fire. The church office is in the Gainesville Medical Building, 14370 Lee Hwy., Suite 105. Dropoff hours are Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., via the front doors.

— BONNIE HOBBS

the doctors and nurses to provide the best possible care."

"Your boys are so beautiful and strong," wrote Rhya Daubert. "We are continuing to pray, and we will not stop."

"Through tears and a broken heart, my family and I hit our knees praying for you all," wrote Tammie Scott.

And Portia Bowman wrote, "Praying continuously. Please, Lord, heal these boys! There has never been a family more deserving of these prayers. They give so much love to their community, please allow us to give it back to them in answered prayers."

Susan Culin asked people to "please pray for these little boys. They're fighting so hard and can use everyone's support."

Calling the situation "heartbreaking," Doug Crowe wrote, "My daughter, a nurse at Children's, was on duty when they arrived and said everyone on staff is praying for these two angels."

In response, Reina Brice wrote on Friday, "We are so overwhelmed by the outpouring of prayer, financial and physical support. We see your messages. We feel your prayers. Saying thank you could never be enough."

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NEWS



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Families from the Owls Class Caleb Chu with his parents David Chu and Jieun Lee, Porter Santo with his parents Christine and Vincent Santo, and Maeve Miller with her mom Kariann Miller.

Week of the Young Child at Christ Presbyterian Preschool

Christ Presbyterian Preschool in Fairfax hosted Family Friday on April 12 to cap off the Week of the Young Child, an annual celebration hosted by the National Association for the Education of

Young Children (NAEYC). The purpose of the Week of the Young Child is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the ear-

SEE YOUNG CHILD, PAGE 7



State Sen. Stella Pekarsky (District 36) and Del. Irene Shin (District 8) with CPP Director Diane Volcansek and Assistant Director Amy Halstead.



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NEWS

Week of the Young Child

FROM PAGE 6

ly childhood programs and services that meet those needs.

Family Friday focuses on engaging and celebrating families at the heart of supporting their youngest learners. In addition to inviting students' families in for the event, special guests were Senator Stella Pekarisky (D-36) and Delegate Irene Shin (D-8) who were invited to help elevate the importance of Early Childhood Education. Other themes celebrated during the week were Music Monday, Tasty Tuesday, Work Together Wednesday, and Artsy Thursday.



Jelani Jeffrey looks at different seeds under a microscope.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



A group of preschool students learning about food and the kitchen wash dishes together.



Sutton and Liam Osiecki learn about the five senses.



Families from the Ducks Class Zuzu Ball-Li with her mom Cheng Li and Sofia Aguerrebehere with her mom Rosario Pitarini

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OPINION

Groups Urge the General Assembly To Reject Youngkin's Metro Budget Amendment

Gov. Glenn Youngkin slashed the General Assembly's additional funding for Metro by 76%, allocating no money in FY25 and just \$35 million in FY26 (Amendment 179 of Item 433).

The General Assembly had committed \$65 million in FY25 to match \$65 million from Northern Virginia localities, and \$84.5 million from the state in FY26, which would also be matched by Northern Virginia. These additional funds were the minimum additional funding needed to help close WMATA's operating funding gap and were necessary to match formula commitments by DC and Maryland.

Failure to provide additional state funding will have dire consequences for the workforce and economy of Northern Virginia and the DC region. It would mean massive service cuts and fare hikes at Metro, higher transportation costs for workers, and more congestion on the roads, and discourage next generation companies and workers from locating in the DC region.

The groups signing onto this press statement urge the General Assembly to reject Youngkin's budget amendment and restore the funding the General Assembly agreed to. They should also reject the Governor's budget language requiring a redundant set of stud-

ies of WMATA. The General Assembly has already passed SJ28, which establishes a comprehensive study of transit in Northern Virginia including WMATA.

The General Assembly recognized the critical value of Metro to the economy, workforce, and transportation system of Northern Virginia and the over \$1 billion per year in tax revenue that Metro-generated economic activity provides to the state (NVTC analysis). We thank the legislators for their support for Metro and urge them to reject the Governor's amendments regarding Metro.

Coalition for Smarter Growth;

Sustainable Mobility for Arlington County; Washington Area Bicyclist Association; Greater Greater Washington; Sierra Club - Virginia Chapter; Active Prince William; Grassroots Alexandria; CASA; Clean Fairfax; Piedmont Environmental Council; Unitarian Universalist Church of Roanoke; Southern Environmental Law Center; RVA Rapid Transit; Nature Forward; Virginia League of Conservation Voters; Friends of Dyke Marsh; Virginia Bicycling Federation; Chesapeake Climate Action Network Fund; Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets; Fairfax Families for Safe Streets; Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions.

Springtime is Farmers Market Time

JOHN LOVAAS
INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE

Daytime temperatures in Virginia are in the 60s and 70s and it sure feels like spring. Weeping and kwanza cherry trees in our tiny yard are in full bloom. Rain has been plentiful and plant life is bursting out all over. On Saturday, April 27th at 0800 hours the bell will ring announcing the opening of the Reston Farmers Market, the best in Northern Virginia, for a 27th year located in the now newly paved parking as guests of the Lake Anne Condo Association.

The Reston Farmers Market (let's call it RFM for short) is one of ten community farmers markets sponsored by the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA). All are producer-only markets offering the freshest fruits, vegetables and other foods grown or produced within 125 miles of here. You'll also find plants and flowers as well as seafood originating in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. All fresh, all local every Saturday morning from April 27 to December 7, 2024.

RFM will have 34 farmer/vendors again this season, tying us

(with Burke) for the title of largest in Fairfax County. Nearly all your favorites will be back, along with four newcomers. We've added an especially fine organic farm, Shenandoah Seasonal, bringing a variety of vegetables to our produce lineup. So, the Market will now have two certified organic farms, the other being Coulter's, a fully organic dairy farmer. Pasta Ligatto is a new arrival adding a good selection of fresh pastas and sauces to go with them at competitive prices. RFM is also happy to welcome back a product missing for a few years, goat cheese. Happy Creek Cheeses will fill that gap with a delightful selection of its own. Last, but by no means least among the newcomers is Grammy J's Baking with a favorite dessert of mine, fresh baked cookies!

With the addition of these producers, I doubt that you would be able to find as interesting and diverse selection of fresh goods in any other market in Northern Virginia. And I'm quite sure you won't find the lively and fun musicians who



Lovaas

come and play every Saturday in the RFM! We're proud to note that RFM, with the help of CORNERSTONES, offers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to low-income neighbors. Volunteers also collect unsold fresh fruits and veggies for the

from cooperating vendors at closing time for the CORNERSTONES' food pantry.

And, if you need assistance with problems in your own garden, visit the Fairfax Master Gardeners booth for everything from advice to sending samples of diseased plants to a Va. Tech lab for testing and suggested solutions! The Park Authority is once again planning to provide an in-Market composting service this year. What's more, if you come early, you just might find a free personal compost bucket, courtesy of FCPA, to use to bring your kitchen leftovers to market every week. Also, RFM and FCPA will be continuing their campaign to reduce single-use, forever-fouling-our-environment plastic bags. We ask that you bring

your own cloth bags to carry your purchases. We will have on hand a modest supply to give away at the Market Managers' stand and FCPA will be supplying vendors with compostable bags for your use for individual fruit and vegetable purchases. Our Market goal this year is to eliminate single-use plastic bags that clog our landfills, and ultimately our animal and seafood supply pretty much forever.

You might notice another change this year at the Reston Farmers Market — a fine team of Market Managers which does not include yours truly. Returning Market Managers whom you know are led by Fran Lovaas, Keith and Anne Strange along with newcomers Ben Miller, Linda Fuller, Maureen Broderick, and Meg Huffaker. Occasionally there will be other volunteers to fill if needed. As year 27 begins, I can assure you that RFM is in the best imaginable hands.

If you need more info about No-VA's finest farmers market, go to: www.restonfarmersmarket.com, a website created and maintained by another superb community volunteer, Sue Merk, for the last 24 years!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Calls for Cutting School Funds by \$100 Million

My wife and I have been homeowners in Fairfax County since 1968. I am a Board Member of the Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance (FCTA). I have been protesting both the budget and taxes for over 50 years! I am here to protest the outrageous salaries of executives of the Fairfax

County Public Schools (FCPS). I understand that the Chief Experience and Engagement Officer is paid \$244,255 and the Chief Equity Officer is paid \$248,693. This is more than the U.S. Secretary of Defense who is paid \$221,400 and is responsible for a trillion-dollar budget and millions of military

and civilian employees. The Superintendent is paid \$407,832. That is more than the President of the United States who makes \$400,000 annually. These are examples of overpaid executives. Keep in mind that a Senator and Congressman makes \$174,000 annually. The Majority and Minori-

ty Leaders in Congress as well as the President Pro Tempore make \$193,400 annually.

I understand that Mr. Chairman that you had a real problem with this FCPS budget. I believe that you stated, "the FCPS requested for the school transfer of \$165

SEE CALL FOR, PAGE 18

CONNECTION

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ROUNDUPS

Overnight Route 28 Centreville Road Closures

Heads up to all motorists planning on driving on Route 28 in Centreville during the overnight hours. From now through May 15, there'll be single- and double-lane closures between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. on both the northbound and southbound lanes of Route 28.

Final paving will be taking place there between the Route 28/Route 29 interchange in Centreville and the Fairfax County/Prince William County line. This road work is part of the Route 28 widening project; however, the dates are subject to change in the event of inclement weather.

Free Document Shredding and Scam- Prevention Info.

Fairfax County and AARP Virginia will hold the 7th Annual Scam Jam on Friday, April 19, from 9 a.m.-noon, at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Pkwy. Attendees will learn how to spot and report scams and will hear from cybersecurity experts with the FBI and representatives of the American Bankers Assn.

Complimentary morning refreshments and lunch will be provided for all registered participants. Registration is required for the information sessions, but not for the shredding service. Register for the Scam Jam at <https://events.aarp.org/event/FFXSJ24/summary>.

A shred truck will also be on site that day from noon-3 p.m. to provide free document shredding (limit two, banker-size boxes per car).

Celebrate Earth Day at Sully Historic Site

Fairfax County's largest Earth Day celebration is happening this Saturday, April 20, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way in Chantilly (near the Air and Space Museum annex), off Route 28 north. This annual event celebrates the outdoors through fun activities, live entertainment and educational resources. Suitable for all ages, the event is free, but there's a \$10/vehicle parking fee.

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STATIONARY ENGINEER APPRENTICESHIP



Applications for the IUOE Local 99 Apprenticeship Program will be accepted during the period of May 6-10, 2024, inclusive. Applications must be completed in person by the applicant at Engineer Center 9315 Largo Drive West, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. \$35 application fee includes drug screen.

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COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The Herndon Council Chambers is the site of public hearings on the 2024-2025 Town Budget.



Fairfax County Valor Awards

Police Officer First Class Steven Monahan of the Fairfax County Police Department receives the 2024 Bronze Medal of Valor. Standing from left to right: 2024 Valor Awards Master of Ceremonies Larry Miller, WUSA9; Andy Klaff, Executive Managing Director, Newmark, 2024 Valor Awards Gold Sponsor; Police Officer First Class Steven Monahan, Fairfax County Police; Chief Kevin Davis, Fairfax County Police; and Chairman Jeffrey McKay, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

STUDIO 151 PHOTOGRAPHY/SAMANTHA MARSHALL

Top stories and briefs.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Reston

The 46th Annual Fairfax County Valor Awards celebrates 230 first responders. On Thursday, April 11, the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce honored first responders at the 46th Annual Fairfax County Valor Awards. A steering committee composed of law enforcement agencies, representatives, the Sheriff's Office, event sponsors such as platinum sponsors Inova Hospital and Transurban, and members of the Fairfax County community selected the recipients, guided by specific criteria per category.

"We are proud to bring together members of our community to honor the 230 first responders who received a Valor Award this year," said Charles Kapur, president, and CEO of the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce. "Extraordinary heroes protecting us and our families."

Great Falls

The Rotary Club of Great Falls Honors Founder's Memory- The Rotary Club of Great Falls held a bocce tournament on Saturday, April 13, in memory of its founder, Sean Plunkett (1959-2022). The tournament supported the non-profit charity Veterans Moving Forward, which provides service, therapy, emotional support, and service dogs for veterans with physical and mental challenges at no cost. "We do what we do because it's our opportunity to serve those who serve our country," Kerri Kline, president and ceo of Veterans Moving Forward, said. "You see a veteran meet their dog, and there are no words to describe that immediate connec-

tion." Raising and training a dog costs as much as \$40,000.

Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCFA)- Chase Bank Building Planned for Village Centre- Fairfax County's Site Development and Inspections Division (SDID) is currently finalizing reviews of a proposed commercial bank project at 778 Walker Road to ensure compliance with county, state, and federal regulations. Its site is currently home to the Great Falls Farmers Market. A drive-through financial facility received a special exception from the County Board of Supervisors on Sept. 12, 2017. On April 9, 2024 the GFCFA Land Use and Zoning Committee reviewed the waiver application and voted to support it due to the risk of losing mature trees otherwise. Columbine Street and Oliver Estates' streets have "neither curbs and gutters nor sidewalks throughout. "Nor are any planned. It would essentially dead-end at the west boundary of the Chase parcel," stated GFCFA.

GFCFA on Pike Crosswalk Design- GFCFA's Transportation Committee Task Force has voiced concerns about Fairfax County's \$217,000 Georgetown Pike/Great Falls Library Pedestrian/Bicyclist Improvement Crosswalk Project. The tentative scope is to install a pedestrian refuge island near Bucks Lane east of the El Tio shopping center entrance. The Transportation Committee reported that a representative of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation "stated no safety study was conducted, nor is one planned in connection with the library crosswalk project."

High School Boundaries Changes- GFCFA's Schools Task Force drafted a position paper on school facility issues and FCPS Policy 8130 revisions. The school board proposes new boundaries for Langley, McLean, and Herndon high schools. The recently approved Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) forecasts capacity utilization for McLean HS



Presentation of colors by members of the Fairfax County Police Honor Guard at the 46th Annual Fairfax County Valor Awards. The Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce hosted the 46th Annual Fairfax County Valor Awards at the Hyatt Regency Reston on April 11 to honor public safety heroes in our community who went above and beyond the call of duty through their remarkable actions and achievements. Police Officer First Class Claire Craig is at the podium to deliver the national anthem.



Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce CEO Charles Kapur provides welcoming remarks to open the 46th Annual Fairfax County Valor Awards.

at 104 percent (119 percent without modular classrooms), Langley HS at 98 percent, and Herndon HS at 71 percent in school year five of the forecast period. GFCFA's position: "Boundary changes are disruptive to community-based schools and student learning and should be a last resort in managing our school facilities and learning spaces. Capacity renovations, program placement, and various innovative best practices should be exhausted before any consideration of a boundary change."

John Halacy Leads GFCFA—On April 5, vice president John Halacy became president following Chris Rich's resignation due to an increased workload in his professional career.

Town of Herndon

Man Armed with a Knife Shot by Herndon Police- A Herndon Police Department (HPD) officer shot and wounded a man Sunday morning, April 14, police say. Officers from the department responded to

COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE



U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D), Rep. Don Beyer (D-8), and Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) join Mitre to open its new lab for discovering and managing risks in AI-enabled systems at its facility in McLean.

Herndon Police Officer Shoots and Critically Wounds Stabbing Suspect

SCREENSHOT @HERNDONPOLICE

A Town of Herndon police officer shot and wounded a stabbing suspect armed with a knife when the man approached him after a reported domestic dispute.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Days after an open door caused it to deflate and partially collapse, the falling lighting damaged the court, and the Town of Herndon reinflated the tennis court bubble. The bubble is unusable and will not reopen this season.

the 900 block of First Place around 11:54 a.m. after a woman called 911 and reported that her husband stabbed her. Once police established contact with the suspect, he approached the responding officer with a knife. The officer fired his service weapon, striking the husband in the upper body.

The husband and wife were taken to Reston Hospital, where the wife was in stable condition, and the husband was in the intensive care unit following surgery. The family's dog also suffered one or more stab wounds and was transported by emergency personnel to a veterinarian emergency clinic. There is no update on the dog.

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Piper, a Veterans Moving Forward therapy dog, is trained to detect people who have type 1 diabetes and to locate people who are lost.

The Herndon Police Department is part of the regional Critical Incident Response Team, which Maggie DeBoard, HPD chief, activated. DeBoard is investigating the shooting incident for the department. Police say the chief executive officer of each participating agency in Northern Virginia can call the multi-jurisdictional team to investigate incidents within their localities.



SCREENSHOT TOWN OF VIENNA

Town of Vienna: The Vienna Business Association's Get Healthy Vienna Expo returns for its second year on April 6, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St.

Proposed Town Budget Increases Nearly 20 Percent- The second public budget hearing on the Proposed FY 2025 Budget hearing 2023 is April 23 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers. Herndon Town Manager Bill Ashton proposes a total FY 2025 budget expenditure of \$74,632,184, up 19.9 percent from FY 2024. The most significant increases are the sewer service rate, which went from \$8.27 in FY 2024 to \$8.93 per 1,000 gallons of water consumption in FY 2025, and the water service rate increase from \$3.47 in FY 2024 to \$4.08 per 1,000 gallons of water consumption in FY 2025. The first budget public hearing occurred on April 9.

Tennis Bubble Deflates- The Herndon tennis bubble deflated after a door was left open, causing some lighting to crash to the floor, break, and damage the court. It will

remain closed for the rest of the season.

New Vision Statement- The Herndon Town Council approved the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan 2024 last month. Its new vision statement is: "Herndon is an integrated, sustainable, safe, and equitable town built on accessible development and an engaged community. One of its core values is "to be a thriving community with few physical, socioeconomic, and cultural barriers."

McLean

MCA Urges School Board Not to Construct School- During the McLean Citizens Association Board of Directors meeting on Wednesday, April 3, in a vote of 16-13, the

COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/
THE CONNECTION

The eastern North American moist woodlands and river flood plains are home to Virginia bluebells. The early-spring blooming ephemeral perennial thrives at Riverbend Park in Great Falls.

FROM PAGE II

board approved that “MCA urges the School Board to refrain from constructing Dunn Loring ES during FY 2026, FY 2027, and FY 2028 unless and until FCPS provides data showing that Dunn Loring ES is necessary to address a demonstrated capacity deficit in that area. The MCA urges the school board to justify constructing the Dunn Loring ES. If the School Board cannot provide adequate data justifying the construction of the Dunn Loring ES, it should refrain from constructing it.”

U.S. Congressmen Help MITRE Open AI Lab- On March 25, U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D), Rep. Don Beyer (D-8), and Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) joined MITRE at its headquarters in McLean to open its lab for discovering and managing risks in AI-enabled systems. “We need to have an all-hands-on-deck approach to studying and unleashing the potential of AI, and I look forward to seeing the discoveries and progress the lab will be able to make in this critical field,” said Warner. According to Connolly, MITRE’s AI Assurance and Discovery Lab will be invaluable to those efforts across the government. The new lab is based at MITRE’s McLean, Va., headquarters.

Fairfax County Park Authority

Fairfax County Park Authority Foundation Honors Philanthropic Partnerships - Fairfax County Park Authority announced on Facebook on April 14 that the McLean Youth Soccer Association, Leidos, and the Embassy and Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates received the Eakin Philanthropy Award. Thanks to the partnership’s donations, Holladay Field, next to Spring Hill Elementary School, has a new synthetic turf field with a full-sized rectangular soccer field available for football, lacrosse, field hockey, and small-sided soccer. The project includes two underground stormwater management facilities, a bleacher pad, an access trail, and landscape improvements.



PHOTO VIA INSTAGRAM

Supervisor Jimmy Bierman (Dranesville), pictured here with Fairfax Parks Director Jai Cole at Fairfax County Park Authority’s Turner Farm Park Observatory in Great Falls, joined others gathered to watch the solar eclipse on April 8. Bierman posted: “Watching the eclipse at Turner Farm Park with @fairfaxparks Director Jai Cole was out of this world!”



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Park Authority’s Bend Festival at Riverbend Park on April 6 draws families and friends to see the Bluebells. From left, McLean’s Max, 3, his mom Nikke, and friend Tim get down to better see the bluebells without stepping on them.



SCREENSHOT FCPA

Fairfax County Park Foundation Eakin Philanthropy Award

The McLean Youth Soccer Association, Leidos, and the Embassy and Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates receive the Fairfax County Park Foundation Eakin Philanthropy Award. Back row: Tim Hackman, FCPA Board Dranesville Representative; Kevin Eakin, Eakin Properties President; and Chris Eakin, Eakin Associate Regional Manager. Front Row: Dima Alfaham, Chief of Staff to the United Arab Emirates Ambassador; Kareem Al-Attar, MYS Board Member; Julie Dabrowski, MYS Board; Natalie Bennett, Aide to Dranesville Supervisor Bierman; Vicki Schmanske, Leidos Commercial & International Sector President; Louise Waxler, MYS Executive Director; Ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba, United Arab Emirates Ambassador to the United States; Jai Cole, FCPA Executive Director; Ian Harper, MYS Board Chair; Bobbi Longworth, FCPF Executive Director; Robin Walker, FCPF Board Secretary; John Forte, MYS Board Member.

Bobbi Longworth, executive director of Park Foundation, says that the Eakin Philanthropy Award shows that public-private partnerships with Fairfax County parks can improve communities. “Together, we can

leverage strengths to help improve parks and programs that benefit our neighbors in need.” The Fairfax County Park Foundation supports the Park Authority by raising private funds, obtaining grants, and creating

partnerships that supplement tax dollars to meet community needs for park land, facilities, and services.

SEE COMMUNITY NEWS, PAGE 19
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

REAL ESTATE

March Home Sales Down from Prior Year, According to NVAR

Prices continue to rise as supply remains tight.

In a reversal from February when sales had grown over the prior year, March home sales in Northern Virginia dropped 13.8% from the previous March. However, a recurring theme was that tight supply contributed to increases in home prices, according to the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors (NVAR).

"We had a reprieve in February as sales grew year over year for the first time since 2021, but March was a return to what we have been experiencing: lower sales from the previous year. That said, I think February's positive news represents a change that is going to slowly transform the housing market, getting us back to more normal market dynamics," said NVAR Board Member Christina Rice, Pearson Smith Realty. "As the year progresses, I expect to see more people start selling their homes, which will help bring more parity between supply and demand."

Overall, home sales were down in March, but they were still up compared to February — nearly 14.4%. Supply remained tight at a 0.90 month's supply — the same as last year and similar to this past February. A reflection of high demand and low supply was that homes stayed on the market only 16 days in March 2024, down 27.3% compared to March 2023 when the average days on market was 22 days. This was also a theme that was repeated from February.

These market forces continued to make houses more expensive. The median sold price for a home in March 2024 was \$730,000, up 9.8% compared to March 2023.

This was also an increase from February 2024 when home prices reached \$687,250.

NVAR's 2024 economic housing forecast, produced in conjunction with George Mason University's Center for Regional Analysis in late 2023, revealed that the residential and commercial real estate market has not yet reached a post-pandemic normal. The forecast reported a possible downturn despite the economy attracting regional workers and creating jobs. As such, overall sales activity is expected to decline in 2024.

BACKGROUND

The Northern Virginia Association of Realtors® reports on home sales activity for Fairfax and Arlington counties, the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church and the towns of Vienna, Herndon, and Clifton. Below is March 2024 regional home sales compared to March 2023 for Northern Virginia with data derived from Bright MLS as of April 9, 2024 (total sales and listings may not include garage/parking spaces):

The number of closed sales in March 2024 was 1,191 units, down 13.8% compared to March 2023.

The volume sold in March 2024 was \$973,604,474, an 8.5% decrease from March 2023.

The average sold price was \$835,575 in March 2024, an increase of 7.4% compared to March 2023.

The number of new pending sales in March 2024 was 1,606 units, up 0.4% compared to March 2023.

Active listings in March 2024 totaled 1,210 units, down 14.6% compared to March 2023, when active listings were 1,417.

New listings in March 2024 were 1,504 units, a drop from March 2023's 1,744 new listings.

Read more about the NVAR region housing market at NVAR.com/public.

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Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

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

Jurisdiction	Fed Struc Id	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
BLAND	3099	617	WADDLETOWN ROAD	BIG WALKER CREEK #3	4/4/2024
GIIES	8514	772	SINKINGCREEK ROAD 772	SINKING CREEK	4/2/2024
SCOTT	16685	619	BIG STONY CREEK ROAD	BRANCH	3/21/2024
RICHMOND (M)	21531	161	NORTH BOULEVARD	CSX RAILWAY	3/19/2024
DINWIDDIE	6046	622	BALTIMORE ROAD	GEORGE'S BRANCH	3/19/2024
WAYNESBORO	22301	0	HOPEMAN PARKWAY	CSX RAILWAY	3/14/2024
BEDFORD	2834	699	BORE AUGER ROAD 699	BORE AUGER CREEK	3/13/2024
SMYTH	17395	16	B F BUCHANAN HWY	WHITE OAK BRANCH	3/6/2024
TAZEWELL	18583	631	INDIAN CREEK ROAD	INDIAN CREEK #2	3/6/2024
BEDFORD	2879	746	DICKERSON MILL ROAD 746	WOLF CREEK	3/4/2024

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

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

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

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

ROUNDUPS

Car Seat Inspections on April 25

Parents may get their children's car seats inspected on Thursday, April 25, 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 May 9, at the same place and time.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Cyclists use the Wiehle Avenue (Rte. 828) at the W&OD trail crosswalk while above them looms the new but not operational pedestrian and bicyclist bridge.



A sense of humor is evident at Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Station 25, Reston, neighbors to the pedestrian and bicyclist bridge over Wiehle Avenue (Rte. 828) at the W&OD trail.

Bridge Over Troubled Crosswalk

Wiehle Avenue and W&OD Trail Bridge to be operational this summer.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
<2B>THE CONNECTION

The new pedestrian and bicyclist bridge over Wiehle Avenue (Rte. 828) at the W&OD trail is in place as of early Sunday morning, April 14. Trail users continued to navigate the six-lane road shortly after noon on Sunday, using Wiehle's at-grade marked crosswalk and refuge island. The Department of Transportation expects the bridge to be operational by mid-June, after which the existing at-grade crossing will close.

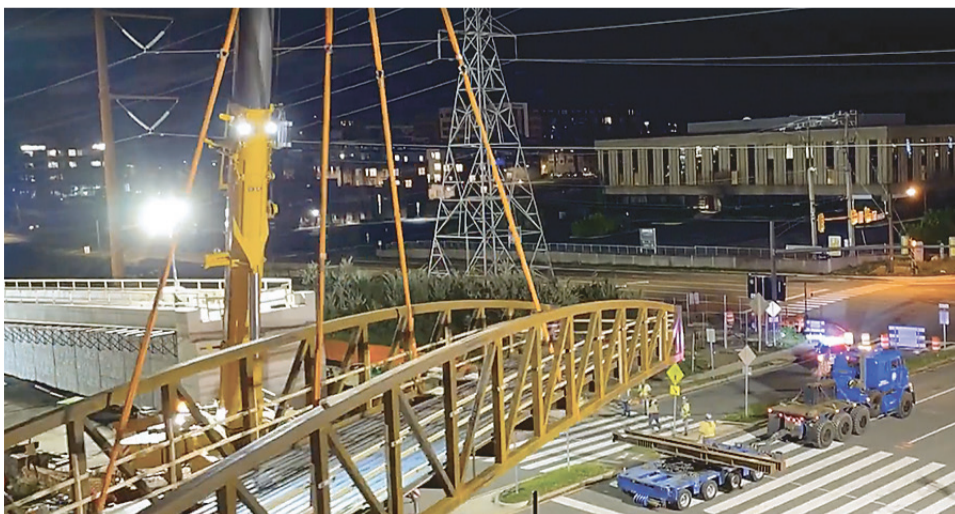
The groundbreaking ceremony took place on March 9, 2023. The project involved relocating Dominion Virginia Power's electrical lines. The 50-ton bridge, with steel trusses, is 147 feet long, 16 feet wide, and now sits about 18 feet above Wiehle Avenue.

The Wiehle Avenue section of the W&OD Trail Pedestrian Improvement Projects aims to improve safety by reducing conflicts between vehicles and trail users while allowing for free-flowing traffic. The 2016 Design Public Hearing Presentation for Wiehle Avenue at W&OD Trail cited among its safety concerns seven reported crashes from June 2011 to June 2015, vehicle vs. vehicle and vehicle vs. trail user.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Station #25 is the bridge's closest neighbor, at 1820 Wiehle Ave. The sign in front of the station says, "We Wiehle Like This New Bridge." A 59-second Fairfax County Transportation Projects video shows the pedestrian bridge being raised over Wiehle Avenue. Visit Fairfax County Transportation Projects to view the video.



The bridge is not completed and operational yet.



SCREENSHOT FAIRFAX COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

A crane lifts the bridge off the tow truck.

Safety Concerns



SCREENSHOT PRESENTATION FOR: WIEHLE AVE. AT W&OD TRAIL

Safety concerns cited eight years ago.

- Crash Data
 - 7 reported crashes from June 2011 to June 2015
- Crash Types
 - Vehicle vs. Vehicle
 - Vehicle vs. Trail User
- Different Behaviors
 - Cautious
 - Confused



Prepare Now for 'Extremely Active Hurricane Season'

Researchers at Colorado State University are forecasting an extremely active 2024 Atlantic hurricane season, which starts June 1 and lasts until Nov. 30. According to their report released on April 4, they anticipate 23 named storms, 11 hurricanes and five major hurricanes (Category 3 or higher on the Saffir-Simpson scale).

These numbers are well above the 1991-2020 averages of 14 named storms, seven hurricanes and three major hurricanes.

The CSU team cites record warm sea surface temperatures in the tropical and eastern subtropical Atlantic as a primary factor contributing to their prediction of a hyperactive season. As stated in their report:

"Sea surface temperatures in the eastern and central Atlantic are currently at record warm levels and are anticipated to remain well above average for the upcoming hurricane season. A warmer-than-normal tropical Atlantic provides a more conducive dynamic and thermodynamic environment for hurricane formation and intensification."

Another key factor is the anticipated transition from the current El Niño conditions to a La Niña pattern by the peak of the Atlantic hurricane season (August-October). La Niña typically decreases upper-level westerly winds across the Caribbean and tropical Atlantic, favoring hurricane formation and intensification.

The CSU team also emphasizes that their April forecast has a higher-than-normal confidence level, given the robust signals from their primary predictors. However, conditions can change between April and the peak of the season.

The forecast also includes the probability of major hurricanes making landfall along the U.S. coastline and in the Caribbean. CSU predicts a 62% chance of at least one major hurricane striking

the entire U.S. coastline, a 34% chance for the U.S. East Coast, a 42% chance for the Gulf Coast, and a 66% chance for the Caribbean. These probabilities are well above their long-term averages.

As the hurricane season approaches, Fairfax County residents should prepare by stocking up on emergency supplies, being prepared to secure their homes and having an evacuation plan in place. Areas like Mount Vernon that have sometimes experienced flooding could be more vulnerable to tropical storms.

Hurricane Season Safety Tips

Stay informed: Monitor weather reports and follow instructions from local authorities. Sign up for severe weather alerts from Fairfax Alerts.

Prepare an emergency kit: Include essentials like non-perishable food, water, first-aid supplies, and batteries. Our Department of Emergency Management and Security has more information.

Secure your home: Be prepared to clear loose objects from your yard, trim trees and shrubs and board up windows.

Know your evacuation routes: Identify safe shelters and have a plan to get there if ordered to evacuate.

Protect important documents: Store essential documents in waterproof containers or have digital backups.

Have a communication plan: Establish a way to stay in touch with family members in case of separation.

Pet preparedness: Have a plan for your pets, including supplies and potential sheltering options.

Remember, it only takes one hurricane making landfall to make it an active season for your community. Thorough preparations should be made every season, regardless of predicted activity.

Source: Fairfax County Emergency Information

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Public Hearings



Funding the Right Transportation Projects

You are invited to share comments on transportation projects that have been recommended for funding in the FY2025-2030 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). Additionally, pursuant to §33.2-202, comments will be accepted for new projects valued in excess of \$25 million. The Commonwealth Transportation Board will take your comments into consideration as it develops the FY2025-2030 SYIP. The program allocates public funds to highway, road, bridge, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation projects. All federally eligible projects in the SYIP will be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program to document how Virginia will obligate its federal funds.

Meeting materials will be available <https://www.ctb.virginia.gov/planning/springmeetings2024/default.asp>.

Public meetings begin at 4 p.m. in each of the locations except as noted below:
A formal comment period will be held at these meetings.

Thursday, April 18 Richmond District Hawthorne Room 2430 Pine Forest Drive Colonial Heights, VA 23834	Wednesday, April 24 Staunton District Laurel Ridge Community College 173 Skirmisher Lane Middletown, VA 22645	Thursday, April 25, 5 p.m. Northern Virginia District Loudoun County Government Center, 1 Harrison Street, S.E., 1st Floor, Leesburg, VA 20175
Wednesday, May 1 Lynchburg District Lynchburg District Ramey Auditorium 4303 Campbell Avenue Lynchburg, VA 24501	Thursday, May 2, 5 p.m. Hampton Roads District James River Auditorium 7511 Burbage Drive Suffolk, VA 23435	Monday, May 6 Bristol District Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center One Partnership Circle Abingdon, VA 24210
Tuesday, May 7 Salem District Salem Civic Center Community Room 1001 Roanoke Boulevard Salem, VA 24153	Wednesday, May 8 Culpeper District Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission Water Street Center 401 East Water Street Charlottesville, VA 22902	Thursday, May 9 Fredericksburg District Fredericksburg District Auditorium 86 Deacon Road Fredericksburg, VA 22405

Additionally, DRPT will host its own public meeting on Thursday, May 16 at 4 p.m. Individuals may participate and provide comment either virtually (register here: <https://bit.ly/3Q7UqM7>) or at the following locations: 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219 or 1725 Duke Street, Suite 675, Alexandria, VA 22314.

You can submit comments online at <https://bit.ly/SYIP2024>, or by email or mail by May 20, 2024.

For roads and highways: Six-YearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov, or Infrastructure Investment Director, Virginia Department of Transportation, 1401 East Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219.

For rail and public transportation: DRPTPR@drpt.virginia.gov, Public Information Office, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond VA, 23219.

The Commonwealth is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on these policies or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-2730 or the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-4440 (TTY users call 711).

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ENTERTAINMENT



The Spring Community Parking Lot Sale will take place Saturday, April 20, 2024 at the McLean Community Center in McLean.

WEDNESDAYS THROUGH SATURDAYS

Tours Aboard Tall Ship Providence and Sen. John Warner Maritime Heritage Center. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Alexandria's Waterfront Park, 1A Prince Street, Alexandria. Guests of all ages are recruited into the Continental Navy aboard Tall Ship Providence with legendary Captain John Paul Jones. Recruits are assigned jobs on the ship, learn where they will work and live, how to load a cannon, etc... Tours conclude in the Naval History Theatre with a film about the ship. The Heritage center is a floating museum on the Alexandria waterfront. Visit <https://tallshipprovidence.org/>

BONITA LESTINA FAIRFAX OLD TOWN HALL PERFORMANCE SERIES

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

SCHEDULE

April 19: Sylvan Waters Duo – Harp/Brass

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.

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 or call 703-854-1856.

APRIL 6-28

Pat Macintyre Retrospective Exhibit.

At Reston Art Gallery and Studios, 11400 Washington Plaza West, Lake Anne, Reston. See a collection of works by Pat Macintyre, a beloved, lifelong artist with an instantly recognizable style, including original drawings and paintings from the era of Reston's formation. Open every weekend from 12-5 p.m. Meet the artist and connect with fellow Macintyre fans at the show reception, 2-4 p.m. on Sunday, April 14.

PARK AUTHORITY, MASTER GARDENERS OFFER FREE VEGETABLE GARDEN CLINICS

As spring blooms, the Fairfax County Park Authority and the Fairfax County Master Gardeners extend a warm invitation to all gardening enthusiasts for a series of free Vegetable Garden Plant Clinics. These educational programs, offered in collaboration with the Fairfax County Master Gardeners and the Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), aim to cultivate a deeper understanding of gardening practices and foster a sense of community among green thumbs of all levels.

Join expert gardeners at a variety of locations as they provide valuable insights, answer questions, distribute soil sample kits, and

offer complimentary analyses of plant and pest issues. These clinics are scheduled to run from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on the following Saturdays: April 13, May 11, June 8, July 13, Aug. 10 and Sept. 14. Clinics will be held concurrently on each of these dates at eight locations across Fairfax County:

Pine Ridge Park, 3401 Woodburn Road, Annandale
Baron Cameron Park, 11300 Baron Cameron Ave., Reston
Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean
Grist Mill Park, 4320 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria
Grove Point Park, 6432 Bowie Drive, Springfield
George Mason Park, 9700 Braddock Road, Fairfax
Hogge Park, 3139 Glen Carlyn Road, Falls Church
Nottoway Park, 9537 Courthouse Road, Vienna

JOIN THE SPRING CLEANING EFFORT IN FAIRFAX COUNTY PARKS

It's spring cleaning time again and the Fairfax County Park Authority and dozens of volunteers of all ages throughout the county are rolling up their sleeves to spruce up public parks across the county as part of the annual Watershed Cleanup Days in conjunction with the Nature Conservancy.

Cleanups have been scheduled at various locations throughout the county and offer a diverse array of activities to be involved in. From collecting and bagging trash to tackling other projects, volunteers will have the chance to contribute to the beautification and preservation of our natural spaces. Choose from among the following locations:

Saturday, April 20

Hidden Oaks Nature Center - Roundtree Park, Falls Church (9 a.m.-noon)
John Byers Park, Alexandria (9-11 a.m.)
Centre Ridge North Park, Centreville (9-11:30 a.m.)
Merrybrook Run Stream Valley Park,



The 2024 Earth Day Festival takes place Saturday, April 20, 2024 at Sully Historic Site in Chantilly.

Herndon (9-11:30 a.m.)
Saturday, April 27
Cub Run Stream Valley Park: Penrose Place, Chantilly (9-11:30 a.m.)
Cub Run Stream Valley Park: Flint Lee Road, Chantilly (9-11:30 a.m.)
Sunday, April 28
Lake Accotink Park, Springfield (9 a.m.-noon)

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.

THURSDAY/APRIL 18

“Twelfth Night” Movie. 1 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. One of Shakespeare's best-loved comedies, “Twelfth Night” was ‘blissfully reborn’ (The Daily Telegraph) for the 2012-2013 season at London's Globe Theatre. Not rated.

THURSDAY/APRIL 18

The Green Expo. 7-9 p.m. At Vienna Community Center. Plant guidance, giveaways, and expert tips on sustainability are what's in store. Don't forget the best part: live animals! See the new additions: ewes and lambs, along with returning favorites: live birds of prey! Details: <https://bit.ly/TOVGreenExpo>.

THURSDAY/APRIL 18

Climate Change: Our Response as Artists. 4 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Monson Grand Tier III, Fairfax Campus. Co-presented with the Inclusive Collaborative Arts at Mason (ICAM) project with panelists BaoBao Chen, Co-Founder and Producer of Small Island Big Song; Mark Cooley, Associate Professor and Director of New Media Arts, Mason School of Art; Founder of Green Studio; moderated by Edward Maibach, distinguished professor at George Mason University and director of Mason's Center for Climate Change Communication. The group will explore ways in which artists can use their voices to expand global conversation on political, econom-

ic, social, and cultural questions at the root of the climate crisis. This event is a part of the Artist-Activist Speaker Series, an initiative of the Inclusive Collaborative Arts at Mason (ICAM) project.

THURSDAY/APRIL 18

Founders Row Pop Up Workout.

6:30-7:30 p.m. At Rumble Boxing Falls Church, 118 Founders Ave., Falls Church. Rumble Boxing Falls Church is thrilled to celebrate National Exercise Day with a free Founders Row Pop Up Workout as we come together to honor the importance of staying active and healthy. Rumble believes fitness should be empowering and inclusive, and National Exercise Day is the perfect opportunity to experience the Rumble vibe firsthand.

APRIL 19 TO MAY 4

The Vienna Theatre Company presents “The 39 Steps”. Don't miss the fun as Monty Python meets Spy vs Spy. Get tickets at <http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org/tickets.html>

FRIDAY/APRIL 19

Schooltime Matinee Performance: Small Island Big Song. 11 a.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. In conjunction with the Great Performances at Mason series, students will be introduced to music, film, dance, and more, with instruments and rhythms from around the world. The performance includes participatory dance and rhythmic activities, as well as an open Q&A with students. Suggested for grades K-6. First-come, first-served registration for educators.

FRIDAY/APRIL 19

7th Annual Scam Jam. 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. At Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Learn how you can fight back against con artists. Con artists don't care how hard you've worked for your money. They steal billions of dollars from hard-working Americans every year. With advances in artificial intelligence (AI), scams can be hard to identify. Criminals make it hard to spot fraud by using AI to mimic voices, alter photos, and avoid spelling and grammar mistakes.

TUESDAY/APRIL 19

Five Hills Garden Club Flower Show – For the Love of Nature! 2-4 p.m. At Church of the Holy Comforter,

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

ENTERTAINMENT



The BRUSH Theatre presents “POLI POP” on Sunday, April 21, 2024 at the McLean Community Center in McLean.

543 Beulah Road, N.E., Vienna.
Enjoy creative floral designs presented by club members as well as horticultural specimens on display from member home gardens. Free and open to the public.

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
May 2 -Nov. 14, 8 a.m. - noon
Mason District Park, 6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale

Herndon
May 2 -Nov. 7, 8 a.m. - noon
Old Town Herndon, 700 Block of Lynn St., Herndon (by the Red Caboose)

FRIDAYS

McLean
May 3-Nov. 15, 8 a.m.-noon
Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean

Kingstowne
May 3-Oct. 25, 3-7 p.m.
In the Giant parking lot, 5870 Kingstowne Towne Center, Alexandria

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SATURDAYS

Burke
April 20-Dec. 21, 8 a.m.-noon
VRE parking Lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke

Reston
April 27-Dec. 7, 8 a.m.-noon
Lake Anne Village Center, 1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston

SUNDAYS

Lorton
May 5-Nov. 10, 8 a.m.-noon
VRE parking lot, 8990 Lorton Station Blvd., Lorton

Visit the Farmers Market website for complete information about this year's markets – including details on SNAP benefits for eligible households available at designated locations.

If you have any questions, contact the Community Horticulture Office at 702-642-0128.

SATURDAY/APRIL 20

Academy Day. 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. At Randolph-Macon College in Ashland. The event will include a seated program that will provide a comprehensive overview of the United States service academies and their admission processes. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions during both the interactive service academy panel and the panel of other military-related options that exist at higher education institutions in Virginia. Information will also be shared regarding application procedures for congressional nominations and medical requirements for the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DoDMERB). Following the program, attendees will be able to meet with officials from all five academies as well as representatives from DoDMERB, Navy Talent Acquisition Group (NTAG) Richmond, ROTC programs at Randolph-Macon College and the University of Virginia, the United States Marine Corps, the Virginia Military Institute, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, and the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership at Mary Baldwin University at their resource tables. Staff from Virginia congressional offices will also be available to answer questions. Information on the nomination process for the service academies is available on Sen. Warner's website. You may

email academy_noms@warner.senate.gov with any questions about the event.

SATURDAY/APRIL 20

Spring Community Parking Lot Sale. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Shoppers will find bargains galore at this community sale of more than 50 sellers, including a limited number of commercial vendors and flea market dealers. The sale offers a wide variety of new and gently used household goods, electronics, furniture, clothes, appliances, “attic treasures” and other items suitable for every budget. Check out the Kids' Corner, a special area of the sale where children ages 3-15 can increase their math and entrepreneurial skills while selling toys, clothes, games and other items. Visit mcleancenter.org for more details.

SATURDAY/APRIL 20

The Giving Garden Meet & Greet. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. At The Plaza at Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Learn about our incoming Urban Farm – “The Giving Garden” and meet our farmer, Annie! The first 50 attendees will receive a free Grow-At-Home Kit. Enjoy activations from sustainable retail partners like Clean Origin, LOccitane, Rothy's and more!

SATURDAY/APRIL 20

2024 Earth Day Festival. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Spring is on the way and that means Earth Day is right around the corner! Mark your calendar and make your plans to join Fairfax County's largest, family-friendly Earth Day extravaganza at Sully Historic Site. Celebrate Earth Day with a fantastic time filled with games, entertainment, food and a variety of hands-on crafts, exhibits and activities.

SUNDAY/APRIL 21

Bands on the Run 5K. 8 a.m. This event is open to the entire community and benefits the Langley HS and Cooper MS bands. Friends and family of Langley, Cooper and the elementary schools of the Langley pyramid are especially invited. All ages are welcome. Run the course like a pro or walk the course with



The Vale Arts Spring Show and Sale will take place Friday, April 26, 2024 in Oakton. (Pictured): “In the Shadow”, Size: 7”x5”, Oil Painting by Kim Richards.

a friend! Stay afterwards and enjoy live DJ music, refreshments and sponsors' tables. Race registration is now \$35 for students 6-18 years old and \$40 for adults. All participants will receive an official race t-shirt and children 5 and under are free! Sign up at <https://www.langleyband.org/bands-on-the-run-2024-5k#:~:text=Our%205th%20Bands%20on,walk%20it%20with%20a%20friend!>

www.fairfax-station.org, <http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR>, 703-425-9225.

APRIL 22-24

2024 Mason Film Festival. At GMU's Johnson Center at the GMU Fairfax Campus. The Mason Film Festival is an annual film festival at George Mason University showcasing the diverse work of Film and Video Studies students, including that of beginning video students, intermediate directing students, and graduating seniors. The event is free and open to the public, but seating is extremely limited so advance registration is required. To view the Festival schedule and register to attend each of the separate events, visit:

<http://film.gmu.edu/events/annual-mason-film-festival>.

MONDAY/APRIL 22

Earth Day. 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. At The PARC at Tysons, 8508 Leesburg Pike, Tysons. Celebrate Earth Day with Celebrate Fairfax, Tysons Community Alliance, Supervisor Palchik's Office, and Supervisor Alcorn's Office! The day will be full of educational and hands-on activities. Visit the website: <https://celebratefairfax.org/event/earth-day/>

SCHEDULE

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM – Fairfax County Park Authority Nature Walk
Join Fairfax County Park Authority experts and the team at Providence Board of Supervisors office as they take you on a nature and litter pick-up walk. You will learn interesting facts while helping clean-up the trails!

Note: this activity involves walking for long distances.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 19

1300 TABLES! Buy! Sell! Trade! VPN

NATION'S GUN SHOW

APRIL 19, 20 & 21

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CALENDAR

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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

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

Legals

ABC LICENSE

Dad Strength Brewing, LLC trading as Dad Strength Brewing, 4303 Henninger Court, Chantilly, VA 20151. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Industry Brewery license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Michael Carey, Managing Member. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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AUCTION

Friday, May 3, 12:30pm
 at the Floyd EcoVillage,
 188 EcoVillage Trl, Floyd, VA



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OPINION

Calls for Cutting School Funds by \$100 Million

FROM PAGE 8

million is unrealistic." I certainly agree. This transfer to the school should be substantially reduced especially that they expect a 6% salary increase which should not have given to the top 25 high paid executives of the FCPS. The advertised budget of \$3.8 billion that includes an increase of 8.6% over the previous budget of \$301.8 million even though the enrollment is estimated to rise 1%. In the meanwhile, the latest nationwide inflation rate (cost of living) is 3.5% and yet the FCPS wants their budget more than double the inflation rate. This is outrageous!

Recently the FCPS Board Members were given raises to \$48,000 annually and the Chairman at \$50,000. How many hours per year do the School Board Members work?

FCPS spending has increased six times faster than enrollment since the year 2000 through FY2024. So, my request is to cut the transfer of funds to the FCPS by \$100 million.

I look forward to your written response and also responses from the Superintendent and School Board Members that I am forwarding this presentation to at this time.

Charles McAndrew,
 FCTA Board Member
 Oak Hill

Be a part of our:

Wellbeing pages, the first week of every month.

Delight in our **HomeLifeStyle** sections, the second week of every month. Peek at the top real estate sales, glimpse over-the-top remodeling projects, get practical suggestions for your home.

Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our **A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun** pages, the third week of every month.

Senior Living, fourth week of every month.

Questions?
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THE CONNECTION
 NEWSPAPERS

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 17

10:30 AM – 12:30 PM – Tysons Forest Clean-Up

Join Tysons Community Alliance and the team at the Hunter Mill Board of Supervisors office with cleaning-up Tysons Forest!

Note: this activity involves walking for long distances, picking up litter, and moving objects. Supplies for litter pick-up will be provided.

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM – PARC Beautification
Celebrate your community by beautifying a community hub, The PARC at Tysons! Get hands-on by picking up litter, removing invasive plants, and more.

Note: this activity involves walking for long distances, picking up litter, and removing plants. Supplies for litter pick-up and plant removal will be provided.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 24

Okaidja Afroso “Jaku Mumor” The Ancestral Spirit of Ghana. 8:00 p.m. At the Center-Stage at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, Reston. Okaidja Afroso ushers in a fresh breeze of musical flavors from the shores of Ghana’s Gulf of Guinea. Visit <https://restoncommunitycenter.com/things-to-do/performances/touring-artist-series/>.

APRIL 26-28

Spring Book Sale. Sponsored by Friends of Centreville Library. At 14200 St. Germain Drive, Centreville.

Friday, April 26 from 1-5 p.m.

Saturday, April 27 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, April 28 from 1-4 p.m.

Bag Sale on Sunday from 1-4 p.m.

COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

FROM PAGE 11

Bluebell Mania- On April 6, the Fairfax County Park Authority celebrated the Virginia Bluebells at the Bend at Riverbend Park in Great Falls. “Next to the cherry blossoms, the blooming of the bluebells is the next amazing natural floral phenomenon to hit our area every year, and it really draws a crowd at Riverbend Park,” said Jai Cole, executive director of the Fairfax County Park Authority.

The partial solar eclipse on April 8 was visible along a narrow path. Local eclipse chasers gathered at Turner Farm Park Observatory in Great Falls, confident they would see something. Fairfax County Supervisor Jimmy Bierman joined in. Appropriately, International Dark Sky Week kicked off on April 2 and ended on April 8, the day of the partial eclipse. Dark skies are the natural state of nature, and light pollution affects both humans and wildlife. The Fairfax County Park Authority and Fairfax County Public Library teamed up to create the Light Pollution Monitoring Kit, an initiative to combat light pollution. Get yours: <https://bit.ly/4aiV69i> and learn more about Dark Skies at <https://bit.ly/3J2gK5S>.

FRIDAY/APRIL 26

Vale Arts Spring Show and Sale. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Historic Vale Schoolhouse, 3124 Vale Road, Oakton. More than 150 original artworks by 9 local artists, Kim Richard, Linda Bullen, Laura Barringer, Lorrie Herman, Cathleen Lawless, Andrea Cybyk, Jenna Klimchak. Guest Artists: Anna Willard, and Lori Goll.

FRIDAY/APRIL 26

Watercolorist Gwen Bragg. 11 a.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. McLean Art Society is honored to present nationally acclaimed watercolorist, Gwen Bragg, giving a step-by-step demonstration of her wet-on-wet method. She will show how she creates textures in her paintings, applying water and paint on paper that is set on plexiglass and repeatedly flipping it to create colors that blend and flow, resulting in a beautiful aesthetic that is integral to her work.

SATURDAY/APRIL 27

DEA Prescription Drug Take Back Initiative. 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. At Vienna Police Department, 215 Center Street, South, Vienna. In conjunction with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and state and local law enforcement agencies, the Vienna Police Department will again participate in a one-day initiative to remove potentially dangerous controlled substances from area homes. The Vienna Police Department will have a collection site for old, expired, unused, or unwanted medications. Prescription medications, controlled or non-controlled substances, and over-the-counter drugs may be turned in anonymously at the collection point inside the Vienna Police Department.

SATURDAY/APRIL 27

Bamberg Symphony. 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. The Bamberg Symphony—one of Germany’s premier orchestras—debuts at the Center for the Arts in a program inspired by New Yorker music critic and Pulitzer Prize finalist Alex Ross’s recent book *Wagnerism: Art and Politics in the Shadow of Music*. It explores Richard Wagner’s complicated, many-sided legacy and his colossal influence on music, art, and culture as part of the ensemble’s concert series “The World After Wagner.”

SATURDAY/APRIL 27

National Poetry Month Poetry Reading. 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. Come celebrate the Poetry in the Parks community engagement series, starting with a free poetry reading held during National Poetry Month. Hosted by ArtsFairfax and the Fairfax Poet Laureate, the fifth event in the series will feature the poetry of prominent writers from the greater Virginia region. Spaces are limited, so reserve your spot today!

SUNDAY/APRIL 28

Walk on the Hill. 2-5 p.m. Some of Vienna’s most beautiful, historic properties will be featured during this year’s Walk on the Hill in the Windover Heights neighborhood. At Windover Avenue between Lewis Street and Lawyers Road. Since 1974, residents and visitors have made the lovely pilgrimage to this historic neighborhood to participate in self-guided tours through dozens of participating yards and gardens offering inspiring views of glorious spring flowers, budding trees, live music, exhibits and refreshments.

Diagnosis to Date



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I have been lucky – and/or terribly diagnosed, so that my story/diagnosis has been all wrong. Originally diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer stage IV, I was given a “13 month to two-years” prognosis in late Feb. 2009. I was treated with all manner of conventional – and mostly unpronounceable chemotherapy infused every three weeks for years. Occasionally, depending on the chemotherapy I was getting, and on what my monthly lab work was indicating, my medicine was changed, and the infusion schedule was even extended as well. Despite the mortality statistics, I continued to survive this “terminal” diagnosis leading my oncologist to boast that I was his “third miracle.” a lung cancer patient who didn’t die within the expected – according to the hypothetical book I often refer to, time frame.

As the years passed, my continued survival became even more incredible/rare. Why? Because lung cancer is a killer. Based on easily found statistics, lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer deaths annually. In fact, more people die from lung cancer than the combined totals of the next three cancers. Yet, I lived, and the longer I lived, the more invested I became in my survival and prouder of it too. It was a “Star Trek” kind of adventure: I had gone where few men had gone before.

For nearly 10-plus years I was able to live my life reasonably well until I noticed a jaw-breaker-sized growth above my Adam’s apple. Certainly, I pointed it out to my oncologist (those days appointments were in office – not on zoom). He took note of it, even measured it, but said it was a clone of the lung cancer and because of some skin fact, was basically inoperable. This non-action continued for almost a year. Eventually, he felt compelled to refer me to an endocrinologist, across the hall no less. When she saw me, she immediately asked what that was on my throat. I gave her the short story which ended with a “No. Dr. (name withheld) never recommended it.” She said, “we’re doing a biopsy right now.” I asked if I needed to make an appointment. She said “No.” After the needle biopsy, she said she’d have the results in a few days and would call me. The next day she called and told me I had “papillary thyroid cancer, stage IV,” she said, not the lung cancer with which I had been unexpectedly living. Not sure if it was a relief, given this new unknown diagnosis, but I was grateful nonetheless that there seemed to be an updated diagnosis (and from I had learned over the years as a cancer patient, almost any cancer other than lung offered a better life expectancy).

In communicating the results to Team Lourie, the endocrinologist felt that papillary thyroid cancer is what I’d had all along, not lung cancer. Moreover, we learned that thyroid cancer is often curable and has earned the nickname “the friendly cancer” because often when treated properly, lives are saved. And ‘treating properly’ is not what I had experienced for the past 11-plus years. I had been treated for non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. I was told, unfortunately, that receiving the wrong kind of chemotherapy/targeted and/or immunotherapy as I had for lung cancer would have minimal effect on my actual thyroid cancer. Apparently, what I had for 11-plus years was a very slow-moving type of thyroid cancer which had been basically untreated since 2009. Finally, it manifested as a lump on my throat.

Here I thought I was superman, having survived lung cancer well beyond my doctor’s original prognosis/expectation, but it turns out I was more like mistake man. I didn’t have a terminal form of cancer after all. I had a curable form that had been untreated. My entire narrative changed that day. I went from beating the odds to what were the odds of misidentifying a tissue sample as lung cancer when it was actually thyroid cancer?

From here my care changed. Within the next few months, I had a thyroidectomy to remove my thyroid and the para thyroid. Going in for the operation, I was hopeful that this recent biopsy had discovered the answer to my prayers: normal life, free of cancer. “But alas, poor Yurick,” it was not to be. When I woke up from my two-hour outpatient surgery, it had actually been a seven-hour surgery as the cancer had spread and embedded itself under my collarbone. The surgeon spent the extra five hours attempting to “get” all the cancer. As much as he tried, ultimately, he was unsuccessful, and I’ve been treated for papillary thyroid cancer ever since – until three or four months ago. That’s when it was determined that the side effects of the thyroid cancer medicine were damaging my kidneys. So much so in fact that I stopped that medicine and have been unmedicated ever since. Here I am, 15-plus years into thyroid cancer during which I’ve been on medicine for only three years and now I’m forced to stop. Comparatively speaking, I had only recently started. Now what? Apparently there is no ‘what.’

It was slow moving to begin with; I must hope it will be slow-moving to end with (prepositions notwithstanding).

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



Rotary Club of Great Falls' Bocce Tournament Benefits Veterans Moving Forward

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

1st place winners Rich Lemoine, Steve Flannery, Bob Dinkle, and IB Barghout of Team Padron in the Rotary Club of Great Falls' bocce tournament, in memory of club founder Sean Plunkett

BULLETIN BOARD

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

MCLEAN NEWCOMERS AND NEIGHBORS

The club was founded in 1969 to create new friendships, provide opportunities for social-

izing 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.

SUPPORT GROUPS

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



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#1 Virginia Agent 2020 - NEWSWEEK



JD and ED Sold More Homes Last Year in 22101 Than Any Other Agent!

Per MLS

FOR SALE!



Offered for...\$1,475,000

1466 Kirby Road, McLean
 GORGEOUS 4BR/3BA brick home on 2 spacious finished levels situated on 1+ acre lot in sought-after Chesterbrook neighborhood. Expansive backyard featuring mature trees and beautiful plantings. Step inside and you'll be greeted by a sun-filled living room and dining room with a huge picture window overlooking the large back deck and backyard. Updated gourmet kitchen w/ ss appliance and new lvp. Large pantry/storage adjacent to the kitchen. Main level offers primary BR w/ ensuite; 2 add'l BR's and hall bath. The lower level features a huge rec room; 4 BR; full bath; and laundry room. **Chesterbrook, Longfellow, McLean Schools!**

FOR SALE!



Offered for...\$2,439,000

6025 Woodland Terrace, McLean
 SPECTACULAR 2016 Arts & Crafts home with 3BR/4.5BA on 3 spacious levels located on over a half acre in sought-after Chesterbrook Woods! Designed by renowned architect Dwight McNeil and built by Joy Custom Design + Build. This finely detailed home features over 5300 sq ft of living space. The back of the house transitions beautifully to the sun-filled gourmet kitchen, breakfast area, and stunning family room. Spacious main level BR with en suite. Upper level features 2 BR's, each with en suite. Lower level offers a spacious family room, rec room, wine cellar, and full bath. **Chesterbrook, Longfellow, McLean Schools!**

ELITE PRODUCER
BEST WASHINGTONIAN 2023

FOR SALE! **FRANKLIN PARK!**



2049 Rockingham Street
 McLean, 22101
 \$4,695,000
NEW CONSTRUCTION!

SOLD!



Sold for...\$2,550,000

6813 Tennyson Drive, McLean
 SPECTACULAR 8BR/5.5BA Craftsman, just a few blocks from the center of McLean. Boasting over 8000 finished square feet, this finely detailed and expansive home features 3 finished levels of naturally bright open floor plan design with 10 ft. ceilings and a beautiful 2-story foyer. Stunning family room with coffered ceiling and a wall of windows that opens to the gourmet kitchen with high-end appliances, oversized kitchen island, and custom cabinetry. Sprawling owner's suite on the upper lvl with expansive lux. spa like bathroom. LL w/ large rec, media, and 2 BRs. **Franklin Sherman, Longfellow, McLean Schools!**

SOLD!



6144 Farver Road
 McLean, 22101
 \$1,550,000

SOLD!



6709 Pine Creek Court
 McLean, 22101
 \$1,200,000

SOLD!



1562 Forest Villa Ln
 McLean, 22101
 \$1,550,000

SOLD!



2336 N. Oak Street
 Falls Church, 22046
 \$2,000,000

SOLD!



1639 Macon Street
 McLean, 22101
 \$2,215,000

SOLD!



1313 Merrie Ridge Rd
 McLean, 22101
 \$1,637,500

Curious what your home is worth? Call to chat with JD and Ed today!