

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

APRIL 25, 2024



The sign welcoming customers to the first Mount Vernon farmers market of 2024.



David Ericson, a Falls Church musician, sang and played his trumpet.



Valentine Miller has been coming for around 20 years.

## Farmers Market Fans Welcome Back Vendors

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

David Erickson was crooning a mellow “Shadow of Your Smile” into his microphone at the Mount Vernon Farmers Market’s April 17 opening day amid smiles of satisfaction all around.

Jill Bernier, one of the three market managers, said she had “been counting the days,” to the opening, adding, “It’s fun to be outside and to support local farmers.”

Geraniums, petunias, tomato plants, sweet potatoes, asparagus, basil, breads, macaroons, mushrooms, honey, eggs, crab cakes, ice cream, pickles, pho and more practically jumped off the 23 vendors’ tables.

There were many happy reunions, lots of catching up to do since the last 2023 market in December.

What did the vendors do all winter? Valentine Miller from Orange, Virginia, was busy feeding his 450 cows and 500 sheep. Wayne Pierson who lives in Warsaw, Virginia, did a lot of hunting and cut firewood for his greenhouses. “I don’t just sleep,” he chuckled. Grace Banahene from Herndon took her delicious baked goods to other Northern Virginia markets and took a trip to Ghana. Darlene Pierson drove 30 hours to Halifax, Nova Scotia to see her grandchildren.

The Miller family brings breads, granola, cookies, fruit pies and whoopie pies every week from Valentine’s Bakery and Meats on their farm near Orange, Virginia. They often run out of eggs from their grass-fed chickens. Their big white coolers are packed with chicken breasts, pork chops, country-cured hams, smoked and cured bacon, spareribs, sausages, dog bones and even chicken feet.

Pierson and Gil Balderson have made their two-hour drive to the Mount Vernon market since 2006 to sell flowers and vegetables like carrots, onions, kale and asparagus. Next to the basil and rosemary, stood a few patchouli plants. They were stumped to explain what one does with patchouli, but



Caroline Ross, Riverbend Bistro chef, sniffed the herbs.

Caroline Ross, chef at River Bend Bistro in the Hollin Hall Shopping Center, came to their rescue. “You make a smelly oil that hippies wear,” she commented, to everyone’s amusement. Ross shops at the market every week because she said, “the produce is fresh and reliable” and she builds relationships with the vendors.

A “mini-dairyland,” Misty Meadows Farm Creamery was a hotspot for milk, ice cream, yogurt and six flavors of cheese curds, including Old Bay. Betsy Herbst, who’s come to the market from Smithsburg, Maryland, for 13 years, raises Holstein, Jersey and Brown Swiss cows, milked by two robots. “Our milk is pasteurized, not homogenized, so lactose intolerant people can drink it,” she explained, then quipping, “Our products are true from cow to cone.”

Banahene, a 27-year market veteran, is a popular vendor because of her chicken and beef pies, cherry strudel, apple turnovers and chocolate croissants, among other baked goods.

Matt Gitlin offered naturally-fermented (no yeast) whole grain, sourdough breads



Grace Banahene sells delicious pastries.



Betsy Herbst from Misty Meadows Farm Creamery sells six flavors of cheese curds

at Brutto Breads, breads that are “good for the gut,” he maintained. “Brutto means ugly breads in Italian,” he explained, but his loaves were far from ugly. Using Virginia-milled flour, he makes breads “like breads used to be.”

Mushrooms – shiitakes, creminis, maitakes, oysters, portobellos – were almost falling off the table at King Mushrooms. David King rises at 4 a.m. to travel from Maryland’s Eastern Shore. He started raising mush-

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

### More Information

Fairfax County’s 10 Farmers Markets, including vendors, schedule and more <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/>.

rooms eight years ago to earn extra money while in college and now does it full-time. “The long drive is worth it,” he said.

Jon Littere, of Future Acres Urban Farming in Burke, collected food scraps to make compost for gardening and regenerative agriculture, practices that avoid chemicals. “Healthy soil is a necessity for healthy crops which grow green, resist insects and outgrow the weeds,” says their website.

Karen Arnest and Darlene Pierson had a steady stream of customers who snatched up crab cakes, rockfish, catfish, flounder, oysters and scallops fresh from the Chesapeake Bay. Based in Hague, Virginia, over two hours away, Arnest Seafoods is a family business. “Daddy, age 84, still oysters,” Karen stressed.

“I love the people here,” she summarized.

MORE FARMERS MARKET, PAGE 7

# BABS BECKWITH

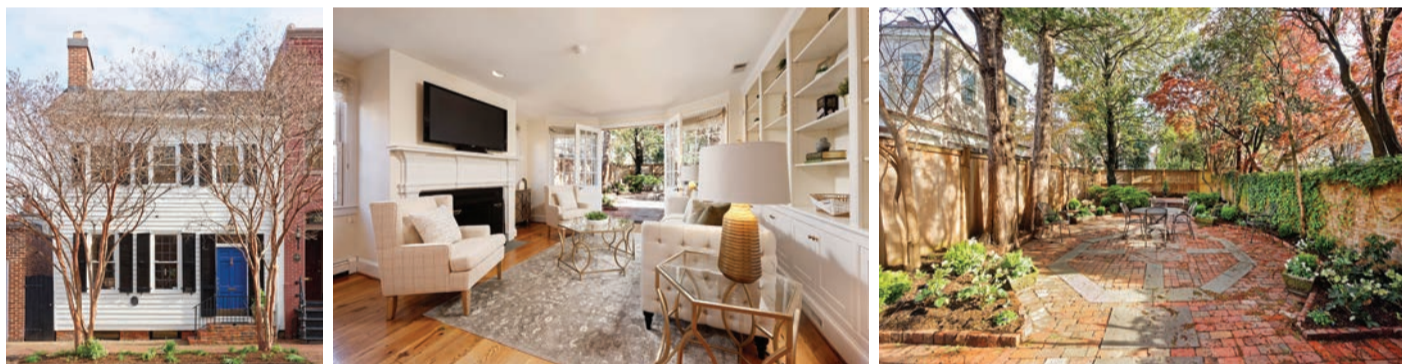
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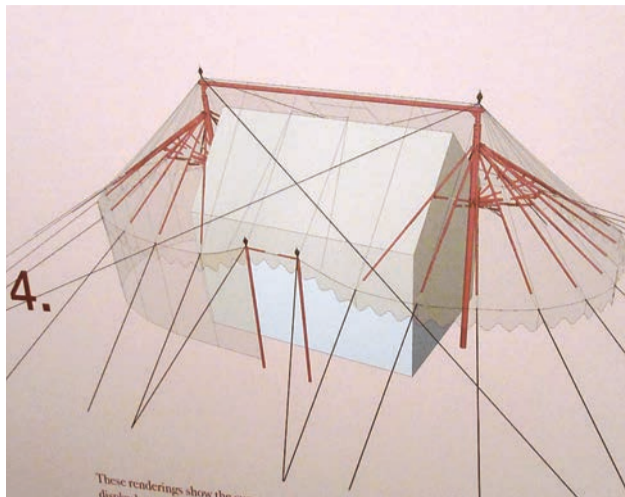


# NEWS

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



A photo of George Washington's actual tent which is displayed at the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



A rendering of the supports for the erected tent, displayed at the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



A fragment of the original tent displayed at the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Washington's step-grandson cut up pieces of the tent and gave them away as souvenirs. Many pieces were recovered.

## Explore George Washington's 250-year-old Tent

### Mount Vernon's Revolutionary War Weekend is May 4-5.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

A dull white cloth tent may not sound like an attention-getter, but if you think of it as a home, a war headquarters and the first U.S. Presidential Oval Office, it takes on a certain pizzazz.

On May 4 and 5, at George Washington's Mount Vernon, people can explore a replica of the tent that General George Washington, Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army, used from 1775 to 1783 when he led the colonies to independence.

The actual, original, 250-year-old, flax linen tent with red scalloped edges is on display at Philadelphia's Museum of the American Revolution, where an introductory video intones, "The tent is like the republic. It survives."

The actual tent and the replica at Mount Vernon are oval shaped and approximately 24 feet long, 14 feet wide. They are 12 feet tall at the highest point. Washington was over six feet tall and probably had to duck to go in and out. It was called a marquee tent in its day, typically used by high-ranking military officers, but Washington's tent was modest compared with the elaborate war tents of 18th-century European monarchs. Washington chose to camp among his soldiers instead of using a building, the usual practice at that time. He wanted to share in his men's hardships and inconveniences. A French officer who entered the tent observed, "He did not display the luxury of a monarchical general. Everything announced in him the hero of a republic."

Inside the tent Washington had a sleeping quarters with its own walls and ceiling, his private office and a combined baggage



PHOTO COURTESY OF MOUNT VERNON ESTATE

The replica of George Washington's battlefield tent at Mount Vernon is oval shaped and approximately 24 feet long, 14 feet wide.

chamber and dressing room. There was also space for his enslaved aide, William Lee. Visitors to the replica tent at Mount Vernon can peek inside and see minimal, 18th-century, "camping gear."

After the war, Washington's tent had a multi-step, protracted journey, including time with Civil War Confederate General Robert E. Lee as its custodian at Arlington House, a co-owner of the tent because he married Martha Washington's great-granddaughter Mary Custis. Washington's step-grandson, George Washington Parke Custis, actually cut up pieces of the tent and gave them away as souvenirs. Some have been recovered and are displayed in the Philadelphia museum along with the original tent meticulously saved through conservators' delicate needlework.

#### 18th-century Drills and Camp Followers

During Mount Vernon's Revolutionary War weekend, Continental soldiers, British

redcoats and Hessians will conduct military drills in uniform and reenact battles. The Hessians were around 30,000 German mercenaries from the principality Hesse-Kassel hired by the British to help fight the war. Visitors can explore a field encampment with several other tents.

Visitors to Mount Vernon can also interact with camp followers, mostly women and children, who traveled with the army and received payment and rations for their work as nurses, seamstresses, washerwomen, as well as merchants called "petty sutlers" who sold provisions and services to the soldiers.

"Mount Vernon's Revolutionary War Weekend happens just two days a year," said Julie Almacy, Mount Vernon's Vice President of Media and Communications. "It is an exciting experience that gives us a window into what it may have been like for those who fought for America's independence. Because it was almost 250 years ago, it's sometimes hard to remember these were real people

who sacrificed for the cause."

#### 250th Anniversary

In 2025, events around the nation will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the start of the Revolutionary War and the 250th birthday of the United States.

#### More information

Mount Vernon's Revolutionary War Weekend: <https://www.mountvernon.org/plan-your-visit/calendar/events/revolutionary-war-weekend/>

Virtual tour of Washington's field headquarters: <https://www.amrevmuseum.org/virtual-tour-of-washington-s-field-headquarters>

Tent details: <https://www.amrevmuseum.org/learn-and-explore/frequently-asked-questions-washington-s-war-tent>

SEE REVOLUTIONARY WAR WEEKEND.

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MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE ♦ APRIL 25 - MAY 1, 2024 ♦ 3

# Are Our Waterways Becoming Plastic Soup?

Local cleanups reveal many mysteries.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

A mysterious teal blue plastic bottle is nestled in the cattails and spatterdock plants of Dyke Marsh. The 28-ounce, blender-type bottle, with a Global Position System (GPS) tracking device inside, traveled south 16 miles from the upper reaches of the Anacostia River in two months and is stuck in the muck.

Researchers at the Smithsonian Institution's Environmental Research Center launched 43 tracker bottles across the Anacostia River watershed in late January, part of a nationwide project with the Ocean Conservancy and the University of New Hampshire to model how trash moves through urban streams. They are tracking the bottles' movement until August and then will retrieve them. Of the 43 bottles, the "Dyke Marsh bottle" traveled the longest distance so far.

The tracking study can help people better understand plastics' movement patterns and whether plastic debris travels to oceans and whether it stays local or deposits onto beaches and shorelines close to rivers' mouths. The conclusions can help inform cleanup, reduction and prevention strategies, the sponsors maintain.

The Smithsonian researchers cite a 2021 study on global annual plastic emissions from rivers that found that there may be as much as 2.7 million metric tons per year entering oceans each year which represents 25 percent of all plastics entering the ocean. That study concluded that 1.6 percent of the 100,887 rivers and streams studied accounted for over 80 percent of annual plastic entering the ocean from rivers. A Pew Charitable Trusts study predicts that given current trends, the amount of plastic waste entering the world's oceans will triple to nearly 32 million tons a year by 2040.

## Plastic Pollution, a Growing Menace

An organization called Beyond Plastics reports that worldwide one million single-use plastic bottles are purchased every minute and that less than one-third are recycled. For all plastics, only five to six percent are recycled in the U.S.

Around 40 percent of plastic produced is used for disposable packaging. Ocean Conservancy volunteers have collected nearly nine million plastic foam cups, plates and carryout food containers since 1986. Virginians use 320 single-use plastic bags a year each or three billion a year, according to Litter Free Virginia.

Plastics break down into smaller and smaller pieces called microplastics, pieces less than the size of a pencil eraser. Some come from larger plastic debris and some are manufactured as microbeads. Birds and aquatic animals can mistake plastic for food. Some studies show the presence of microplastics in human organs.



PHOTO BY CLARENCE MONTEIRO

Ivy Carter and Birgitta Cruanes hauled out a tire at the Dyke Marsh cleanup.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Local retailers like the Hollin Hall Safeway sell water in plastic bottles.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Plastic trash like this accumulates in Dyke Marsh



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

This display encourages volunteers to not ignore small trash items.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

This represents half the trash collected during the April 20 cleanup along the Potomac River shoreline and in Dyke Marsh

## 400 Pounds of Trash

On April 20, 100 volunteers hauled out 40 bags or 400 pounds of trash from the Potomac River shoreline of Belle Haven Park and in the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve in two hours. Among myriad items, volunteers found a tire, shoes, balls, a life jacket and many plastic bottles and pieces. A substantial proportion of the items collected were plastic. At a Feb. 24 shoreline cleanup, vol-

unteers also collected 400 pounds of trash.

Clean Virginia Waterways cites plastic bottles as the number two item found during coastal cleanups. Other plastic trash on their top 20 list are bags, cups, plates, utensils, food wrappers, bottle caps, straws, balloons, fishing line and six-pack holders.

Most of the mismanaged trash in rivers has land-based sources. It gets there from intentional and accidental discards, illegal



PHOTO BY CAREY PELC

Smithsonian researchers released 43 bottles with GPS devices to track how trash travels in rivers.

dumping, the wind, overfilled bins and people littering.

"Though all types of aquatic trash can have potentially harmful impacts, plastic waste is particularly concerning because of its tendency to persist in the environment and its widespread production and disposal," says the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's website.



Franconia District Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D) cleaning up at Hunting Creek, just off the Potomac River.



Potomac Riverkeeper Dean Naujoks.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

# Riverkeeper in Keeping Tabs on Water Levels, Chemicals

## Health of Potomac River matters more in Mount Vernon area.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

Over the last 100 years the Potomac River has risen 11 inches, and it's not done yet the Army Corp of Engineers says. In the next 50 years, it's expected to rise two feet more, putting many waterfront properties in danger.

Dean Naujoks sees the results of the water levels rising while on the job as Potomac Riverkeeper. While he pays more attention to the salinity and chemicals in the water, he sees the results of the higher river level and it raises a concern. "It will overwhelm

sewage treatment plants," he said, and with this comes damage to the shellfish population which acts a gauge to the water quality.

Storms in 2018 were a particular concern and east coast hurricanes seem to be pushing more water ashore which causes damage. The annual pictures of the canoeist on the streets of Old Town Alexandria make a great conversation piece but this is a signal to a bigger problem.

"We lost lots of oysters in the lower Potomac," he said.

In January, there were big storms that flooded many places off the Potomac River and Naujoks detected crabs and skates coming upstream pretty far. Then there are

droughts downstream in the Shenandoah River that cause alarm too because extreme events like this are not normal.

Naujoks is in close contact with the Chesapeake waterman that make a living on the river and has found them worrying about the water levels and quality. "A lot of this stuff isn't visible to the naked eye," he said.

The Riverkeeper Network is based on M Street in Northwest Washington, and the Potomac River is divided into the Upper Potomac, monitored by Brent Walls, and the Lower Potomac by Naujoks. Mark Frondorf is the Riverkeeper of the Shenandoah River.

The EPA reports that coastal flooding has increased since the 1950s and reports that ex-

treme tides have contributed to this in recent years. The Potomac River is considered by the EPA to be in the Mid-Atlantic region where the rising waters have not impacted properties along the shore as much as the southern, region but Mount Vernon residents with backyards right up against the river or creeks that come right off the river have reported issues with the higher water levels.

*Learn how to help with the environment at Supervisor Dan Storck's expo next week.*

**2024 ENVIRONMENTAL EXPO**  
Hosted by Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon)  
Saturday, April 27  
11 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Fort Hunt Park, 8999 Fort Hunt Road  
Mount Vernon

### 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.

#### VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Alexandria Families for Safer Streets - Executive Assistant to AFSS Board of Directors. The agency is seeking

an executive assistant to help coordinate a diverse group of tasks necessary to keep us on track and moving forward. Someone with office manager skills would be the ideal candidate. [www.volunteeral-alexandria.org](http://www.volunteeral-alexandria.org)

ALIVE! Volunteers are needed to assist with multiple programs relating to their Food Program, ALIVE! House, and Alexandria Eviction Prevention

Partnership Program will distribute food at Mobile Pop-ups and Truck to Trunk events, etc. <https://www.volunteeral-alexandria.org/ALIVE>  
Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in

Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email [info@alnv.org](mailto:info@alnv.org), or visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org).  
Join Friends' Board. Those who care about mental health, the Alexandria community, and collaborating with fellow residents to make sure

the City's most vulnerable residents have a chance to thrive, then consider joining the Board of Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center. The Friends Board is an all-volunteer group of residents that oversees the administration of one of Alexandria's top mental health charities. Friends has no

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## Virginia's Equine Industry Is Thriving

BY DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK

**A**s a new member of the General Assembly's important Agriculture Committee, I want to take this opportunity to share some interesting agricultural-related information about our wonderful Commonwealth. This week, let us look at Virginia's enduring love affair with horses, which dates back to 1610 with the arrival of the first equines in Jamestown and continues to shape the state's landscape and economy even today. I bet you didn't realize that Virginia stands proudly as the fifth-largest equine state in the nation, boasting a vibrant industry encompassing live racing, horse farms, breeders, and enthusiasts. From the thundering hooves of thoroughbred racehorses to the graceful leaps of steeplechase jumpers, Virginia truly is a haven for horse lovers. Here in Fairfax County, we have Frying Pan's Equestrian Center. It is a public-use facility that is part of Frying Pan Farm Park. The center offers rental events, schooling, horse shows, short-term stabling, and multiple trailer-in schooling options.

The equine industry in Virginia is an economic powerhouse, supporting over 170,000 horses and generating significant revenue. Virginia's Equine Alliance notes that horse owners across the Commonwealth invest an average of \$2,969 per horse annually, totaling approximately \$505 million in direct expenditures. Moreover, horse-related events attract over 800,000 participants and spectators each year and infuse more than \$167 million into the state's economy through over 700 events and competitions. Cash receipts from horse sales reach an impressive \$99.4 million annually, solidifying equine-based activities as the seventh largest agricultural commodity in Virginia. Fur-



Delegate Krizek with a horse at Shenandoah Downs on April 13th

thermore, the industry sustains nearly 20,000 jobs and contributes over \$352 million in wages and salaries annually.

Virginia's equine population reflects a diverse array of breeds, with Thoroughbreds and Quarter Horses leading the pack at 36,300 and 32,500 heads, respectively. Across the state, the equine inventory by breed is distributed as follows:

- ❖ Thoroughbreds: 21.4%
- ❖ Quarter Horses: 19.1%
- ❖ Arabians: 7.1%
- ❖ Ponies: 6.2%
- ❖ Tennessee Walkers: 5.7%
- ❖ All other equine: 40.5%

The equine industry in Virginia encompasses agriculture, breeding, racing, and entertainment, blending rural traditions with urban pursuits. With over 12,800 horses sold annually, equine sales contribute nearly \$99.4 million to the state's economy. Breeding, another cornerstone of the industry, sees an annual expenditure of approximately \$505 million, with top breeds including Thoroughbreds, Quarter Horses, Arabians, Ponies, and Tennessee Walkers.

Virginia is home to approximately 28,000 equine operations/farms, with Loudoun, Fauquier, Albemarle, Augusta, and Bedford counties boasting the highest horse populations. We still have a few in Fairfax County too and they are a terrific place for children to learn firsthand about horses and even how to ride one.

Horse racing, a time-honored tradition in Virginia, has evolved into a significant economic driver. Pari-mutuel wagering, dating back to colonial times, has generated substantial tax revenue for the Commonwealth. Since its inception in 1996, horse racing has contributed well over \$23 million in tax revenues. Pari-mutuel wagering has directly benefited various cities, counties, and special interest groups, totaling \$31 million in contributions since 1997. This year during the General Assembly session we passed legislation that requires 0.025% of funds from wagers on historical horse racing machines be distributed to the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, the Virginia Horse Industry Board, the Virginia Horse Center, and the Problem Gambling Treatment and Support Fund, among others.

Virginia's equine industry stands as a testament to the enduring bond between humans and horses, enriching the Commonwealth's culture, economy, and heritage for generations to come.

## Mental Health: 10 Ways to Help

BY JOSEPH GETCH  
CEO, HOPELINK BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



**M**ay is Mental Health Awareness Month. Nearly 46% of Americans are expected to meet the criteria for a diagnosable mental health

condition in their life, half of which will develop conditions by age 14, according to Mental Health America. That's why it's important to know the signs and solutions. Our individual actions and understanding can be life changing.

As the leader of HopeLink Behavioral Health (formerly PRS), a regional nonprofit that delivers behavioral health and suicide and crisis intervention services, I approach the month from various vantage points. What we've seen over the years is that it's becom-

ing more common for individuals and families to discuss behavioral health and to seek and get help. Keeping information about mental health flowing and accessible remains vital for us to continue the progress and ensure we can help our loved ones

and help ourselves. That's why we've put together a list of ways to be part of the solution to change and even save lives. I hope you will consider sharing these with friends and family.

### 10 Ways to Be a Mental Health Supporter

1. Listen: Listen for signs of distress from loved ones or friends such as talking about wanting to die, ending their life, having no reason to live, being trapped, or being a burden to others.

2. Watch: Observe for signs that can indicate a mental health crisis such as increased use of alcohol or drugs or impulsive or reckless behavior.

3. Ask: Ask the tough ques-

tion. When somebody you know is in emotional pain, ask them directly: "Are you thinking about killing yourself?"

SEE MENTAL HEALTH, PAGE 11

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

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

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A Connection Newspaper



# FARMERS MARKET

From Page 1

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Betsy Herbst sells dairy products “true from cow to cone,” she says.



Vendors from the Montross, Virginia, Linda Vista farm have long tables of flowers and vegetables every week.



Ochoa Produce’s vendors from Warsaw, Virginia, had flowers galore.



Emily Chacbonneau lives nearby and loaded up on herbs.



Jon Littere turns food scraps into compost.



Matt Gitlin ran a busy bread stand.



David King grows and sells many types of mushrooms.



Tomato plants were best sellers at several stands.

**CALENDAR**

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**Let us know about an upcoming event**

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

## 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.

For additional information scan the QR Code.

Equal Opportunity M/F

# EARTH DAY

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE GAZETTE



Volunteers removed trash and invasive plants at Laurel Hill Park Central Green in Lorton, finding a license plate and a basketball. Aurora Boughi, Jon Lee, Jai Dheeraj, Selwin Mazariegos-Delcid, Nicholas Tun and Troy Hernandez, (not pictured Angel Banegas Bustillo)



Volunteering at native plant nursery, Earth Sangha, for the first time in celebration of Earth Day are Matt Abicht of Springfield and Mary Rust of Alexandria (right), with Madison Abicht a more frequent volunteer there.

## Earth Day Celebration Big in Small Ways

### Volunteers lend many hands.

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE GAZETTE

Earth Day celebrations large and small sprang up across Fairfax County last weekend. While there were large and well publicized events drawing hundreds, such as Earth Day Fairfax 2024, some were small special efforts to acknowledge care for the environment. Others were merely business as usual, as volunteers who see every day as Earth Day showed up for the on-going environmental projects they support often with their time and work effort.

For all, the day of special recognition was an opportunity to think a little more than usual about the impacts of human activity on our planet and local environment. Some



PHOTO BY SARA HOLTZ

Sixty volunteers at Difficult Run Stream Valley Park, in Oaken, remove bags of invasive plants and trash to promote water quality and native plant life

picked up trash from public parks. Others removed non-native invasive plants which can out-compete native plants, damaging the local ecosystem. Other volunteers ensured the continuation of healthy native plants by nur-

tering them in native plant nurseries. And volunteers cleaned up watersheds to protect water habitats in local lakes and streams, and their downstream rivers and bays.

To keep our natural environment in your

mind all year, find Fairfax County energy initiatives, such as: Zero Waste Program, Environment Vision, Carbon Neutral Counties Declaration, and community driven greenhouse gas emission reduction, at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/policies-and-initiatives>.

For environment-related volunteer opportunities throughout the year, consider helping at the Fairfax County Park Authority, Soil and Water Conservation District, NOVA Parks, Mason Neck State Park, and Earth Sangha:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/volunteer>

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation/volunteering>

<https://www.novaparks.com/donate-volunteer>

<https://friendsofmasonneckstateparkinc.wildapricot.org/page-1769083>

<https://www.earthsangha.org/volunteer>



Keileb, 13, and Endrik, 9, Elliott, volunteer at the native plant nursery Earth Sangha with their dad, Mike, who says, "Working here is fun and we like their mission. The boys really like digging in the dirt."



Not the Conga line dance it seems, Karin Lehnigk leads other volunteers in tamping down newly laid mulch in Laurel Hill Park's pollinators garden, in advance of Earth Day



Accused of often lying down on the job by his workmates who volunteered together, Keenan Krokum finds another comfortable position for weeding the pollinators garden.





PHOTO @KRIZEKFORVA

Volunteers spent the day removing trash, litter and debris from two sites in the uppermost watershed of the creek, where it originates in Hybla Valley.

# Earth Day, 2024: Great Day for Little Hunting Creek

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Sen/ Scott Surovell and Del. Paul Krizek partnered with the Friends of Little Hunting Creek for their annual creek cleanup of Little Hunting Creek in Mount Vernon on Saturday, April 20. The creek is one of Fairfax County's most severely degraded streams. Fairfax Democrats reported volunteers have removed, during 12 years of creek cleanups, 200 shopping carts, 500 bags of trash, a dozen bikes, multiple car seats, and a .22 caliber rifle.

When Surovell arrived for Saturday's clean-up, he found 12 neatly arranged shopping carts ready for disposal. Volunteer crews worked at two stream sites, Janna Lee Bridge across from Mama's Kitchen and behind the Audubon mobile home park.

This year, Sen. Surovell posted a video on X, @ssurovell. In his video, Surovell sees a fallen tree at Little Hunting Creek. The tree is nature's trash catcher, like trash interceptors in storm drains, which catch litter before it reaches waterways.

With birds tweeting in the background, the video records Surovell asking, "So what do we have? We have basketballs, water jugs,



SCREENSHOT VIDEO PAUL KRIZEK (@KRIZEKFORVA) / X

Robert O'Hanlon receives a Senate of Virginia commendation for his Little Hunting Creek Cleanup Project service from Virginia Sen. Scott Surovell.

SEE HUNTING CREEK, PAGE 11  
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# HISTORY

## Mount Vernon's Revolutionary War Weekend Is May 4-5

From Page 3



George Washington's Mount Vernon  
#22031601

Reenactors as British redcoats flying the Union Jack.



George Washington's Mount Vernon  
#16401154

During Mount Vernon's Revolutionary War weekend, May 4 & 5, reenactors dressed as Continental soldiers, British redcoats and Hessians will conduct military drills in uniform and reenact battles.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MOUNT VERNON ESTATE



George Washington's Mount Vernon  
#88331862

Reenactor mounted on a horse at Mount Vernon for Revolutionary War weekend.



George Washington's Mount Vernon  
#24177405

Children visiting during Revolutionary War weekend at Mount Vernon can see weapons of war up close.



George Washington's Mount Vernon  
#90426348

Visitors to Mount Vernon can also interact with camp followers, mostly women and children, who traveled with the army paid for work as nurses, seamstresses and washerwomen.



The music in General Washington's continental army consisted of fife and drum corps. The army used fifes and drums not only to boost morale but also for communication and regimentation.

# OPINION

## Mental Health: 10 Ways to Help

FROM PAGE 6

4. Follow Up: Check in with the person you care about on a regular basis.

5. Connect: Help connect people to resources. For an immediate crisis, encourage them to call or text the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988. Or visit your county's local community services board for more resources.

6. Keep Them Safe: Ask if they've thought about a plan and remove access to lethal means of self-harm.

7. Normalize: The more information that gets shared, the less stigma there is about mental health, and the more likely people will seek help. Consider

er using social channels or discuss mental health openly with friends and family.

8. Donate: Support local and national mental health nonprofits that are working to save and change lives. It matters and works.

9. Advocate: Being a voice with local, state, and federal government ensures that mental health is front and center and that funding for mental health programs exists. Write letters/emails to officials in support of mental health funding and legislation.

10. Volunteer: Nonprofits need volunteers whether helping with fundraising events, walking in a 5K, or answering crisis calls. Check in with mental health nonprofits like ours to learn about ways you

can make a difference.

We've come a long way in the past decade. This May, we encourage you to join the movement to prioritize mental health. We have more tips for Mental Health Awareness Month on our website at Hope-LinkBH.org. If we are successful, one day "mental" health will simply be a discussion about health. Visit <https://prsinc.org/crisislink/>



A crisis worker at HopeLink

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Infant Immunization Week

Dear Editor,

April 22-29 is National Infant Immunization Week, an observance to highlight the importance of protecting infants and young children from vaccine-preventable diseases.

With summer just around the corner, now is the perfect time for families to proactively schedule appointments for their children's school-required vaccines. By scheduling vaccination appointments now, families can ensure their children are fully protected

against preventable diseases by the time school starts this fall.

Vaccines serve as crucial safeguards, protecting our children from preventable diseases and allowing them to enjoy a summer filled with fun and exploration.

This National Infant Immunization Week, let's prioritize our children's health by taking action on vaccinations now.

Rebecca Epstein  
ImmunizeVA

## Earth Day, 2024: Great Day for Little Hunting Creek

FROM PAGE 5

Casa Modelo, [and] a football. We have all kinds of styro-foam food containers, [and] a lot of water bottles. What is that; malt liquor maybe; maybe bourbon, hard to tell. Cushions, lots of plates. A lot of food wrappers, a Big Gulp, plastic bags."

Turning the video lens to a sandy shoal, Surovell tells viewers, "You can see it breaks down to this stuff; how it disintegrates as we get microplastics from when styro-foam breaks up."

Surovell says there are fewer plastic bags now that Fairfax County has the plastic bag fee. Glancing upstream, Surovell sees a bike wheel. Look-



11:17 AM · Apr 20, 2024 from Mount Vernon, VA · 769 Views  
SCREENSHOT VIDEO PAUL KRIZEK (@KRIZEKFORVA) / X

Earth Day 2024: So what's in your creek? This is a view of Little Hunting Creek in Mount Vernon.

ing at the fallen log cross-tied with sticks and litter, Surovell says, "And somehow, it's all filtering through down here in the bottom." It is nature's trash collector.

Earth Day 2024 and videos like Surovell's raise awareness, helping to educate the public about plastic pollution and promote sustainable habits.

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# Governor Puts Virginia's Domestic Violence Victims in Danger

Local legislators irate at Youngkin's veto of important bills.

BY EDEN BROWN  
THE CONNECTION

**Y**ou could have heard a pin drop in the room as Lisette Johnson told the story of being shot by her husband of 21 years. It wasn't an easy story to tell. She tells it because she cannot believe Gov. Glenn Youngkin vetoed bills that would have prevented her husband from keeping that weapon after he threatened her.

"My verbally abusive husband was not mentally ill, he didn't just 'snap.' He had told me years earlier that if I ever tried to leave him he'd put a bullet through my head. I had asked him to keep guns away from our home and he said he had. But he had not. He knew exactly what he planned to do.

"I was one of the lucky ones — not just because I survived but because he didn't shoot my children. And as I lay bleeding from four bullets in my chest wall, liver, and diaphragm, my 12 year old daughter had the presence of mind to tell her brother to run next door and call 911. [My husband] had disabled the phone."

Virginia is one of a handful of states that hasn't closed fatal loopholes in the law. It is difficult for women like Johnson to understand why.

"What a slap in the face," she said, "for us to be considered so insignificant by our elected governor that he feels comfortable vetoing legislation that would have pro-

SEE VETO, PAGE 15



Diana Ortiz, Doorways Executive Director, said Doorways has been part of the community for almost five decades. "The increasing presence of firearms is a common denominator in the increased lethality of domestic violence. When we get a call from someone who is feeling threatened, the first question we ask is, has he ever used a weapon or threatened you with a gun? Do they have one?"

**"I have worked at the Center for Gun Violence Solutions at Johns Hopkins since 2009 when my daughter was shot and injured at Virginia Tech. I've learned a lot since. . . . States with strong gun laws have lower death rates than [other] states."**

— Laurie Haas, Center for Gun Violence Solutions, Johns Hopkins



Lisette Johnson and Sen. Barbara Favola at the Doorways session on Gov. Glenn Youngkin's veto of important gun safety laws that would prevent guns from being in the hands of people with a history of domestic abuse.



Sen. Barbara Favola talked about Arlington County's efforts to curb firearms in cases of abuse. Her Senate Bill 47 was a law and order bill. "It was incredibly disappointing to have the governor veto a bill that ensured those subject to a protective order actually relinquished their firearms. We've heard from so many survivors that the firearm wasn't actually turned in... That's why I submitted this bill."



Sen. Russet Perry (D-31) told the crowd she had been a prosecutor before being elected.

"I dealt with the abuse of people who are victims of domestic violence. I had the honor of walking beside those who fought being abused - it's one of the reasons I ran for office. You can't change the law when you're a prosecutor, so I offered SB 642. It's a bill that is supposed to close the 'boyfriend loophole.' The courts would take a firearm from someone who was identified as an abuser. I listen closely to the Governor as he talks about support for victims and safely. Words don't matter. Actions matter. This is not a partisan issue. We won't be dissuaded by the Governor's indifference."



Elizabeth Bennett-Parker was the patron of HB 46.

"Nearly one-third of all homicides in Virginia are domestic violence incidents, and nearly two thirds of those involve a firearm. The bill would not have affected law abiding Virginians, only those who pose a danger to others. Governor Youngkin had his chance to stand up for victims of gun violence, and he didn't."



Adele McClure carried the house version of this bill, HB 362.

"The governor silences with a stroke of his pen many people who have been threatened or harmed by a partner, whether married or not. The Governor's veto protects abusers. HB 362 and SB 642 would have closed a loophole in current statute that allows those who commit domestic violence against a dating or intimate partner — the boyfriend loophole — to continue to possess their firearms. It is our DUTY as legislators to protect our citizens from abuse. This was a deadly veto, not just any veto."



Laurie Haas praised the legislators.

"These people are committed to saving lives. In addition to the shootings that go unnoticed, my colleague at Hopkins, Lisa Geller, in a study of mass shootings in the U.S., established that in two thirds of those mass shootings, the perpetrator had killed either a partner or family member or had a history of domestic violence before committing a mass shooting."

# ENTERTAINMENT

## 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/>

## MARCH 5 THRU APRIL 28

**Mosaics by Nina Tisara and Photographs by Steven Halperson.** At Green Spring Gardens, 4601 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. The Opening Reception is Sunday, March 10, 1-3 p.m. The mother-son team had worked together at Tisara Photography in Old Town for three decades. Steven now manages the Alexandria portrait studio as well as creating painterly photographic images and unique etched copper art. Nina creates intricate mosaics of unglazed porcelain tile which are widely exhibited and collected. Their work may also be seen by appointment at Serenity Place Gallery, Nina's in-home gallery.

## APRIL 1-30

**Cherry Blossom Dreams.** At Van Landingham Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Gallery 311, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Embrace the ethereal beauty of spring this month in the Van Landingham Gallery. Cherry Blossom Dreams features a collection of works presented by the Torpedo Factory Artists' Association. Artists participating in the exhibition interpret the essence of spring through a diverse range of mediums and styles.

## APRIL 4 TO MAY 12

**Japanese Inspiration: Sean Donnan, David Gootnick, Yoshiko Ratliff.** At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. To complement Washington's festivities celebrating the Japanese cherry blossoms around the Tidal Basin, the Athenaeum Gallery is featuring the work of three local contemporary artists whose work is influenced and guided by traditional Japanese art. Sean Donnan is an illustrator whose fanciful posters are inspired by Japanese mythology, anime, video games, and pop culture. David Gootnick creates lacy and delicate designs out of wood using an ancient Japanese artform called Kumiko. And Yoshiko Ratliff's paintings are bold, but intricately detailed representations of Japanese characters and Kimonos.

## APRIL 9 - MAY 19

**There and Back Exhibit of Photographic Art by Maureen Minehan.** At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N Union Street, Studio 312, in Alexandria. There and Back reflects Maureen's ceaseless desire to explore the beauty inherent in solitude. Through her artistic vision, she portrays isolated landscapes not as desolate or forsaken, but as

sanctuaries where quietude reigns supreme, and narratives yet untold await discovery. Maureen will be at the gallery on Sunday, April 21st from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

## MAY 3 TO JUNE 2

**"The Art of Tea" exhibit at Del Ray Artisans gallery features art that explores themes and stories woven around this aromatic beverage.** From tea cups and tea pots to the Mad Hatter or Boston Tea Party, this exhibit intrigues and delights. Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Reception: Friday, May 3, 7-9pm. Open Thursdays 12-6pm, Fridays 12-9pm, Saturdays & Sundays 12-6pm (June 2, 12-4pm). [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](https://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

## APRIL 4 TO MAY 12

**Special Gallery: "Japanese Inspiration."** At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. To complement Washington's festivities celebrating the Japanese cherry blossoms around the Tidal Basin, the Athenaeum Gallery is featuring the work of three local contemporary artists whose work is influenced and guided by traditional Japanese art. Sean Donnan is an illustrator whose fanciful posters are inspired by Japanese mythology, anime, video games and pop culture. David Gootnick creates lacy and delicate designs out of wood using an ancient Japanese art form called Kumiko. And Yoshiko Ratliff's paintings are bold, but intricately detailed, representations of Japanese characters and kimonos.

## APRIL 5-27

**"Same But Different" Exhibit.** At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features art that explores notions of identity, distinctions and similarities in our natural and manmade world. This exhibit showcases the interconnectedness of humanity and the uniqueness of things that may appear to be the same. Opening Reception: Friday, April 5, 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details: [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](https://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

## BEGINNING WEDNESDAY

**APRIL 24TH, the Friends of the Duncan Library will be holding their Spring Book Sale.** In addition to providing an opportunity to get great books on the cheap, this sale benefits the operations of one of Alexandria's neighborhood library branches.

## THURSDAY/APRIL 25

**Events at Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, Alexandria.** Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, a site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, is opening two new exhibits as part of a dynamic re-birth including an expanded, inclusive narrative focused on telling the fullest story of all people



**The Metropolitan School of the Arts will present its Spring Ballet: Coppelia on April 27-28, 2024 at George Washington National Masonic Memorial in Alexandria.**

associated with the property. The exhibit Woodlawn: People & Perspectives traces the history of the site of Woodlawn, a former plantation owned by Eleanor Parke Custis Lewis, George Washington's step-granddaughter. The exhibit follows the Lewis family and the people they enslaved, through the site's history as Quaker site of free labor before Emancipation, and the preservation of the site in the 20th century.

The exhibit, Offerings for Tauxenent: Acknowledging Indigenous Place brings attention to the Doeg, the Indigenous people who originally inhabited the land Woodlawn sits on, and their forced absence from the area. This is one of first known exhibits to highlight the Doeg people

## FRIDAY/APRIL 26

**Shopping at George Washington's Mount Vernon.** Shop for heirloom vegetables, herbs, annual flowers, native perennials, trees, and shrubs grown in Mount Vernon's greenhouses. Members can shop one day early, on April 26, with a reservation. Advance tickets are not required on April 27 for the general public sale. Members receive a 10 percent discount on plants.

## FRIDAY/APRIL 26

**Homeschool Day.** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Hwy., Alexandria. Discover the architecture and history behind two American houses from different centuries. Special guided tours of the houses will be available on the hour starting at 10 AM, 11 AM, 12 PM, and 1 PM. Hands-on activities will explore different aspects of the homes' histories. Visit the website: <https://www.woodlawnpopeleighey.org/nwshow24>

## SATURDAY/APRIL 27

**SFA Tapestry.** Scholarship Fund of Alexandria's 38th Annual Gala and Auction. 6 p.m. to midnight. At Hilton Alexandria Mark Center, Alexandria. The fun begins

with a 2-hour open bar reception while mingling with 499 other Alexandrians who care. Then join us in the Ballroom for a delicious dinner, silent and live auctions, followed by dancing to a live band until midnight. Buy a ticket or join the Honor Roll of Giving as a sponsor of this important event, helping students with financial need achieve their college and career dreams. All proceeds go toward the SFA scholarships awarded annually.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 27

**Native Plant Sale in Northern Alexandria.** 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Largest native plant sale in D.C. Metro Area hosts 11 vendors from three states and D.C. selling native perennials, shrubs, and trees for sun or shade. This event is free. 1701 N. Quaker Lane in Church of St. Clement parking lot, Alexandria. Call 571-232-0375 or [cscottknudsen@gmail.com](mailto:cscottknudsen@gmail.com) or [www.NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale.org](http://www.NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale.org).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 27

**Environment Expo.** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Fort Hunt Park, Alexandria. This free family-friendly festival will feature loads of activities and exhibitors sharing information about climate action, environmental challenges we face and how we can take action to make Fairfax County, and the world at large, a healthier, more sustainable place. There will be live music, reptile and raptor demonstrations, food, face painting, make and takes, giveaways, solar cooking, CCTV Robot Camera Demos, touch-a-truck, the Purple Glass Monster, an EV Showcase and more.

## APRIL 27-28

**Metropolitan School of the Arts to Present Spring Ballet: Coppelia.** At George Washington National Masonic Memorial in Alexandria. Showtimes at 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. Coppelia, a captivating tale of love, mischief, and mechanical dolls. Audiences can experience a village brought to life by dance, where fantasy and reality blur in this heartwarming story, perfect for all ages. In addition to the performances, MSA will also feature a Springtime Marketplace and a meet-and-greet session after the show. Tickets are from \$18 to \$25 and can be purchased at [metropolitanschoolofthearts.org](https://metropolitanschoolofthearts.org)

## SUNDAY/APRIL 28

**PNC Parkway Classic Race.** From Mount Vernon Estate to Old Town Alexandria, the PNC Parkway Classic, produced by Pacers Running, celebrates its 40th-year and returns Sunday, April 28, 2024. The race, sponsored by PNC Bank, attracts thousands of runners and spectators throughout the DC Metro region and beyond to experience the historic George Washington Memorial Parkway from a different vantage point during the Spring-

time. The signature adult race, beginning at 8:00 a.m., will feature two distance options for runners - 10 Mile or 5K. The 10-mile course will start at the beautiful Mount Vernon Estate and will take runners down the tree-lined George Washington Memorial Parkway and through historic Old Town Alexandria; a unique opportunity for runners of all skill levels. Featuring a pre-race with family-friendly activities, a Kids Dash 600-meter race will take place for kids under 12 years old. For registration information, race route details and event day activities, visit: <https://www.parkwayclassic.com>.

## THURSDAY/MAY 2

**May Coffee & Connections.** 8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. At The Landing Alexandria, 2620 Main Line Blvd., Alexandria. The Chamber ALX's Professional Women's Network May Coffee & Connections. Hear from ACT for Alexandria President & CEO Heather Peeler who will share her amazing story.

## <cal1>Thursday/May 2

<cal2>**Maskerade: Moving Tradition Forward.** 7 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. In celebration of Asian Heritage month in May, Fiesta Asia & Dance Asia jointly presents Maskerade: Moving Tradition Forward - a dance showcase of mystery and enchantment featuring Asian mask cultures. This presentation will feature works that explore the influence and charisma of masks across different regional cultures. The jovial, the forbidden, the divine, the sanguine, masks are significant elements in many folk and traditional ceremonies, rituals and traditions and are often of an ancient origin. Witness the vivacity of movement and partake in the dance!

## MAY 4-5

**Mount Vernon's Revolutionary War Weekend.** At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate, Mount Vernon. Step back in time at Mount Vernon's Revolutionary War Weekend on May 4th and 5th. Mount Vernon's 12-Acre Field transforms into a battleground as Continentals, Redcoats, and Hessians conduct military drills, perform cavalry demonstrations, and engage in 18th-century tacticals.

## SATURDAY/MAY 4

**Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria.** Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

## SUNDAY/MAY 19

**Old Town Festival of Speed & Style.** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Across lower King Street in Old Town Alexandria. Sponsored by Burke & Herbert Bank. The event is a high-sensory spectacle for participants, spectators and car enthusiasts, allowing them to experience the "Speed & Style" variety of exotic supercars and vintage motorcycles

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 15

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**OPENING ALERT 06/01/2024**

Spring Garden Apartments, LLC (Section 8)  
Waiting List Notice of  
Re-Opening for One-Bedroom Apartments and  
Closing Three-Bedroom Apartments

06/01/2024

On June 1, 2024 Spring Garden Apartments, LLC will re-open its waiting list for one-bedroom sized apartment units in the Section 8 Housing program for low and extremely low income individuals and families. Spring Garden Apartments is a 207 unit community of rent subsidized one- two- and three-bedroom apartments located in Fairfax County, Virginia. Only the waiting list for one-bedroom sized apartment units will re-open on June 1.

All applications for housing must be submitted online at:

<http://smgroup.biz/Rental.html>

Those who need extra assistance, may contact the rental office at 7943 Richmond Highway, Suite 10, Alexandria, Virginia 22306 (703) 780-6700.

Once you have completed the application, you will need an email address to receive notifications and monitor your application status online. Spring Garden Apartments two-bedroom waiting list will remain open. The three-bedroom waiting list will close on June 1, 2024.

Spring Garden Apartments does not have a preference point system that may improve your spot on the waiting list. Applications will be reviewed and filed in the order of receipt. In addition, applications will be categorized according to unit size.

Under the Federal Code of Regulations, 24 CFR § 982.206, the Management of Spring Garden Apartments, LLC has the authority to open and close the waiting list based on the number of pending applications. It is the policy of Spring Garden Apartments, LLC to not accept new applications for housing when the list exceeds 12 months.

Management will post a separate public notice, in accordance with 24 CFR § 982.206 (c), when families may resume applying for three-bedroom apartments tenant-based assistance at Spring Garden Apartments.

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**BULLETIN**

FROM PAGE 5

paid staff, so Board members, working on average 10 hours per month, share the day-to-day work needed to accomplish its goals. Interested candidates should email [FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com).

STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, [stemvolunteers.org](http://stemvolunteers.org), during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or [donaldrea@aol.com](mailto:donaldrea@aol.com).

ALIVE! offers numerous programs that aid low-income families in Alexandria that rely on volunteers: monthly food distributions, furniture, houseware and emergency food deliveries, and community food drives. Individuals, families and groups are encouraged to participate. Students can earn community service hours by participating. Visit [www.alive-inc.org/volunteer.htm](http://www.alive-inc.org/volunteer.htm) or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteers@alive-inc.org](mailto:volunteers@alive-inc.org).

Volunteer Drivers Needed. Drivers needed by the American Cancer Society to take cancer patients to treatment in Northern Virginia. To volunteer, call 1-800-227-2345 or go to [cancer.org/drive](http://cancer.org/drive).

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at [chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org) or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit [www.rsvpnova.org](http://www.rsvpnova.org).

Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria's preteens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for "Space of Her Own," and "Space of His Own," serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making healthy choices and succeeding in school and in life. Visit [www.spaceofherown.org](http://www.spaceofherown.org) and [www.spaceofhisown.org](http://www.spaceofhisown.org). For more information on how to become a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at [sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov](mailto:sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov) or phone at 703-746-4687.

Farmer's Market Volunteers Needed. To volunteer for the Farmer's Markets, email Brian Morreale, [brianmorreale@gmail.com](mailto:brianmorreale@gmail.com)

**SUPPORT GROUPS**

Postpartum Support Virginia sponsors a free, bi-monthly support group for women suffering depression and/or anxiety during pregnancy or in the first year following childbirth. Meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at Inova Alexandria Hospital, Health Education Center, rooms 1-2, 4320 Seminary Road. Contact co-moderator Susan Doyle at [suzjdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:suzjdoyle@gmail.com) or 571-403-0673.

# ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 13

rarely seen sitting still for up-close viewing. Center-stage at noon, a unique Fashion Demonstration will be hosted by Maria Elizabeth of Alexandria-based Salon DeZEN. Maria will discuss the elegance and importance of natural fashion and its profound impact when paired with beautiful automobiles. An award presentation highlighting cars judged to be the finest in 11 categories, will immediately follow the Fashion Demonstration. In addition to the Festival itself, the pre-Festival High-Octane Ball will take place the night before, on Saturday, May 18th from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Belle Haven Country Club in Alexandria. For more information about the festival and to purchase tickets to the High-Octane Ball, visit [www.festivalofspeedandstyle.com](http://www.festivalofspeedandstyle.com).



Mount Vernon's Revolutionary War Weekend takes place May 4-5, 2024 at George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate.

## THE BIRCHMERE

At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. All shows are at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at [Ticketmaster.com](http://Ticketmaster.com). Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or [www.Birchmere.com](http://www.Birchmere.com).

## APRIL

Thu. 25: Brandy Clark w/ SistaStrings \$45.00 SOLD OUT!  
 Fri. 26: The Stylistics \$65.00  
 Sat. 27: B.J. The Chicago Kid \$35.00  
 Sun. 28: Take 6 \$45.00

## MAY

Thu. 2: Al Stewart with The Empty Pockets \$49.50  
 Fri. 3: Al Di Meola Electric Band \$59.50 SOLD OUT!  
 Sat. 4: VARIETOPIA with Paul F. Tompkins \$35.00 SOLD OUT!  
 Sun. 5: Madeleine Peyroux w/ Joy Clark \$59.50 SOLD OUT!  
 Wed. 8: Vienna Teng w/ Jean Rohe \$35.00  
 Thu. 9: The String Queens \$35.00  
 Fri. 10: 10,000 Maniacs \$55.00 SOLD OUT!  
 Sat. 11: The Longest Johns "The Voyage Tour" w/ Sean Dagher \$29.50 SOLD OUT!  
 Sun. 12: The Longest Johns "The Voyage Tour" w/ Sean Dagher \$29.50 SOLD OUT!  
 Mon. 13: Stanley Clarke Band \$59.50  
 Wed. 15: David Sanborn \$49.50  
 Fri. 17: BoDeans \$35.00  
 Sat. 18: Harmony Sweepstakes A Capella Festival Mid-Atlantic Regionals \$35.00  
 Sun. 19: The Sun Ra Arkestra - 100th Birthday Celebration of Maestro Marshall Allen \$39.50  
 Mon. 20: Leonid & Friends \$65.00 SOLD OUT!  
 Tue. 21: Lucero w/ William Matheny \$39.50  
 Thu. 23: Ruth Moody (of The Wailin' Jennys) \$35.00  
 Fri. 24: Chante' Moore \$79.50 SOLD OUT!  
 Sat. 25: Walter Beasley \$49.50  
 Sun. 26: Maggie Rose: No One Gets Out Alive Tour w/ Fancy Hagood \$29.50  
 Fri. 31: The Manhattans featuring Gerald Alston \$65.00

## Date to Who Knows When



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Continuing the theme from last week's column: it's been medically documented and agreed that I now have papillary thyroid cancer stage IV, and wait for it: chronic kidney disease, also stage IV. This is my new narrative, my current medical situation. This replaces the narrative that had characterized the previous 12 years (until I began treatment for thyroid cancer, after having an operation to remove my thyroid called a thyroidectomy in 2020) that I had non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. As the Lombardi Center (Georgetown) thyroid cancer doctor told me when we went there for a second opinion; after reviewing my medical records said, "If you (meaning me) had lung cancer, we wouldn't be having this conversation." Which means, for all of you readers who haven't yet had your morning coffee, I'd be dead. That's because lung cancer is a killer. Though I might have laughed at the time, I soon stopped laughing when we discussed the effectiveness of the drug I had been prescribed. The doctor said it was the best drug to prescribe, one she most definitely would have prescribed. The problem: it was not a lifelong solution. In fact, it is a one to three-years-ish solution after which, as we say in Boston: "It will be Katie bar the door," which means trouble.

And that was years before I found myself in my current hot seat: stage IV kidney disease caused as a direct result of the years of chemotherapy and the most recent three years of that exact thyroid cancer drug/treatment. As a result, I am no longer taking my thyroid cancer drug so I am presently drifting along with untreated thyroid cancer and untreated (not much the doctors can do I'm told; kidney damage is irreparable) kidney disease. A "double-header" if there ever was one. As Matt Damon said in a classic scene from the movie "Good Will Hunting": "How do you like them apples?" I don't but I will deal with this new hand as I have in the past with the old, whether there's a fat lady singing: "It ain't over till it's over" or not.

And for those of you following along at home, given the fact that I am nearing the age of 70 and am already a cancer patient, a kidney transplant is completely out of the question. Which leaves me with a bit of an uncertain future with few drugs if any, that can successfully treat my stage IV papillary thyroid cancer without damaging my kidneys. And if I damage my kidneys further, I will be on d, d, dialysis. Once this treatment starts, at present, there is no undoing it. I will be on dialysis for the rest of my life. A life which can last for years with a reasonably normal-ish quality and mobility of life (as we've learned). If I were to cross that Rubicon however, I have been well-informed by my medical provider, and some steps have already been taken to prepare and educate me as to the challenges – and opportunities that await. It is not, from what I have learned, a death sentence nor a situation that necessarily confines me to a Barcalounger at an infusion center Mon., Wed., and Fri. for six hours per day, as I had thought.

Part of that education process has been and continues to be interactions with a renal-specific dietician, a nutritionist, and a pharmacy specialist with the hope of slowing down my descent into dialysis. We can't exactly treat the kidneys I'm told, but we can certainly stop stressing them. Eliminating certain foods, medical supplements, miscellaneous drinks (coffee and colas, for an example), and further reducing the amount of liquid that I do drink. This will put less pressure will be put on the kidneys to filter – which is after all, what they do. With this new knowledge and my acceptance of the somewhat tenuous grasp of my future, I will try to eliminate the bad while adding the good. Bad being sodium, potassium, and phosphorus primarily, and of course all the chemicals that manufacturers put in our food. I have lists to follow and articles to read and reread until this dietary evolution becomes second nature to me. Nonetheless, I don't feel as if I've been left to wither on the vine, so to speak. I have regular calls scheduled with these various medical professionals, aside from regular commitments with my oncologist, endocrinologist, nephrologist and of course, my primary care provider as well - who knows me years longer and better than any of these specialists. He knew me before cancer (in fact, he was the one who called me with the results of my surgical biopsy, 15+ years ago). Moreover, I know I can count on him. He's regularly available whenever I need an assessment of any new medical conditions/symptoms. He is an email away and is super responsive. I'll often receive same day feedback from him which for anyone, especially a cancer patient with stage IV chronic kidney disease complicating his life as a papillary thyroid patient, is a kind of responsiveness that I must have. Furthermore, I need to feel that someone is watching and/or listening to me because my situation is quite serious, and time might not be exactly on my side. I don't imagine that having two major health concerns, thyroid cancer, and chronic kidney disease, makes any of these conversations easy. Nevertheless, I'm glad to know where I'm going since I haven't always known where I've been.

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

# Veto Of Domestic Violence Gun Safety Laws

FROM PAGE 12

tected victims of sexual and domestic violence in Virginia. When courts hold abusers accountable it works," said Johnson. "There is no reason why anyone under a restraining order should have possession of a firearm."

Johnson's advocacy for victims was emphasized by the appearance of four local legislators, some of them just elected, who stood up and talked about legislation they had gotten through the Virginia General Assembly only to be vetoed by Youngkin. And they were angry.

Jonathan Yglesias, policy director for the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, thanked Doorways for hosting the event. "Gov. Youngkin's decision to veto these bills and cut millions of dollars from agencies providing vital services to crime victims jeopardizes the safety of women and families and leaves sexual and domestic violence

advocates without the resources to do their jobs," he said. "Without a significant influx of state dollars, there will be catastrophic and generational impacts on victims throughout Virginia."

Doorways is one of those organizations seeing more calls for help and fewer resources.

"Youngkin cut more than \$7 million from agencies providing services to victims of domestic violence," said Yglesias, while reminding attendees that despite cuts, help is available with trained advocates 24 hours a day.

"We also need to be paying attention to the helpers and advocates who need places like Doorways to be open to them," said Laurie Haas, Center for Gun Violence Solutions, Johns Hopkins.

"I have worked at the Center for Gun Violence Solutions at Johns Hopkins since 2009 when my daughter was shot and injured at Virginia Tech. I've learned a lot since. The greed driven efforts of the gun lobby to re-

frame the second amendment as the absolute right for anyone to carry any gun anywhere has resulted in our country being awash in firearms. We regulate our right to free speech. I can't go into a theater and yell "Fire!" We regulate the right to assemble: I can't go up to the Capitol and stand on the steps without a permit. States with strong gun laws have lower death rates than states with loose gun laws."

To learn more: <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/center-for-gun-violence-solutions/about/our-team>

For more: <https://www.doorwaysva.org>

Statewide Hotline | Call: 800.838.8238 | Text: 804.793.9999 | Chat: [www.vadata.org/chat](http://www.vadata.org/chat)  
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8909 Dogue Dr | \$683,800



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