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## Throngs Come To Asian Festival

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The huge throng on Main Street during Fairfax City's annual Asian Festival.

### Will Police Reform Languish?

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### Viva! Vienna! Memorial Day Community News at a Glance

PAGES 20-23

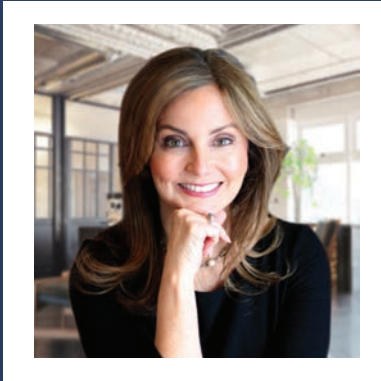
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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

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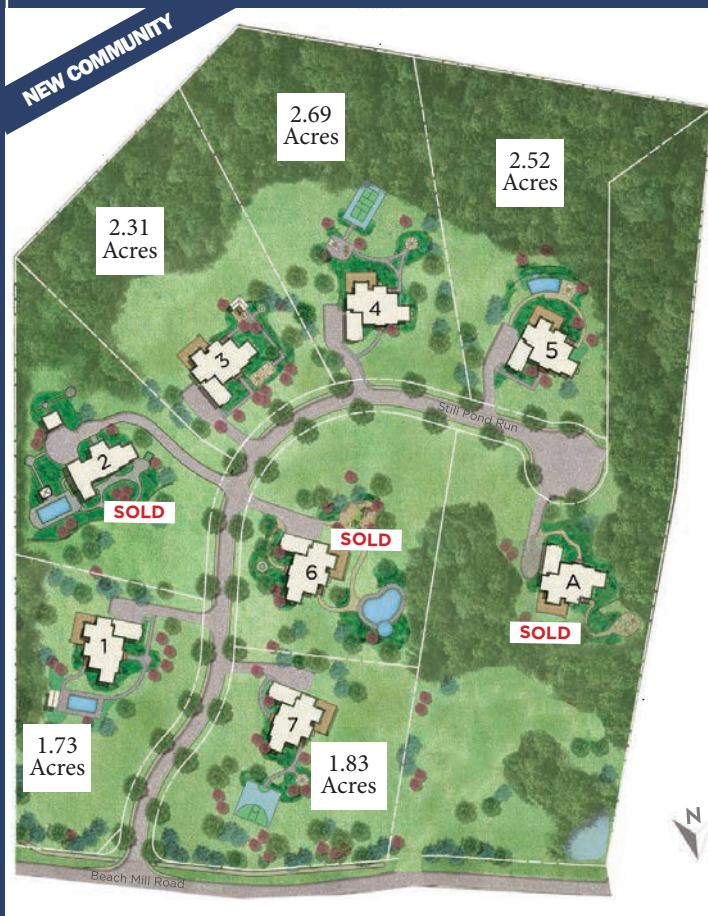


Joe Trippi, Justin Scango, Twee Ramos and Susan Canis

## Spring Market is Hot!

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## Fairfax City Festival Celebrates All Things Asian



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

The huge throng on Main Street during Fairfax City's annual Asian Festival.

**The fourth annual Asian Festival on Main was May 19 in Fairfax City.**

SEE MORE ASIAN FESTIVAL, PAGE 10, 11



The Choy Wun Lion Dance Troupe entertains in Old Town Square.

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Members of the Choy Wun Lion Dance Troupe carry what'll become a large dragon down University Drive.





FILE PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION, JUNE 10, 2020

Fairfax County residents protest the death of a Black man, George Floyd, killed by a white Minneapolis police officer in May 2020, sparking protest for police reform inside the Fairfax County Police Department as well as across the nation. The sign the young Black boy carries says, “When I grow up I want to be an actor; not a hashtag.”

# County Supervisors Act Now

Increase Trust, Preserve Sanctity of Life, Reduce Disparity.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors appointed Kevin Davis as the county’s chief of police on April 23, 2021. According to the 13-page report, “Next Steps on Police Reform in Fairfax County, May 12, 2024,” by members of the County’s Police Reform Matrix Working Group, the Fairfax County Police Department has displayed adverse reactions to requests for community co-production on policy revisions, refused to share information concerning its studies, and witnessed an increase in its use of force, primarily against people of color.

Also, “a dramatic rise in police shootings [in Fairfax County] over our ten-year average is cause for concern and warrants reflective conversation about the sanctity of life,” said Dr. Vernon C. Walton, senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Vienna and one of ten members of the county’s Matrix Working Group. Walton said this one year earlier, on May 16, 2023, when he and one of his colleagues on Matrix Working Group, Phillip A. Niedzielski-Eichner, convener of the Matrix Working Group, presented the group’s 45-page “Community Recommendations for More Equitable Policing in Fairfax County: an Action Plan” (Action Plan 2023) to the Board at its Safety and Security Committee Meeting. The Action Plan 2023 included 52 recommendations for FCPD to the Board. Less than two years after the Board appointed Davis as the county’s police chief, it as-

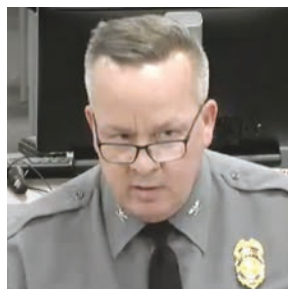
signed the Matrix Working Group’s ten members to author and present a report.

Diane Burkley Alejandro, Sadaf Atashbarghi-Nehr, Prince Howard, Mary Kimm, Adrian Steel, and Vernon Walton collaborated and authored the comprehensive Next Steps 2024. Burkley Alejandro promptly submitted it to the Board and others on the same day, and the Connection received a copy. They remain dedicated to the equity-focused action plan of the Matrix Working Group.

Three of the five individuals who authored Next Steps 2024 —Diane Burkley Alejandro, Atashbarghi-Nehr, and Pastor Walton — represent ACLU People Power Fairfax, Fairfax NAACP, and Voices of Black Fairfax. The other two, Mary Kimm and Adrian Steel have been actively involved in various county police reform committees and groups for the past decade, contributing to the creation of several critical police reform documents and studies presented to the board.

### What Are ‘Next Steps 2024,’ in 13 pages?

First, Next Steps 2024 begins with a detailed background on the national scene and its impact on Fairfax County. The murder of George Floyd, a Black man, by a white Minneapolis police officer in May



SCREENSHOT YOUTUBE VIDEO, MARCH 12, 2024, FAIRFAX COUNTY SAFETY AND SECURITY MEETING

**Chief Kevin Davis of the Fairfax County Police Department at the March 12, 2024, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Public Safety and Security Committee Meeting**

For example, when the Matrix Working Group requested co-production with FCPD on the 52 recommendations in their Action Plan 2023 before the agency formally responded, FCPD refused.

The Working Group requested co-production again, with a foot pursuit policy. FCPD denied them, as the agency did a third time when the group asked for co-production on a proposed change to the “proportionality” standard governing the use of force policy. Ed Roessler Jr., Fairfax County’s police chief from 2013 to 2021, coined the word “co-production,” which in this case meant “community-FCPD engagement to understand each other’s concerns with a policing practice, with the goal of reaching a consensus through redrafting and compromise.”

RMWG RECOMMENDATIONS	FCPD Status Assessment	RMWG Status Assessment
<b>A. RETHINKING POLICING</b>		
1. Co-responder Expansion	Concur	Agree
2. Expand “Behavioral Health First” Approach	Completed	Disagree
3. Increase Mental Health Resources	Non-applicable	Applicable
4. Expand Crisis Receiving Center Services	Non-applicable	Applicable
5. Increase Community Service Board Outreach	Non-applicable	Applicable
6. Be Open to Other Models of Policing	Unclear	Not addressed
<b>B. USE OF FORCE (UoF) POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY</b>		
7. Respond to CAC Recommendations	Completed	Mostly completed
8. Adopt “Necessary and Proportional” Standard	Nonconcurrency	Needs discussion
9. Use Force Only So Long as Required	Completed	Partially completed
10. Classify Pointing of a Firearm as UoF	Concur	Agree; need details
11. Revise De-Escalation Standards	Completed	Partially completed
12. Clarify Levels of Resistance	Completed	Disagree
13. Remove Self-Harm from Aggressive Resistance	Nonconcurrency	Resolution needed
14. Strengthen the Duty to Intervene	Completed	Disagree
15. Restrict Prone Restraints, Spit Hoods, etc.	Completed	Disagree
16. Adopt Foot Pursuit Policy with Community Input	Under review	Resolution needed
<b>C. INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT</b>		
17. Expand Civilian Oversight of Police	Nonconcurrency	Resolution needed
18. Independent Criminal Investigations of Officers	Nonconcurrency	Revisit later
<b>D. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION</b>		
19. Strengthen Officer Relationships with Residents of Color	Completed	Disagree
20. Establish Community Participation Protocols	Completed	Disagree
21. Conduct Customer Service Audits of Stops	Completed	Disagree
22. Enhance Diversity on Policy Group Initiatives	Completed	Disagree
23. Community Feedback on FCPD Training	Completed	Disagree
26. Incentivize and Reward Positive Policing Behaviors	Completed	Disagree
27. Enhance Officer Wellness Programs	Completed	Defer to FCPD
28. Drug Test Officers if Force Results in Serious Injury	Nonconcurrency	Resolution needed
29. Independent Assessment of Wellness Programs	Nonconcurrency	Revisit later
30. Create an Early Intervention System	Completed	Revisit later
31. Officer Physicals & Wellness Session Frequencies	Completed	Revisit later
32. Independent Means to Assess Officer Feedback	Completed	Agree
<b>F. TRANSPARENCY, DATA REPORTING, AND DATA ANALYSIS</b>		
33. Online Searchable Database for Key Police Actions	Completed	Disagree
34. Disaggregate Latinos of All Races; Combine Race/Ethnicity	Completed	Disagree
35. Monitor Offenses Linked to Behavioral Health	Under Review	Need discussion
36. Capture UoF Instances Sequentially	Completed	Partially completed
37. Follow-up to UTSA to Assess Changes in UoF Disparities	Completed	Disagree
38. Assess Stops Escalating from Minor Charge to UoF	Completed	Partially completed
39. Publish Multi-Year Disparity Analyses on Key Actions	Unclear	Resolution needed
40. Independent Study of Stops	Not addressed	Should address
41. Release BWC Footage within 10 Days	Nonconcurrency	Revisit later
42. Establish a Data Control Board	Unclear	Revisit later
43. Use BWC to Assess Disparities, Race/Ethnicity Mislabeling	Completed	Partially completed
44. Create Officer Misconduct Database	Under Review	Needs discussion
45. “Predisposition To Disclose” FCPD Public Records	Completed	Disagree
46. Disclose Personnel Records and Investigatory Files	Completed	Disagree
47. Training Topics and Schedules in General Orders	Completed	Partially completed
<b>G. SPECIALIZED POLICE UNITS</b>		
48. Evaluate Specialty Unit Roles, Responsibilities	Completed	Disagree
49. Limit Role of SROs to Serious Violent Offenses	Nonconcurrency	Resolution needed
50. Report Specialty Unit Disparity Data	Completed	Disagree
<b>H. MONITORING AND EVALUATING PROGRAM PROGRESS</b>		
51. County Executive Report on FCPD Progress	Non-Applicable	Applicable
52. Independent Monitoring of Reform Implementation	Non-Applicable	Applicable

SCREENSHOT FROM “NEXT STEPS ON POLICE REFORM IN FAIRFAX COUNTY, MAY 12, 2024,” BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY’S POLICE REFORM MATRIX WORKING GROUP

### Comparison of FCPD’s and RMWG’s ( Reform Matrix Working Group) Assessment of Progress of the 52 recommendations

2020 sparked nationwide outrage and protests, but the impact on Fairfax County was significant because it “energized Fairfax residents to seek holistic reform of local law enforcement,” according to the report.

Additional background material describes an uncooperative culture in the FCPD as recently as 2023.

The Working Group then requested access to given FCPD studies; however, the agency denied their request and advised them to go through the Freedom of Information Act.

In Next Steps 2024, the authors recommended that the Board of Supervisors take immediate action on six of the 52 Working Group recommendations with the “greatest potential to increase trust, preserve the sanctity of life, and reduce disparity.” They urged the Board to take “action on issues that are ripe for resolution and referral to the One Fairfax Roundtable on matters that could benefit from further study.”

Next Steps 2024 provides the board with a clear plan.

It concisely summarizes the six recommended steps, downsized from the group’s 45-page Action Plan 2023. The six steps describe recommendations for Board action and first steps for the recently formed One Fairfax Roundtable. Reportedly, the Roundtable convened for the first time in April of this year. No record of its meetings and actions appears to be available online.

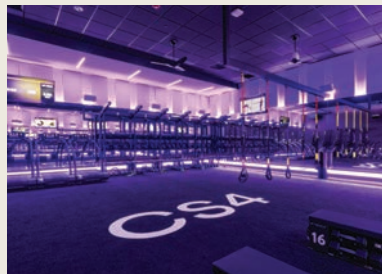
The six next steps proposed by the Matrix Working Group: “1. Evaluate and Improve Current Civilian Oversight of Police; 2. Clar-



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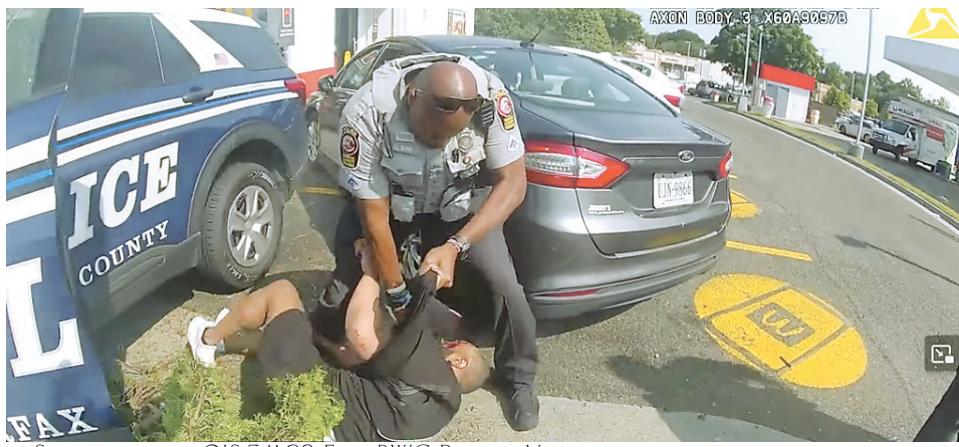
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# NEWS ANALYSIS



SCREENSHOT VIA OIS:5.11.23 FULL BWC RELEASE VIDEO, NOT INCLUDED AT PRESS CONFERENCE

**FCPD policies in action, proportionality standard governing authorized use of force**  
**Body Worn Camera (BWC): Officer #4- At (10:14/11:28) Lemagne is on his back; legs down. Officer Kenyatta Momon has the barrel of his gun farther down. Three additional pops are heard between 10:13 and 10:14. Blood and wound visible on Lemagne's temple. Lemagne is fatally wounded.**



SCREENSHOT VIA OIS:5.11.23 FULL BWC RELEASE VIDEO

**FCPD policies in action, proportionality standard governing authorized use of force and foot pursuit policy: On May 11, 2023, a Fairfax County Police officer on foot draws his weapon as he sees the FCPD SUV with a kidnapped FCPD officer trapped inside with the driver as the vehicle speeds backward out of the gas station parking lot; the driver's door is open.**

## Police Reform Recommendations Sit on a Shelf

### Inaction by Supervisors compounded by FCPD stalling on life-saving measures.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
 THE CONNECTION

In the past year, the Fairfax Board of Supervisors has yet to act on 51 of 52 police reform recommendations presented to them by County Supervisor Rodney Lusk's board-appointed Fairfax County Police Reform Matrix Working Group in their May 12, 2023, report, "Community Recommendations for More Equitable Policing in Fairfax County: A Proposed Action Plan."

Seeing a lack of Board action in police reform over 12 months, the Matrix Working Group followed up with a 15-page report, "Recommendations to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Next Steps in Police Reform."

The members of the Fairfax County Police Reform Matrix Working Group remain committed in 2024 to updating of Fairfax County Police Department policies, although the group is no longer a formal county entity. The Matrix Working Group continues to engage with the Board of Supervisors and attempts to engage with the Fairfax County Police Department on an ad hoc basis, particularly on reform recommendations that deal with the proportionality in the use of force; foot pursuits, civilian review; expansion of behavioral health care resources, efficacy and disparity analyses, and deadly policing practices that target communities of color and individuals experiencing mental health crises.

However, the Matrix Working Group is essentially locked out of further discussions with the FCPD, as evidenced by the department's repeated denials of the group's requests for co-production on policy development as well as requests for information and documents, instructing them to file Freedom of Information Act requests instead. FOIAs can come with a bill for research time and copies; documents can be refused or redacted.

The recommended policies proposed by

the Matrix Working Group in Action Plan 2023 and revisited in a condensed roadmap-form in Next Steps 2024, aim to increase trust, ensure data and information transparency, create co-production opportunities, hold police officers and the Fairfax County Police Department accountable, and push for access to documentation. Next Steps 2024 cites disagreement with Chief Davis' belief that the newly established One Fairfax Roundtable can replace co-production. Next Steps 2024 explains that the One Fairfax Roundtable lacks the necessary tools and design to offer significant guidance on police policies and practices and it is not designed to do so.

The Matrix Working Group based many of its 52 recommendations published May 12, 2023, on FCPD policing incidents since 2021, categorized into eight subsets. FCPD reports indicated that there had been eight police shootings in the prior 15 months, six in 2022, and two in 2023, as stated Community Recommendations for More Equitable Policing in Fairfax County: A Proposed Action Plan by the Police Reform Matrix Working Group, May 12, 2023 (Matrix Working Group Recommendations 2023).

"There have been three deaths caused by Fairfax police in the past nine months, the most recent involving a February 2023 foot pursuit of an unarmed Black man, Timothy Johnson, who allegedly stole a pair of sunglasses at Tysons. Another death occurred on April 5, 2023, of a kidnapping victim where a FCPD canine officer came to the assistance of the Virginia State Police, although it is unclear who fired the fatal shot," reported Matrix Working Group Recommendations 2023.

The day before the Matrix Working Group dated and published its recommendations, on May 11, 2023, Fairfax County Police fatally shot Brandon Lemagne, 38, after Lemagne attacked and attempted to disarm another

FCPD's Response lists 62% (32/52) of our recommendations as completed; Chief Davis at our meeting stated the completion rate is 85%. We assess that only 25% of our proposals (13/52) have been even partially adopted or agreed to.

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SCREENSHOT

**Partial comparison of FCPD's and the Matrix Working Group's assessments of progress on police reform recommendations.**

Fairfax County police officer in Mount Vernon. The average for officer-involved shootings for the prior 10 years was 1.5 annually, according to the Message from Chief Davis, Chief of Police.

Recommended policies are new or clarifications of existing ones, such as: a policy on the use of force and proportionality; pointing a firearm with further clarifications or appropriateness; and others.

In 2020, the Chair of the Board of Supervisors Safety and Security Committee, Supervisor Rodney Lusk (Franconia) had sought community input on necessary reforms for the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD). The committee ultimately received 315 practice and policy recommendations from the community. These recommenda-

tions, compiled into a matrix, are available for online viewing at FCPD and BOS Police Reform Tracker. This is the source of the Matrix Working Group's 52 recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, ripe for impactful implementation.

According to Next Steps 2024, six recommendations are immediately pressing: "Evaluate and Improve Current Civilian Oversight of Police; Clarify the Roles of the One Fairfax Roundtable and FCPD-community Co-production to Expand Engagement with Communities of Color; Expand Resources and the Role of Behavioral Health to Reduce Low Level Offenses; Measure and Assess Progress on Police Reform; Re-

SEE POLICE REFORM, PAGE 13  
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# Robertson Found Guilty of Second-Degree Murder

**Brutally beat and stabbed Fairfax man to death.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**N**early a year has passed since Aaron James Anthony Robertson beat Fairfax City resident Luis Barahona Reyes within an inch of his life. And when Robertson realized his victim was still breathing, he finished the job.

He was arrested the next month; and two months later, he gave the police an unsolicited confession. Jurors watched a one-hour video of it during Robertson's May 6-8 trial in Fairfax County Circuit Court. On May 9, they found him guilty of second-degree murder.

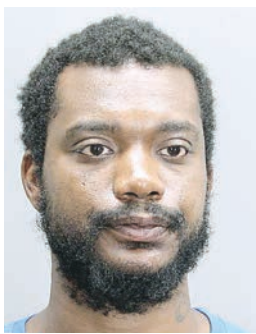
The offense took place June 9-10, 2023, behind a building under construction at 9715 Fairfax Blvd. in Fairfax City. What made this crime so chilling was its sheer brutality, plus the facts that the victim, 49, was a total stranger to Robertson and much smaller than his 6-foot-4, 230-pound attacker.

City Police Det. Joe Pittman testified that, after seeing footage from surveillance cameras at both the Wawa and 7-Eleven near the crime scene, police identified Robertson, 30, as the suspect. Pittman also obtained a video showing both men riding on a City CUE bus, June 9, just after 11 p.m., before both exited at Draper Drive, some 350 yards from where Barahona Reyes's body was found the next morning.

Robertson had no fixed address; but on June 11, police searched his room at a Fair Oaks hotel where he often stayed with his girlfriend. There, they seized the victim's shoes. "The top and side of the right shoe was covered with blood," said Pittman. "And a DNA examination identified it as belonging to Barahona Reyes."

Police continued investigating, talking to people in the vicinity of the crime scene, and eventually built a timeline of both men's whereabouts on June 9. On July 6, police arrested Robertson on a second-degree murder charge – which was later increased to first-degree murder.

Then, on Sept. 12 – with permission from



Robertson

his attorney, Mike Sprano – Robertson asked Pittman to come to the jail and speak with him. The next day, after being advised of his Miranda rights, Robertson spoke to Pittman and Det. John Farrell while being videotaped. And he described in graphic detail how he killed Barahona Reyes.

Robertson said he'd gotten into an argument with his fiancé on June 9, and she pepper-sprayed him, so he packed his things and left. "And from that morning, I was drinking that whole day, two to four beers at a time," he said. "That night, I was drinking near Wawa [directly across the street from the murder scene] and didn't know where I'd go stay that night."

When he got off the bus, said Robertson, a man [Barahona Reyes] was whistling behind him, but he kept walking. "He said, 'Hey,' and was speaking in Spanish," said Robertson. "He seemed like he needed help getting home." But then, said Robertson, "He [allegedly] said, 'Me and you go back there' and he pointed behind a building and [reportedly] said, 'Sex; I give you money.'"

"So I got upset," said Robertson. "We

walked across the street, behind the building, and I put my bags down. I knocked him out and he hit his head hard. I took his beer and poured it over him and walked away. But I thought I should check on this dude."

Robertson said he returned, asked Barahona Reyes if he was all right and told him he wasn't gay. "He said something in Spanish, stood up near the wall, went in his pocket and got a small knife and lunged toward me," said Robertson. "I told him to back up, but he lunged again."

And although Robertson said he was "scared and nervous" when he saw the pocketknife, he also described it as the kind a "grandfather" would carry. He then said he easily disarmed the much-smaller man and attacked him again.

"I hit him, knocked him down, took the knife out of his hand and started choking him," said Robertson. "I hit his head on the ground and kicked his head with my right foot. He stands up, but I kicked his butt and he fell over."

Next, Robertson told how he picked up a nearby brick – which the prosecutor said was actually a rock – and hit Barahona Reyes with it. And when it broke, he got another

SEE ROBERTSON, PAGE 8

## 'It's So Unfair for Someone to Just Take His Life Like That'

**Barahona Reyes remembered by his family as loving, supportive.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**T**o the general public and Fairfax County's legal system, Luis Barahona Reyes is simply known as the victim of a brutal murder that happened last spring in Fairfax City. But he was also somebody's brother, somebody's uncle and a loved and valued member of a large, close-knit family.

"We have so many good memories of him talking and laughing, and he meant so much to each and every one of us," said niece Rosibel Barahona. "And it's so unfair for him to be gone in such a terrible way – for someone to just come out of nowhere

and take his life like that."

From May 6-8, Aaron Robertson – the man responsible for his death – stood trial in Circuit Court. And while it was difficult for Barahona Reyes's family to hear the details of his murder, they showed up each day.

About a dozen of his relatives – including two sisters, a brother, a cousin, a family friend and several nieces and nephews – were in the courtroom. And since many didn't speak English, they listened to the proceedings via a Spanish-language interpreter translating everything through special equipment.

On May 9, the jurors found Robertson guilty of second-degree murder. And while

waiting for them to return with that verdict, three of Barahona Reyes's family members spoke with The Connection outside the courtroom.

"He was an amazing human being and the best uncle I could ever ask for," said Rosibel. She grew up with him in El Salvador and said Barahona Reyes, 49, came to the U.S. when he was 19 or 20.

"He worked hard as a busboy and dishwasher in restaurants – most recently at the Indian Bombay Café [in Fairfax] – and saved his money to help my mom, an aunt and his four brothers and two sisters," said Rosibel.

SEE BARAHONA REYES, PAGE 8



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROSIBEL BARAHONA

Luis Barahona Reyes

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# Robertson Found Guilty of Second-Degree Murder

FROM PAGE 7

one and continued battering the man. Noticing the victim was still breathing, Robertson said he then stabbed him with his own knife, aiming for his heart – and the medical examiner testified in court that Robertson succeeded in striking it.

“I know what I did, but I don’t know why,” said Robertson. “I was just focused on hurting this dude. I should have just told him, ‘Get the hell out of my face.’” He also explained how he tried to cover up the murder by getting rid of the victim’s belongings, throwing away his own blood-spattered shirt and discarding the knife in a sewer near his grandmother’s house in Maryland.

After killing Barahona Reyes, said Robertson, “I left my bags there, walked into the 7-Eleven and washed the blood off my hands. I walked back over there and didn’t know what to do. I never did nothing like that in my life; that wasn’t my intention. I got his arms and pulled him to the dumpster and covered him with cargo boxes and trash bags.”

During the trial, only the prosecution called witnesses to testify. The defense rested without calling anyone. Judge Michael Devine then gave instructions to the jury before the attorneys presented their closing arguments. He told them they could use their common sense in determining the defendant’s guilt or innocence and said their verdict had to be unanimous.

“You are the judges of the facts, the credibility of the witnesses and the weight of the evidence,” said Devine. He said Robertson was presumed innocent, unless they believed otherwise, beyond a reasonable doubt. He also explained the differences between first- and second-degree murder, voluntary manslaughter.

For first-degree, the killing must be malicious, willful, deliberate and premeditated. Second-degree lacks those last three elements. Devine also said malice may be inferred by “cruel and callous acts against another,” as well as by use of a deadly weapon.

Arguing for first-degree murder, Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney Kaitlin Morgan said that, after Robertson first beat Barahona

Reyes unconscious, he left and returned two hours later to find the victim still on the ground. “He was bleeding heavily from his head and had to use the wall to stand up,” she told the jury. “You heard [Robertson] describe how he then committed each intentional act.

“He knew exactly what he was doing – and it was for no justifiable reason. This was an incapacitated victim that he brutally beat. [Barahona Reyes] had multiple, overlapping, blunt-force traumas to the head and was stabbed twice in the neck and three times in the chest. Robertson had no injuries, except for a small cut to his face while he was trying to strangle the victim.”

Furthermore, said Morgan, Robertson told police that, after the murder, “He takes the rock he used to kill Luis, breaks it up and puts it with the other rocks. He gathers up all the evidence of what he did, and anything that was the victim’s and throws it into the woods. The next day, he gets rid of the knife.”

Defense attorney Sprano called it “a terrible crime committed by my client.” But he

said Robertson felt bad about it and knew it was wrong. “Nothing he did is excusable, but he wanted to hurt [Barahona Reyes], not kill him,” said Sprano. “The knife triggered fear that turned into uncontrollable rage.”

But Morgan said the victim had no idea Robertson would attack him when they first went behind that building. “He was blindsided,” she said. And instead of later calling an ambulance to render aid to the badly injured man – or simply walking away – Robertson returned to “finish the job.”

The jurors began deliberating on May 9. After 4-1/2 hours, the five men and seven women found Robertson guilty of second-degree murder. His sentencing is set for July 26, at which time he could receive anywhere from five to 40 years in prison.

Afterward, outside the courtroom, Barahona Reyes’s niece, Neyda Barahona, was disappointed that it wasn’t deemed first-degree murder. “I wanted him to spend the rest of his life in jail because I truly believe that, if he’s released, he’ll kill again,” she said. “He’ll be free someday, but I’ll never see my uncle again.”

# Barahona Reyes Remembered as Loving, Supportive

FROM PAGE 7

“He never married, so his nieces, nephews and I were his family. He was very giving and supportive and always there for us.”

She came to America at age 9 and had fond memories of her uncle taking her to the mall and on various outings and bringing gifts to her and her cousins. Calling him fun-loving, she said he especially enjoyed vacations with the family in Ocean City and Virginia Beach. He also loved dancing and listening to music and hoped to one day visit Spain.

“After he got his permanent U.S. residency, he was happy because he was able to travel back and forth to see his family in El Salvador,” said Rosibel. “He’d last visited in March 2023. He’d bought a lot there near the beach and planned to build a little house there someday, after retiring.”

Shortly before Barahona Reyes’s death, however, she said he “fell into a depression” because one of his brothers in El Salvador had recently passed away. The night her uncle died, said Rosibel, “He was lonely and had been drinking.”

When she learned of his death, she “didn’t want to believe it. I hoped it was a mistake. I kept calling his phone for a whole week. It took me a long time to accept it. We talked on the phone every week. It’s hit me very hard, because I’ve never had someone so close to me die. I always thought he’d become an old man. He had goals and plans – so much ahead. So it’s heartbreaking to have your loved one go that way – tortured.”

Another niece, Neyda Barahona – who’d researched Robertson’s criminal history – stressed his previous arrests for domestic assault, plus his two counts of felony assault against a law-enforcement officer stemming

from an incident at Fair Oaks Mall. Police charged Robertson with these offenses in December 2022; but at the time of the murder, he was free on supervised release.

Furious at the legal system, Neyda said, “Fairfax County failed us because it’s so lenient on crime now.” Noting that Barahona Reyes’s middle name was Innocente – meaning “innocent” in Spanish – she wondered if he would still be alive if, instead, Robertson had been behind bars on that fateful June night. “His death was senseless,” she said. “My uncle lost his life for no reason, and I’m angry.”

Furthermore, she said, Barahona Reyes was a stylish dresser who cared about his appearance. “He was so handsome and always took pride in how he looked,” said Neyda. “But [Robertson] destroyed his face.”

Like her cousin Rosibel, she, too, was devastated by her uncle’s death. “I’ve never cried that hard in my life,” said Neyda. “He and my mom were the closest of all the siblings. My mom’s the youngest, and he was her older brother, always taking care of her.”

“One of the hardest parts of all this is seeing my mother’s pain,” she continued. “She grew up with him and was never as happy as when she was with her brother. It’s sad that she’ll never be that happy again, and



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROSIBEL BARAHONA

Brother and sister, Luis and Barbara Barahona Reyes.

every family gathering isn’t the same without him.”

Neyda said Barahona Reyes also helped her mom financially and played an important role in her own life. “I grew up without a father, so my uncle was the father figure I never had, and I loved him,” she said.

“I’ve never seen him angry. He was the joy of our family, always happy and laughing, and would literally give you the shirt off his back. I’d give anything to hear his laugh again – now it’s just a memory.”

Her mother, Barbara Barahona Reyes, spoke about her brother Luis, as well, with Rosibel translating for her. “I have many special memories since we were little kids, but also special memories of his last days, because we’d always find time to spend with each other,” said Barbara. “I was a single mother, and he protected me and gave me advice about how I could better my life.”

She said Luis was the brother she loved the most and felt the strongest connection to. “My mother died giving birth to me, and my father was very old by then, so he helped raise me,” explained Barbara. “When we were children, we were always together. And as we grew, I looked up to him. We planned to grow old and retire together in El Salvador.”

Since his tragic death, she said, “He lives in my heart. I wish I could turn time back. It hurts me very much that he’s not here anymore.”

As for her, said Rosibel, “I’ll always keep the good memories of him and the fun times alive, so he’ll keep living within us.”

“What’s helped us all go on is being united as a family,” added Neyda. “Being close to each other is being close to him.”



# ROUNDUPS

## Celebrate Pride Month in Fairfax City

The City of Fairfax and Mason (GMU) will host Fairfax Pride on Saturday, June 1, from 5-7 p.m., in Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive. It's a free event open to everyone. There'll be informational vendors from both Mason's campus and Northern Virginia, plus children's activities including facepainting, fairy hair and crafts.

The fun begins at 5 p.m. with a performance by the Mosaic Harmony community choir. Then at 5:30 p.m., attendees will be welcomed by both City and Mason representatives to commemorate the start of Pride Month.

Later that evening, Coyote Grille at 10266 Main St. is hosting a Pride Drag Show from 9-11:30 p.m. Presented by The Palace, tickets are \$15, adults; \$10, college students.

For a full list and further details about all the Pride events in the City throughout June, go to [www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/special-events/fairfax-pride](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/special-events/fairfax-pride).

## High Side Hosts Tiny Beer Fest, June 9

High Side's fourth annual Tiny Beer Fest 2023 is slated for Sunday, June 9, from 1-5 p.m., in the restaurant's parking lot at 4009 Chain Bridge Road in Fairfax City. On tap

will be craft-beer tasting, cider, Asian street food, deejay music and a dad-joke contest.

Besides being a fun way to relax with friends, the event will also raise money for a good cause, with 10 percent of the ticket proceeds being donated to Fairfax-based nonprofit Britepaths, which helps stabilize and support low-income, working families in the local area.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit [www.eventbrite.com/e/tiny-beer-fest-2024-tickets-898719192297](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/tiny-beer-fest-2024-tickets-898719192297). Participants in the dad-joke contest must register for it in advance at <https://forms.gle/HAE55exHTayWA6Di7>.

## Car Seat Inspections on June 6

Parents may get their children's car seats inspected on Thursday, June 6, 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 June 20, at the same place and time.

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# ASIAN FESTIVAL

## Fairfax City Festival Celebrates All Things Asian

FROM PAGE 3



Janet Lam with colorful croissant creations by Toimoi Bakery.



From left, Vian Nguyen and Monina Bantug serving up a pandan ice cream cone from Toby's Ice Cream.



Ann and Ali Laouin serving coconut water, sticky rice with mango and Thai iced tea.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Julio and Audrey Romero sharing beef dumplings from Mom's Momo.



Linh Nguyen dressed as Lady Truth from the video game, Identity V.



Vendor Saya Okayama with her Japanese origami artwork.



Liza Israni and son Brendon offer Filipino spring rolls and crispy pork belly.



Lani Figueroa offering pandan and mango cakes from Gwenie's Pastries.



Serving a crispy, Thai street crepe with Nutella, bananas and strawberries is Taylor Pikhondgam of Good Day Crepe.



# ASIAN FESTIVAL

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



On the Main Street stage with a dragon are members of Fairfax High's Chinese Honor Society.



Representing nonprofit AALead (Asian American Leadership, Empowerment and Development) are (from left) Eva and Sammy Braccia, Duy Nguyen, Hannah Cheyney, Diana Tran, Gio Qiao and Abdullah Jayed.



The Ho brothers, (from left) Hideyoshi, 2, and Takeshi, 5, munched on mango, ube cookies and onigiri (chicken, rice and seaweed).



From left, Ben West and Sophia Mingo enjoy a beef empanada and Takoyaki (Japanese fried octopus balls), respectively.



Raising money for nonprofit Me&You, which helps the homeless, plus students and families in need, are (from left) Nina Ong and Samantha Vo.



# Are Supervisors Leaving Police Reform Efforts to Languish?

**Stymied by FCPD,  
'We need the board  
to act.'**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**D**uring the public comment portion of the Tuesday, May 21, Board of Supervisors meeting, Diane Burkley Alejandro spoke on behalf of ACLU People Power Fairfax. She is also a member of the Fairfax County Police Reform Matrix Working Group. Adrian Steel, Alejandro's colleague on the Working Group, also commented. Each had three minutes.

Alejandro said that the Board of Supervisors has yet to address 51 of the 52 police reform recommendations in the Matrix Working Group's 2023 45-page report, *Community Recommendations for More Equitable Policing in Fairfax County: A Proposed Action Plan (Action Plan 2023)*, authored by the Police Reform Matrix Working Group.

She said that the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) had only "partially adopted about 25 percent of the report's recommendations. She questioned why it did not adopt policies for the use of force and data transparency.

Alejandro said the only adopted recommendation was to establish a permanent community advisory group on equity, the One Fairfax Roundtable, Chairman Jeff McKay's brainchild.

"We do not need serial advisory committees rehashing these concerns. We need the board to act," said Alejandro.

Alejandro directed the Board's attention to a recent report, the 13-page *Recommendation to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors: Next Steps on Police Reform in Fairfax County, May 12, 2024*, which she had conveyed to them the same day, May 12.

"Last week, we [members of the Matrix Working Group] gave you a list of the six most pressing recommendations," Alejandro said to the Board. "First, we asked for more community involvement in police policy, not less.

"Chief Davis is ending it instead," Alejandro said. She opined that Davis believes the Roundtable can achieve the same results as co-production with community members who had expertise in police reform, and questioned the learning curve members of the Roundtable would face.

"Do you really want the Roundtable to become an expert in best practices on things like foot pursuits and probable cause? You won't find that listed in its charter," she said.

Alejandro addressed four assessment measures used by the Fairfax County Police Department. "If this is the country's safest jurisdiction (of its size), then police stops and arrests should also be safer, and performance measures can tell us that," she said.

She said that the University of Texas at San Antonio discovered a discrepancy in FCPD's use of force from 2018 onward. This prompted her to pose a rhetorical question to the Board: What steps had been taken to try to



Diane Burkley Alejandro testifying May 21, 2024.



Adrian Steel speaks before the Board of Supervisors on May 21, 2024.



The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors listens to public comments on issues of concern.

reduce the use of force? Alejandro's findings suggested that FCPD should correct its flawed methodology and refrain from "lumping Latino and white people together." Researchers worldwide have abandoned the practice.

"It is up to the Board to implement these changes," Alejandro said, concluding her three-minute allowed speaking time.

Adrian Steel said that the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission's original intention regarding civilian oversight in 2015 was to structure it according to best practices of the National Association of Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement. While they intended to revisit civilian oversight in three to five years, it did not happen in Fairfax County.

The Matrix Working Group suggested conducting a study comparing FCPD practices to established best practices, citing examples from other Virginia jurisdictions. "The study would take a year," said Steel. "That's one of our first things, but we think that's important."

Steel's second item encompassed three immediate proposals on which the Matrix Working Group wanted the Board to take action. The first is proportionality in the use of force standards. "Everybody, including the chief, PERF (Police Executive Research Forum), the committee, and the (Independent Police) Auditor agrees that proportionately should be playing a bigger role," said Steel. "They haven't done a thing about it."

Steel addressed the absence of a revised foot pursuit policy, particularly in light of the lessons learned from the Tysons incident, in which an FCPD police officer shot and killed unarmed Timothy Johnson, a Black man, during an outdoor, night-time foot pursuit.

FCPD officers suspected Johnson of shoplifting sunglasses.

"It's been 15 months; we have no foot pursuit policy," Steel said. He added that FCPD drafted a foot policy but was unwilling to share it with them or anyone else. FCPD said they intend to submit it to the new One Fairfax Roundtable.

"It's not really the time when we need our policy now," said Steel, "so it doesn't happen again." Steel pointed out that the new foot pursuit policy would also protect the officers so they know what to do and not do.

Third, Steel discussed the pointing of a firearm. He said that Chief Davis announced in November that FCPD was changing the policy; pointing a firearm would be considered a reportable use of force. But since then, "we have seen nothing about what that policy might be," Steel said.

"We need all three of them; we've seen evidence in the police's activities that they will help make us a safer place," Steel said.

Steel said it would be beneficial for FCPD to publish critical incident reports detailing events and concerns following investigations, such as the McLean fatal police shooting of Jasper Lynch in 2023. (Lynch armed himself with a bottle during a mental health crisis.)

Lynch's parents raised questions, such as why the officer who shot and killed their son did not have his electronic control weapon (Taser) with him. "And the proportionality ... when the incident is over, what can we learn so we avoid those situations from happening again?" Steel said.

Alejandro is the lead advocate for ACLU People Power Fairfax and a member of the Fairfax County Police Reform Matrix Work-

ing Group (Matrix Working Group). Fairfax County Board Supervisor Rodney Lusk, chair of the Safety and Security Committee, charged the Matrix Working Group to transform the Fairfax County Police Reform Matrix, a "compendium of (300+) community-based ideas, offered in a range of formats... into an action plan."

Alejandro was also key in the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopting a trust policy in 2021 to prohibit voluntary cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The policy forbids county employees, including police and schools, from asking about or disclosing a person's immigration status unless required by law, a judicial warrant or court order.

Steel was the chairman of the inaugural Police Civilian Review Panel. He has 10 years of police reform work. He served as one of 42 diverse members on the Chairman's Task Force on Equity and Opportunity, convened by Jeff McKay, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. The task force provided 20 recommendations to the Board on equity issues, leveraging the insights, experiences, professional networks, and industry and institutional understanding within the community to better understand the county's drivers of inequity to accelerate the county's progress towards becoming One Fairfax.

Supervisor Sharon Bulova and the Board of Supervisors established the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission in March 2015 in response to public frustration over the shooting death of John Geer by FCPD officer Adam Torres. Steel served on this commission. The Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission evaluated over two hundred recommendations conveyed to the Board of Supervisors in October 2015. Geer, an unarmed Springfield man, was standing in his doorway talking with FCPD police following an alleged domestic dispute when Torres shot and killed him. On July 31, 2015, FCPD fired Torres for violating the department's policies and procedures on the use of force. In 2015, Torres was indicted and charged with second-degree murder. He was sentenced in 2016 to one year of imprisonment, with time served. Torres' release occurred five days after his conviction.

On May 17, a spokesperson for Chairman McKay responded to a request for comment on his reaction to the report, *Next Steps 2024*, emailed to him on May 12, saying in an email, "Chairman McKay asked that I respond to let you know we've received their report but have not had the opportunity to review it in full yet. We appreciate their continued advocacy and will respond once we are able to review their latest."

The police did not make Chief Davis or other FCPD staff available for an interview, responding instead with a statement. "The FCPD remains proud of our enormous progress over the last several years. As policing continues to evolve and as the FCPD serves as a best-practice police organization, we look forward to collaborating with the newly formed One Fairfax Roundtable as its members work with us and other Fairfax County agencies."



# County Supervisors Act Now

FROM PAGE 4

ify the Roles of the One Fairfax Roundtable and FCPD-community Co-production to Expand Engagement with Communities of Color; 3. Expand Resources and the Role of Behavioral Health to Reduce Low Level Offenses; 4. Measure and Assess Progress on Police Reform; 5. Require Disclosure of Key Reports in the Public Interest; and 6. Restart Co-Production on Current Pressing Concerns, with BOS Resolution if Needed.”

Example 6: “Restart Co-Production on Current Pressing Concerns, with BOS Resolution if Needed,” includes explicit directions for the Board, as do the other five steps. “(a) Use of Force- The BOS should adopt the (Matrix Working Group’s) proposal on proportionality if no ... consensus is reached through co-production by July 1, 2024; (b) Foot Pursuit Policy. Reject FCPD’s proposal to refer the issue to One Fairfax Roundtable. Require and complete co-production on development of a policy by July 1, 2024; (c) Pointing a Firearm. Key issues such as what level of force pointing a firearm is considered should be subject to co-production.”

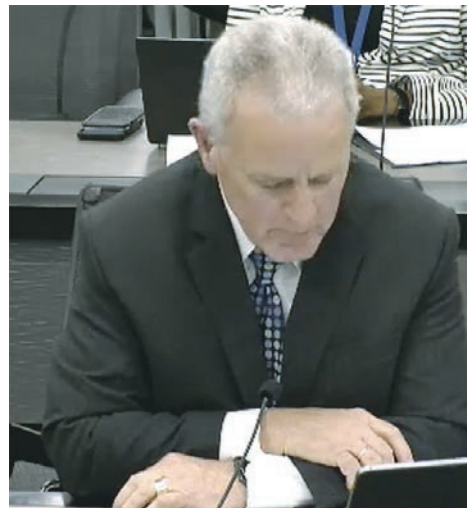
Working Group’s Next Steps 2024 describes the need for reform within FCPD.

One reason is the recent increase in the use of force and the FCPD’s heightened arrest rates of people of color.

The authors of Next Steps 2024 disagree with FCPD’s suggestion that their recommendations are based on national events. The authors state that concerns are locally based, saying, “FCPD’s use of force has primarily increased since 2021 against people of color.” Before that, “in 2021, the University of Texas at San Antonio’s “Investigation of the Use Of Force by the Fairfax County Police Department” (p. 53) found that, from 2016–2018, Black civilians were 2.1 times more likely to be subject to high level force (guns, tasers, etc.) than white civilians. Latino civilians were 1.4 times more likely than white civilians to be subjected to such force.”

The arrest rates of people of color increased during Chief Davis’s tenure. Black residents faced a 4.4 times greater risk of arrest in 2022 (up from 3.7 in 2020), according to Next Steps 2021. The risk of arrest for Latino residents increased by 3.5 times in 2022, compared to 3.0 times in 2020.

According to the Matrix Working Group’s “A Detailed Evaluation of Fairfax County



SCREENSHOT

**Phillip A. Niedzielski-Eichner, the convener of the Matrix Working Group, presents the group’s comprehensive “Community Recommendations for More Equitable Policing in Fairfax County: an Action Plan” (Action Plan 2023) to the Board during its Safety and Security Committee Meeting on May 16, 2023.**

Police Department’s Response to the Recommendations of the Reform Matrix Working Group,” dated May 12, 2024, disparity is increasing.

An In-depth Discussion of the Six Selected Recommendations follows (pages 4–10).

## Conclusion of Next Steps 2024?

The authors of Next Steps 2024 offer the Board direction. “Immediate action is needed on civilian review, expansion of behavioral health care resources, efficacy and disparity analyses, foot pursuits, and proportionality in use of force.” The report suggests that the FCPD’s “reluctance to engage with the RMWG (Reform Matrix Working Group) and their flat denial of any fear or distrust among residents of color indicate a lack of understanding of our concerns.”

Next Steps 2024 closes with a one-page FCPD and RMWG Assessment of Progress chart. The information presented by the members of the Matrix Working Group in the table is much-needed, concise, and visually appealing. It interprets the extensive and daunting data initially provided in the Matrix Reform Working Groups’ 45-page Action Plan 2023 with 52 recommendations compared to FCPD’s 81-page response to Action Plan 2023.



SCREENSHOT YOUTUBE VIDEO BODY WORN CAMERA 1

**A woman in a group home was shot in the abdomen and wounded by a Fairfax County Police officer on July 7, 2021, after she threatened him and another officer with a knife. She survived. She lived in a Springfield group home; neither officer carried a Taser. According to the story in The Connection, “Needed Tasers and De-escalation,” on Oct. 26, 2021, at the Safety and Security Committee meeting, Chairman Jeff McKay asked Chief Kevin Davis, “Can you help us understand what the challenge might be with getting a taser in the hand of every officer?” Davis said that the department is currently procuring 350 new Tasers. “It would just be a matter of looking at the finances and what it would take to outfit the entire police department, but we can certainly explore that ...”**

“The officer in question was reasonable in fearing that the resident intended to either kill him or cause him serious bodily injury, and it was therefore legally permissible for him to use the level of force used to repel the assault,” said Commonwealth’s Attorney Steve Descano (in his report).



FILE PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION (MARCH 8-14, 2023)

**Dr. Vernon C. Walton at March 4, 2023, NAACP Rally for Justice as he stands with the mother of Timothy McCree Johnson, a Black man, shot and killed by a Fairfax County Police officer following a foot pursuit. Officers considered him a shoplifting suspect. Johnson was unarmed. At the time, Walton served as one of ten members of the county’s Police Reform Matrix Working Group and is the senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Vienna.**

# FCPD Undercuts Police Reform

FROM PAGE 6

quire Disclosure of Key Reports in the Public Interest; and Restart Co-Production on Current Pressing Concerns, with BOS Resolution if Needed.”

Fairfax County’s police reform is under attack from two distinct angles.

Not only has the board not taken action on 51 of 52 recommendations in the last 12 months, the sole one acted upon being The [www.connectionnewspapers.com](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com)

One Fairfax Roundtable. Also the Fairfax County Police Department, specifically Chief Davis, did not engage in a responsive manner with the Matrix Working Group after it released Action Plan 2023, thereby thwarting forward motion on recommendations.

By October 2023, NAACP Fairfax publicly condemned the FCPD’s lack of timely action on life-saving measures.

NAACP Fairfax witnesses FCPD’s inaction on life-saving measures; foreshadowing the

department’s responses to the Matrix Working Group

Through its Oct. 3, 2023, public release, the Fairfax County NAACP escalated awareness of FCPD’s lack of action on police reform, saying Police Chief Davis rejected what NAACP Fairfax called “life-saving measures.” The Connection reported that NAACP Fairfax issued the “urgent statement” on behalf of community leaders condemning Davis.

According to the 2023 release, Timothy

McCree Johnson, who was shot and killed by a Fairfax County police officer in February after a foot pursuit when police suspected him of stealing sunglasses from a department store at Tysons Corner Mall, would be alive today if the FCPD had established a best practices policy on foot pursuits earlier that year.

The now-indicted police department offi-

SEE POLICE REFORM, PAGE 14



# FCPD Undercuts Police Reform

FROM PAGE 13

cer killed Johnson fifteen months ago. However, other FCPD officers still lack formal guidance on when and how to conduct foot pursuits, determine the necessary and proportional use of force, and more. In an email shared with The Connection on Thursday, May 23, Adrian Steel, a member of the Matrix Working Group, said that the policy for pointing a firearm would benefit from co-production, and so too does Next Steps 2024.

## Ongoing FCPD Stalling and Disruptions to Collaboration

The Next Steps 2024, details a list of Fairfax County Police Department denials of the Working Group requests for co-production and access to data. Alejandro provided the document to the board. The question remains: What is the root cause of FCPD's seemingly uncooperative, non-collaborative behavior toward the Working Group and Fairfax NAACP?

The Matrix Working Group submitted a separate 4-page report to the Board: "Key Components of a Foot Pursuit Policy, Recommendation to Chief Davis on August 22, 2023." It includes comments from Dr. Vernon C. Walton, senior pastor of the First Baptist Church of Vienna, member of the Matrix Working Group; ACLU People Power Fairfax, whose lead advocate is Diane Alejandro; and Fairfax NAACP. The report analyzes policy suggestions proposed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) (2019), the Stanford Center for Racial Justice Model Policy (SCRJ) (2022), and PERF (Police Executive Research Forum) recommendations on the recent FCPD shooting incidents, and other research. Members of the Working Group requested co-production on a foot pursuit policy, but the FCPD denied it.

On Nov. 13, the Working Group met with Chief Davis and Deputy County Executive Tom Arnold. They learned that the chief was willing to treat pointing a firearm as a use of force. According to Next Steps 2024, the Working Group requested from FCPD the ongoing co-production of a proposed compromise to the proportionality standard governing authorized use of force, as well as a foot pursuit policy. Those



SCREENSHOT

**Chief Kevin Davis holds a press conference to discuss the fatal officer shooting of unarmed Black shoplifting suspect Timothy McCree Johnson.**



SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE MEETING, MARCH 12, 2024  
**Supervisor Rodney Lusk**



SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE MEETING, MARCH 12, 2024  
**Chairman Jeff McKay**

too, FCPD denied. The Working Group sought access to the FCPD studies mentioned in its response but received direction from FCPD to pursue them through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

On March 22, 2024, the Working Group met with Chief Davis for what he described as the "last time." Next Steps 2024, states that Davis told them "all future engagement with community leaders and advocates — including on the new foot pursuit policy — would take place through the new One Fairfax Roundtable." The Roundtable reportedly met for the first time on April 25, 2024. An online search comes up empty.

## Roundtable: No Substitute for Community Engagement

In Next Steps 2024, the Working Group cautioned that the One Fairfax Roundtable cannot be "a substitute for current co-production," as Chief Davis reportedly suggested. "Community engagement in substantive policing "best practices would effectively cease," states Next Steps 2024.

## FCPD vs. Working Group Assessments of Progress

A bottom-line assessment of FCPD's Response to the Community Recommendations, with Chief Davis saying at the meeting with the Working Group "the completion rate is 85 percent."

The Matrix Working Group (denoted as

RMWG in charts of Next Steps 2023) "assesses that only 25 percent of our proposals (13/52) have even been partially adopted or agreed to, in the eight categories."

The Connection requested comment from Chief Kevin Davis by emailing him directly:

"I have received information that on Monday, May 13, Diane Burkley Alejandro of ACLU People Power Fairfax emailed you and others, subject line: BOS action on police reform. She sent you documents. I've attached them to this email.

"What is your reaction to the documents?"

"What next steps might you consider?"

"When could these steps be taken, and how?"

Katherine Hayek, FCPD Director of Public Affairs replied: "friendly reminder that all media inquires/request for comment should go through us at the FCPDMedia email you have, and not to individual officers. We prioritize and respond to them for you the quickest that way, as well. We'll have the media team review your inquiry and get back to you shortly."

FCPD did not make Davis or other FCPD staff available for an interview, responding instead with a statement, asking also that the statement not be attributed to anyone by name. "The FCPD remains proud of our enormous progress over the last several years. As policing continues to evolve and as the FCPD serves as a best-practice police organization, we look forward to collaborating with the newly formed One Fairfax Roundtable as its members work with us and other Fairfax County agencies."

## BULLETIN BOARD

### LEADERSHIP FAIRFAX ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Leadership Fairfax is now accepting applications for its professional leadership development programs – Leadership Fairfax Institute (LFI) and Emerging Leaders Institute (ELI). The application deadline is Sunday, June 30, 2024, with programs set to commence in September 2024.

These programs are designed to equip participants with comprehensive knowledge of community issues, legislative processes, and essential leadership skills. Both LFI and ELI offer a unique blend of monthly classes and collaborative projects, fostering strategic interactions and promoting positive community impact.

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.

Participants in the Leadership Fairfax Institute will engage in a nine-month program tailored for senior-level leaders across various sectors. This program focuses on strategic community interactions, peer coaching, and innovative leadership development, guided by experienced instructors and certified executive coaches.

For more information or to apply, visit the website at <https://www.leadershipfairfax.org/lfi>.

### MCLEAN NEWCOMERS AND NEIGHBORS

The club was founded in 1969 to create new friendships, provide opportunities for socializing and acquaint residents with the com-

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

### SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have

received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax) or [www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html](http://www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html).

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia Caregivers' Support Group takes place the first and third Tuesdays of each month, 10-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. This group is for caregivers of family members with

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## THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

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### NEWS DEPARTMENT

[fairfax@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:fairfax@connectionnewspapers.com)

Mary Kimm

Editor and Publisher  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)

Bonnie Hobbs

Community Reporter  
703-778-9415  
[bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com)

Mercia Hobson

Staff Reporter  
[mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com)

Mike Salmon

Contributing Writer  
[msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com)

Ken Moore

Contributing Writer

Susan Laume

Contributing Writer

### ADVERTISING

For advertising information  
[sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com)  
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk

Display Advertising/National Sales  
703-778-9444  
[debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com)

David Griffin

Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
[dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com)

### Classified & Employment Advertising

703-778-9431

### Editor & Publisher

Mary Kimm  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
@MaryKimm

### Publisher

Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
[jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com)

### In Memoriam

Managing Editor  
Kemal Kurspahic

### Art/Design:

Laurence Foong  
Production Manager  
Geovani Flores

### CIRCULATION

Circulation Manager  
Ann Oliver  
[circulation@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:circulation@connectionnewspapers.com)



# ENTERTAINMENT

## Mama I'm A Big Girl Now!

THREE ORIGINAL STARS REUNITE TO CELEBRATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF 'HAIRSPRAY'



"Mama, I'm a Big Girl Now" can be seen Saturday, June 8, 2024 at the McLean Community Center.

### 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/>

### RESTON ASSOCIATION SUMMER "AT THE MOVIES"

Reston Association is set for another exciting summer of movie events. "RA at the Movies" gives the community a chance to gather together in a variety of settings while enjoying movies in the great outdoors. Whether gathering for a family outing, date night, or to extend a little pool time, RA has a summer movie for all to enjoy. Movies in the Park include:

Saturday, June 8: Date Night: My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3

Doors open: 8:00 p.m./Showtime: 8:45 p.m.

Lake Newport Soccer Field, 1550 Reston Pkwy

Similarly, Dive-In Movies at some of RA's pools throughout the community let guests enjoy family-oriented films after a day of swimming. Dive-In Movies include:

Thursday, July 11: Puss in Boots: The Last Wish

Doors open: 8 p.m./Showtime: 8:45 p.m.

Lake Newport Pool, 11601 Lake Newport Road

Wednesday, Aug. 7: Kung Fu Panda 4

Doors open: 8 p.m./Showtime: 8:45 p.m.

[www.connectionnewspapers.com](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com)

Lake Audubon Pool, 2070 Twin Branches Road  
All RA at the Movies events are \$6 for RA members and \$10 for non-members. Admission is free for kids under the age of 3. Refreshments will be available for purchase. Register at [www.reston-webtrac.com](http://www.reston-webtrac.com) or contact [events@reston.org](mailto:events@reston.org) or 703-435-6571.

### UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AT COLVIN RUN MILL. Mill tours every weekend from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

June 2 and June 16 – Mill in Motion: the mill is operating, the miller is grinding grain, the Northern Virginia Woodcarvers and a local blacksmith are demonstrating their skills. On June 16th, Father's Day, Mill in Motion welcomes fathers and grandfathers with free admission.

June 8 – Brownie Badge Day: Girl Scouts can earn two badges.

June 15 and 19 – Colvin Run Before & After the 13th Amendment (12-Adult): Learn how enslaved and free African Americans helped build and maintain the mill and the Colvin Run community. Discover how, after slavery was outlawed, African Americans developed more connections to the community and created spaces of their own.

### 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: 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

### FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

**Walk With Dr. Rinka Mehra.** 10 a.m. Meet at Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, Vienna. Walk with Dr. Rinka Mehra is a new initiative aimed at encouraging families to participate in a monthly walk to promote a healthy community and encourage active lifestyles. Walk with Dr. Mehra offers participants the opportunity to engage in safe physical activity while gaining valuable health information and connecting with others in their community. Visit <https://www.themehraclinic.com/about>

### FAIRFAX COUNTY FARMERS MARKETS READY FOR 2024 SEASON

2024 Farmers Market season is here and the Park Authority, along with dozens of local food producers, 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



Summer Blast Off takes place Friday, May 31, 2024 at Wolf Trap National Park in Vienna.

## Frank Lloyd Wright Birthday Celebration at Pope-Leighey House



The Frank Lloyd Wright Birthday Celebration takes place on Saturday, June 8, 2024 at the Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House in Alexandria.

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.

**WEDNESDAYS**  
McCutcheon/Mount Vernon  
Through Dec. 18, 8 a.m. - noon  
Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria  
Oakmont  
Through Nov. 6, 8 a.m.-noon  
Oakmont Recreation Center, 3200 Jermantown Road, Oakton  
Wakefield  
Through Oct. 30, 2-6 p.m.  
Wakefield Park, 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale

**THURSDAYS**  
Annandale  
Through Nov. 14, 8 a.m. - noon  
Mason District Park, 6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale  
Herndon  
Through Nov. 7, 8 a.m. - noon  
Old Town Herndon, 700 Block of Lynn St., Herndon (by the Red Caboose)

**FRIDAYS**  
McLean  
Through Nov. 15, 8 a.m.-noon  
Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean  
Kingstowne  
Through Oct. 25, 3-7 p.m.  
In the Giant parking lot, 5870 Kingstowne Towne Center, Alexandria  
**SATURDAYS**  
Burke  
Through Dec. 21, 8 a.m.-noon  
VRE parking lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke  
Reston  
Through Dec. 7, 8 a.m.-noon  
Lake Anne Village Center, 1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston  
**SUNDAYS**  
Lorton  
Through 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

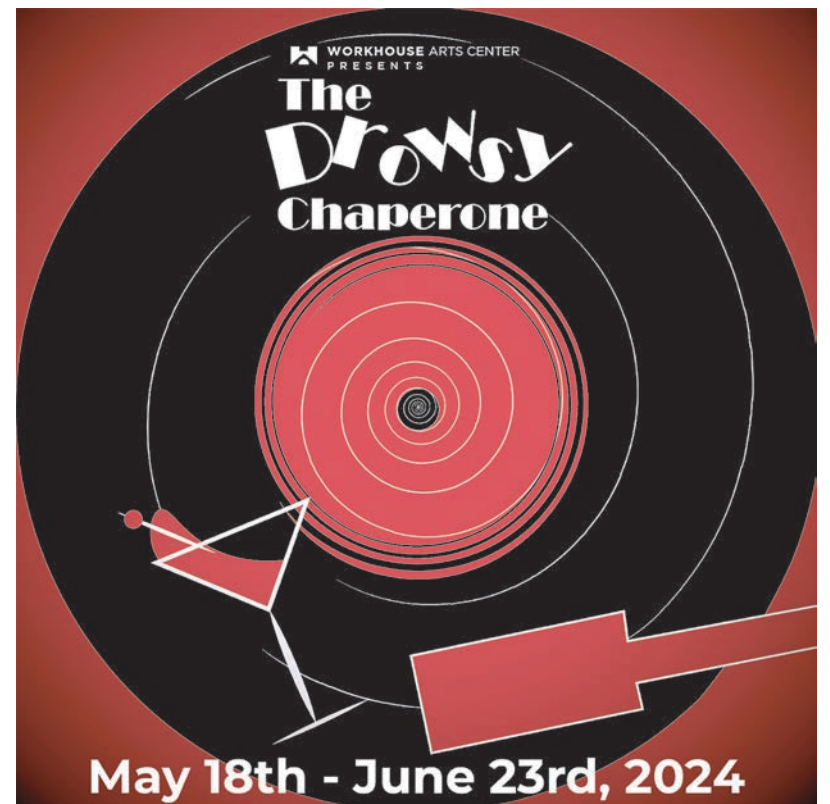
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# ENTERTAINMENT



The Clifton 5K Run will be held Saturday, June 8, 2024 in the Town of Clifton.



"The Drowsy Chaperone," now thru June 23, 2024 at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton.

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households available at designated locations. Contact the Community Horticulture Office at 702-642-0128.

## THROUGH JUNE 23

**"The Drowsy Chaperone."** At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. Workhouse Arts Center Performing Arts announces its newest production, "The Drowsy Chaperone," a delightful musical comedy about characters coming to life in a fictitious 1928 song-and-dance-infused performance. Showtimes are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets range from \$25 to \$40. Visit the website [www.workhousearts.org](http://www.workhousearts.org).

## ART CAMP 2024 WITH CAROL ZEITLIN

**Registration Open at Woods C Center, Burke Centre.**  
Fine Arts & Crafts Fun Camp (7/8 yrs & up/Teen)  
Campers explore Drawing, Watercolor Painting & crafts as Clay or Sculpture and Mixed Media.  
June 17, 19 & 21 (Mon/Wed/Fri) - 12:30-3:15 pm  
July 15, 17 & 19 (Mon/Wed/Fri) - 12:30-3:15 pm  
Drawing Plus Color Fun Camp (5-8 yrs)  
Campers Draw, plus color with Watercolor, crayons cartoon characters, stuff animals & more.  
June 17, 19 & 21 (Mon/Wed/Fri) - 10:00-11:00 am  
July 15, 17 & 19 (Mon/Wed/Fri) - 10:00-11:00 am  
To Register: Call/Text instructor (703) 250-6930 for details and registration. E-mail: [czeitlinschneier@yahoo.com](mailto:czeitlinschneier@yahoo.com)

## MAY 30 TO JUNE 2

**Tysons Library Quarterly Book and Media Sale.** At Tysons Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church.  
Thursday, 30 May, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Friday, 31 May, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Saturday, 1 June, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday, 2 June, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.: Bag

sale. \$10 for a full grocery sack or half price if less. Large selection of books and media for all ages and interests.

## MAY 30 TO JUNE 2

**Used Book Sale.** 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield.  
Thursday, May 30, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. open to all  
Friday, May 31st, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. open to all  
Saturday, Jun 1st, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. open to all  
Sunday, Jun 2, 12 - 2 p.m. Bag Sale, \$5/bag  
Thousands of like new books to choose from. The Friends of the Richard Byrd Library is a nonprofit all volunteer organization. Funds raised support children's and adult programming at the Richard Byrd Library. For more information contact the Friends at [rbfriends@gmail.com](mailto:rbfriends@gmail.com)

## FRIDAY/MAY 31

**Summer Blast Off.** 8 p.m. At Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, Vienna. The President's Own United States Marine Band featuring guest soloist Doreen Ketchens, New Orleans Jazz Clarinetist. Join "The President's Own" for a mix of patriotic favorites, popular movie soundtracks, Sousa marches, and Broadway show tunes, and a guest appearance by iconic New Orleans jazz clarinetist Doreen Ketchens. As always, the program will conclude with a medley of the Armed Forces' service songs honoring all those currently serving, veterans, and their families, followed by one of the best fireworks displays of the year.

## FARM HARVEST FRIDAYS

**Every Friday at 2 p.m. - May 31 through October.** At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Enjoy live music, a guided harvest from Annie, the Giving Garden urban farmer, produce tastings, and more. Throughout the season, the farm will produce over 50 varieties of fruits, vegetables and herbs,

including strawberries, zucchini, beets, spinach, carrots, peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, and more.

## SUMMER CONCERT SERIES: DOUBLE FEATURES

**June 1, June 15, & July 20.** At Tysons Corner Center, The Plaza, McLean. First set: 4:00-6:30 p.m. 2nd set: 7:00-9:00 p.m. Summer Concert Series will offer two live performance sets on each date, with the first band at 4-6:30 p.m. and the second from 7-9 p.m. The series will feature local bands such as Party Fowl, Cazhmiere, Billy Twilde, and more. Come out and enjoy takeout and cocktails from our restaurants while jamming to your favorite groove!

## SATURDAY/JUNE 1

**Reston Pride Festival.** 12-6 p.m. At Lake Anne Plaza, Reston. The festival will offer access to vendors, performances, speakers, fun, festivities and more.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 1

**Dust to Dust.** 9:30 a.m. Join NOVA Parks Naturalist Whitney Gilliland for an unforgettable journey along the banks of Bull Run. Delve into the world of birds, soaking in the beauty of nature, and uncovering some hidden history as we explore two recently discovered enslaved cemeteries. NOVA Parks Historian Paul McCray will be there to share insights into what's uncovered and the lives of those laid to rest. The roundtrip hike will be approximately 4.5 miles, so make sure to wear comfortable shoes for the unpaved trail and bring along a water bottle to stay hydrated. To register: <https://ow.ly/jMcx50REAr6>

## SATURDAY JUNE 1

**Celebrate National Trails Day.** 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. At Laurel Hill Central Green, 8780 Lorton Road, Lorton. Participate in a variety of interactive educational trail activities. Explore nature with the Wonder Wagon. Meet the local fire and rescue team. Learn about the local

history of Laurel Hill Park.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 1

**Quarterly Recycling Day.** 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Northside Property Yard, 600 Mill St., NE, Vienna. Got junk? Get rid of it the eco-friendly way at the next Quarterly Recycling Day! Town residents can drop off scrap metal, electronics, and auto waste for recycling. You can also drop off one-time use and rechargeable batteries for bulk recycling. To learn more visit [www.viennava.gov/recycling](http://www.viennava.gov/recycling).

## SATURDAY/JUNE 1

**Inner Gardens Solo Show Artist Talk.** 11 a.m. At Atrium Gallery, McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Inner Gardens is a collection of Abol Bahadori's latest paintings that delve into the depths of the human psyche, exploring the intricate landscapes of our inner worlds. Each piece invites viewers to embark on a journey of introspection and discovery through colors, surreal simulation of perspective, and intuitive abstract marks. The reception will provide an opportunity to engage with the artwork, meet fellow art enthusiasts, and enjoy light refreshments in a welcoming atmosphere.

## SUNDAY/JUNE 2

**"Dementia Man, An Existential Journey," Performance & Conversation.** 2-3:30 p.m. At McLean Governmental Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean. Written and performed by Sam Simon, a lawyer, husband, grandparent, and proud McLean native who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease in 2021, "Dementia Man" is a play like no other. Simon takes the stage as a man facing cognitive decline, a broken medical system and a personal and family challenge. Simon has traveled the country performing his award-winning play hoping to bring attention to the disease and other forms of dementia. This free performance is not to be missed.

## THURSDAY/JUNE 6

**"Graduation" Movie.** 1 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. (Romania; Directed Cristian Mungiu). Shown in Romanian with English subtitles. A father compromises his integrity to assure his daughter's college admission. Blending rigorous naturalism with the precise construction of a thriller, this drama sheds light on the high stakes and ethical complexities of life in contemporary Romania. Cannes Film Festival award winner.

## JUNE 6-23

**Postcards from Ihatov, adapted and directed by Natsu Onoda Power.** At 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road Tysons. Adapted from the works of Kenji Miyazawa, including the classic "Night on the Galactic Railroad." This spellbinding tale of friendship, self-discovery, and the transcendent power of imagination takes audiences on a cosmic journey through the stars. This world-premiere production of visual theater is bursting with imagination and spectacle that the whole family can enjoy. Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 2 and 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: Tickets: \$25-\$55 general admission, \$15 students, educators, and military. Purchase online at [www.1ststage.org](http://www.1ststage.org) or call 703-854-1856.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 8

**Frank Lloyd Wright Birthday Celebration.** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Celebrate the life and work of Frank Lloyd Wright! Enjoy an open house tour of the Pope-Leighey House and learn about the history of the house and its designer. In the yard, enjoy activities related to Wright's life and work, snap a photo wearing his iconic style of hat, and grab a celebratory bite of cake. Cost is \$15 for adults and \$5 for students (K-12), 5 and under are free.



# ENTERTAINMENT

## SATURDAY/JUNE 8

**Clifton 5K Run.** 6-9 p.m. In the Town of Clifton. A family-friendly race with 5K and one-mile options. Live music, refreshments and an awards ceremony follow at the Red Barn near Clifton's Main Street area. Cost is 5K:\$25 per person; 1-Mile Fun Run:\$20 per person. Email: [clifton5k@verizon.net](mailto:clifton5k@verizon.net). Visit the website: <https://www.facebook.com/cliftonva.org>.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 8

**Paws on the Plaza.** 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Tysons Corner Center. Tysons Corner Center hosts its 3rd annual Paws on the Plaza, sponsored by Beck's Pet Care. Bring your pups out for a day of activities celebrating our furry friends!

11-4 p.m.: Enjoy a dog park and splash pad, beer bar (for the humans), pet vendors, dog food truck, rescues with adoptable dogs, free photobooth and caricatures, giveaways and more! New this year: "Confidence Course" run by the expert trainers at Becky's Pet Care.

4-6 p.m.: Keep the paw-ty going with yappy hour! The dog park will remain open for you to grab a beverage and a bite from one of our plaza restaurants. Sing or howl along to the live music.

Participating vendors include K9 Mastery, Woofbowl, Dogtopia, Pet Grand Hotel, and more. This event is open to the public and free to attend.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 8

**Three Stars of "Hairspray" Reunite.**

7 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. The Alden at the McLean Community Center (MCC) presents "Mama, I'm a Big Girl Now"—The Three Leading Ladies of "Hairspray" with Tony Award-winner Marissa Jaret Winokur ("Dancing with the Stars") and Tony nominees Kerry Butler ("Xanadu") and Laura Bell Bundy ("Legally Blonde") for a single performance. Tickets are \$75, \$60 for students and seniors and \$50 for MCC district residents. VIP tickets, which include preferred seating and a Meet and Greet with the performers, are \$100, \$85 for seniors and students and \$75 for MCC district residents.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 8

**30th Annual Tinner Hill Music Festival.** 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. At Cherry Hill Park, 312 Park Ave., Falls Church. It's a day with GoGo, R&B, jazz, soul-quenching gospel, funk, reggae, Afro Bahian rhythm and more. World renown musicians from New Orleans and Alabama, along with those calling the DMV home will have the audience singing and dancing during this memorable day and night. There will also be fun activities for children and adults, great food, craft beer and beverages. The Festival is the premier charity event for the Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation whose mission is to raise awareness of the civil rights history of Falls Church through music, workshops, theater, murals, and other events. The Festival Lineup includes: George

Porter Jr. and Runnin' Partners • Blind Boys of Alabama • The Blackbyrds • JoGo Project • See-I Band • Batalá Washington • Ms. Niki's Music Class • Dance Party with DJ Bill & DJ Bev • Emcees: Lady Myrrh and Texas Fred, the Zydeco Cowboy.

## SUNDAY/JUNE 9

**T-TRAK Model Train Show.** 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Tabletop N gauge model trains (T-TRAK) will be on display and running at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5, \$6 for special events. Seniors and military (active and retired), \$4. <http://www.fairfax-station.org>, <http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR>, 703-425-9225.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 9

**Fairfax Symphony presents Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue at 100!** 4 p.m. Jeffrey Biegel, piano. George Mason University Center for the Arts - Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Pianist Jeffrey Biegel takes you on a musical journey celebrating the Gershwin Centennial and unveiling the regional premiere of Peter Boyer's "Red, White, and Blue" for piano and orchestra. The piece is part of a national campaign established by Biegel to premiere the work in all 50 states, as a way for our country to "...to join hands through music, despite all the divisions

and differences." Biegel said of his vision... "why not celebrate being an American — celebrating our diversity through unity and celebrating "Rhapsody in Blue" with a new "Rhapsody." This concert of musical discovery also features the brilliance of Amy Beach's "Gaelic" Symphony, premiered by the Boston Symphony in 1896, and was the first symphony published by an American woman composer. Join us for an unforgettable season finale honoring the past and celebrating the future of American classical music.

Tickets start at \$49. To purchase tickets online, visit <https://www.fairfaxsymphony.org> or by phone at 703-993-2787.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 15

**Third Annual Bull Run Juneteenth Commemoration.** 3 p.m. At Bull Run Regional Park, Atlantis Waterpark, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. Don't miss the Third Annual Bull Run Juneteenth Commemoration, brought to you by Fairfax County NAACP and NOVA Parks. This event honors the largest pre-Civil War emancipation, celebrating the lives of the enslaved and their descendants at Bull Run Regional Park.

Experience: Reflections on Emancipation Inspiring words of hope from Bishop Brett Fuller Uplifting music Engaging stories of freedom for kids RSVP using the QR code or follow the link here: <https://ow.ly/pOmy-50RyKtS>

## SUNDAY/JUNE 16

**49th Annual Antique Car Show.** 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Father's Day is just around the corner, and there's no better way to celebrate than at the 49th Annual Sully Antique Car Show. This year's event promises a spectacular day filled with live entertainment, a variety of food vendors, an eclectic craft market, a bustling flea market, and, of course, hundreds of stunning antique cars. In addition to the automotive extravaganza, attendees will have the unique opportunity to explore the first level of the historic Sully house, adding a touch of history to your day of fun. Advance tickets are now available: \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$8 for children aged 5 to 15 years old. Don't miss out on being part of this cherished community tradition!

## SUNDAY/JUNE 23

**Mosaic Harmony 30th Anniversary.** 5 p.m. At Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, 4915 E. Campus Drive, Alexandria. Special Guest Artist Ralph Herndon. Mosaic Harmony is a community choir where people find love and acceptance regardless of color, religion, sexual orientation, or any other differences. We celebrate diversity and inclusion, sharing our message through the powerful medium of song, and inspiring our audiences to embrace all people.

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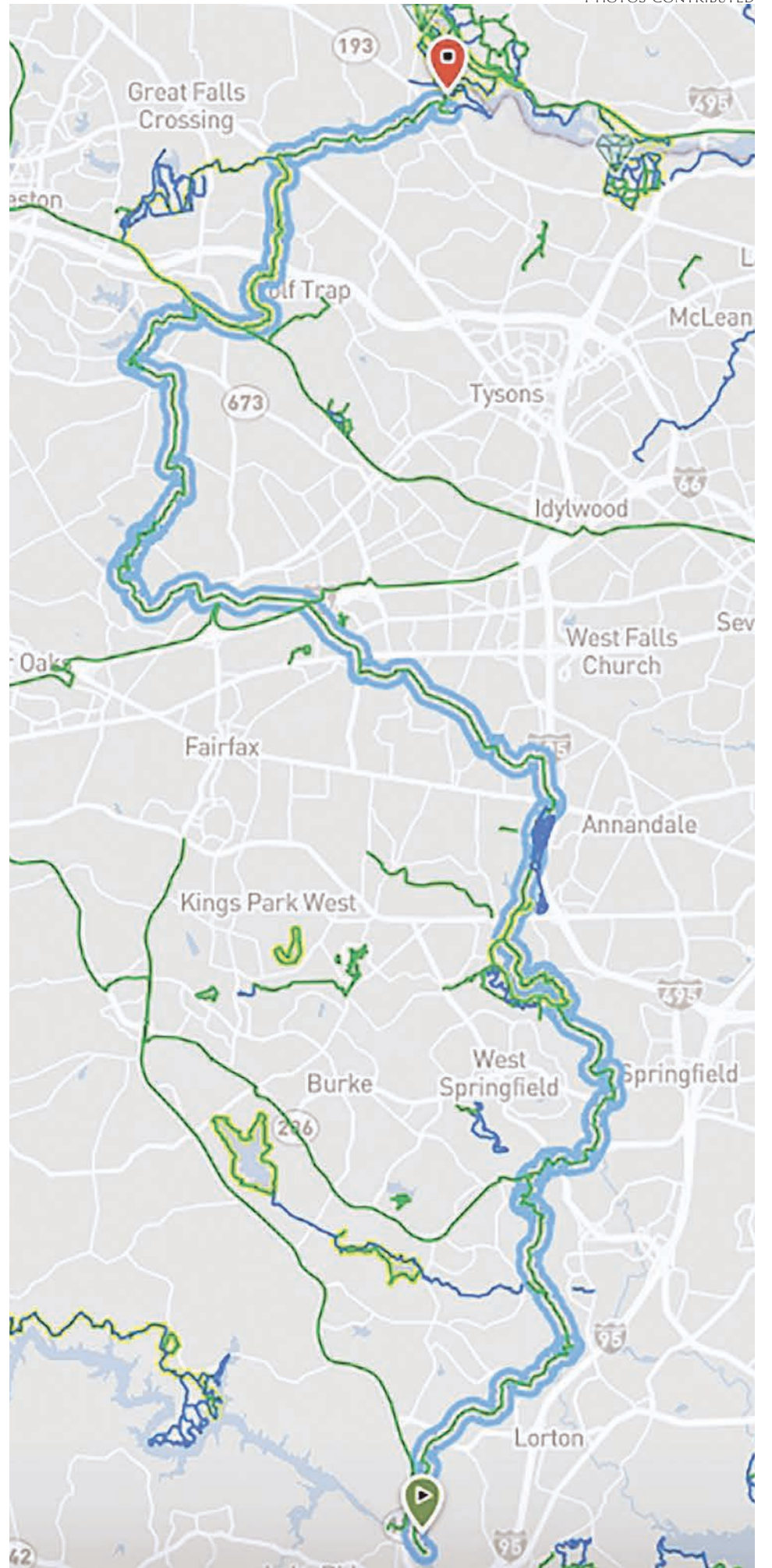
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The Cross County Trail crossing Accotink Creek in the Springfield area.



These trail markers are posted along the trail to guide the cyclists and hikers.

# National Trails Day

## County recognizes 10th anniversary of Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE CONNECTION

Although Fairfax County has many bike trails for family outings, commuting to work, or a scenic ride along the Potomac River, there's nothing like the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail to see the real Fairfax County.

On June 1, county officials and U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) are celebrating the Cross County Trail and the others in Fairfax County as a salute to National Trails Day.

"It connects several neighborhoods and offers the potential to be a foundational piece of the broader Northern Virginia trail network with the W&OD, the Mount Vernon and Four Mile Run Trails," said Joy Faunce, the Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling president. "The CCT is a significant contributor to the Fairfax County trail network," she added.

Parts of the trail are not for the casual rider though. The nearly 41-mile trail goes through stream valleys, crosses busy roads and puts the rider out in the woods with the birds and deer so it seems miles from the suburban landscape when in reality, it's just 18

## National Trails Day

In celebration of National Trails Day, join the Park Authority and Congressman Gerry Connolly for the 10th Anniversary of the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail and a ribbon cutting for the new bathroom facilities at the Laurel Hill Central Green on Saturday, June 1 from 9 - 11 a.m.

a short side-trail away.

On the northern end, the trail starts near Difficult Run in the Great Falls area, and the trail sets off in the woods, snaking along the creek for a while, giving the cyclist a quick feel for what may lie ahead for riders. Bikes with thin racing tires are not recommended for this part of the trail.

The trail goes under Leesburg Pike, still parallel to Difficult Run, across the Dulles Access Road, towards Lake Thoreau, and then south through Oakton. After crossing I-66, it follows Accotink Creek for miles through Wakefield Park, around Lake Accotink and through Springfield, along the Franconia-Springfield Parkway before going along the Pohick Stream Valley over to the Laurel Hill Golf Course and finally ends at Occoquan Regional Park.

### Trail Blazing

All this did not just happen without much planning and rerouting, that began in the late 1990s by hiking enthusiast Bill Niedringhaus, who noticed a nearly continuous stretch of publicly owned land across the county. At that time, Gerry Connolly was the



Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, and he supported the effort and introduced a resolution to create the trail in 1998. Construction of the trail began in the early 2000s and in 2014, the 40.5 mile trail was named after Connolly, the FCPA said.

Reporter Note: I biked the whole trail in

one day years ago when the internet was just in its infancy. I was dropped off in the morning at the trail's start near Difficult Run in the Great Falls area, armed with a paper map and determination. That evening, I arrived at the Occoquan River with a new view of the county and the value of planning a trip like that.



# School Board Adopts FY 2025 Budget

## Can't win 'em all.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

When it comes down to it, the newly tenured Fairfax County School Board, seated on Jan. 1, 2024, had, as R. Kyle McDaniel, a member at large, said, “a very interesting, long, deliberate budget cycle” this year.

At its meeting on May 23, the Fairfax County School Board voted to adopt Fairfax County Public Schools’ Fiscal Year 2025 Approved Budget, totaling \$3.7 billion. This represents a net increase of 6.6 percent, or \$232.2 million, above the FY 2024 adopted budget. Nearly 86 percent of the approved budget is targeted for instruction.

When presenting the budget approval motion. Dr. Ricardy Anderson, representing the Mason District, said budget approval usually provokes “strong reactions and emotions,” with everyone strongly believ-

ing and articulating that school budget “reflects our values.”

“We must acknowledge the disappointment with this budget for this board ... Our full request has not been granted,” Anderson said. She emphasized that further delays caused by the lack of a governor-approved budget created additional chaos for the board.

Anderson noted that the board passed a “robust budget resolution” earlier this year; its purpose was to communicate the board’s priorities with Superintendent Michelle Reid. Priorities included the “development of a “student student-focused, equitable, needs-based proposed budget for this year aligned to the Division’s Strategic Plan and inclusive of the board’s priorities to focus on FCPS workforce, recruitment, and retention to include competitive compensation with consideration for differentiated pay for hard-to-fill positions, such as teachers in Title One schools and special education teachers.”

Kyle McDaniel, member at large, second-

ed the budget approval motion. He said creating a school budget required a delicate balance between competing needs since there are not unlimited resources. In Virginia, school boards do not have the authority to raise their own funding, “adding an additional layer of complexity,” he said.

McDaniel paraphrased and read an excerpt of a letter from the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers union, which voiced support for the budget: “They believe this approach is essential for maintaining unity and morale among our dedicated staff. By remaining steadfast and united, we can continue to provide the best possible education for our students and maintain a positive, collaborative work environment for all staff members.”

McDaniel said he trusted the teachers’ associations and “the folks who made this budget.”

“I trust our superintendent. I fully recognize I am one of 12. I don’t always get what I want. Sometimes I do, sometimes I don’t. Is this budget everything I want? No. But it’s

also not everything everybody else wants. That’s life, and I’m happy to support it.”

The adopted budget includes a 4 percent compensation increase for all employees and maintains the mid-year 2 percent compensation increase for all employees, which the School Board approved in January. It also contains funds to keep class sizes consistent with projected enrollment increases, continue key multiyear initiatives and provide resources to support student well-being outside the classroom.

According to FCPS News, the following budget items will be priorities in the FY 2024 Year End Budget: Thirty additional minutes for extended day contracts for special education teachers; funding for the ERFC (Enter Retirement Feeling Confident) Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP); and one-time funding for an expansion of athletics, including boys’ volleyball and girls’ wrestling.

Watch the FCPS School Board Meeting with Budget Approval at <https://www.youtube.com/live/GD6COX4Y4dE?t=2272s>.



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Scott’s Run Nature Preserve has reopened.

## Scott’s Run Nature Preserve Ropens

“One of the most beautiful, alluring, and remarkable parts of the Fairfax County park system,” Scott’s Run Nature Preserve, opened just in time for Memorial Day weekend, according to the Park Authority. Scott’s Run is located at 7400 Georgetown Pike in McLean, on the Potomac River’s bank. The Park Authority posted on Facebook that an emergency clean-up effort involving a blocked county wastewater facility prompted the park’s closure for several weeks to allow for repairs and maintenance service.

For additional information about the park, authorized activities (dogs on leashes), prohibited activities (no coolers, no swimming, no wading and no boating), and parking restrictions in adjacent communities, go to the Scott’s Run Nature Preserve website. Arrive early since the park fills rapidly and parking is limited. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/scotts-run>

— MERCIA HOBSON

## Donations Benefit Veterans Relief Fund

VFW Post Auxiliary Post 8469, Fairfax Station distributed free Buddy Poppies for Memorial Day 2024 to be worn as a remembrance of veterans who gave their lives in the service of our country. “The Post also collected donations that go into our Relief Fund,” said Post Commander Mac McCarl. He explained that donated funds are specifically used to help veterans in need, irrespective of whether they are in the VFW or not.

— MERCIA HOBSON



HOTO CONTRIBUTED

Pat McGinty



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Karen Cosgrove, Junior Vice Commander VFW Post 8469 with her daughter, Isobel, and son, Jason



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Marshall Snyder, chairman of the Relief Fund and Post Commander Mac McCarl offer people free remembrance poppies.



# COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

## Activists Say No to Tysons Casino



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Despite the temperature at 92 degrees, and blazing sun, Pam Rao of Vienna puts her new 'No Casino' T-shirt over the one she is wearing at Viva! Vienna! Rao opposes any facility with gambling, whether stand alone, built near, or combined with other establishments and especially not in Tysons.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Vince Modugno of Vienna, holds the 'No Casino' bumper sticker at the 'No Casino' booth at Viva!Vienna and says, "I'm in favor of anything that protects the working people." Beside him is Great Falls Citizens Association activist, Jennifer Falcone with Sally Horn, chair of the Greater Tysons Citizens Association.

## General Assembly Likely To Add Fairfax to Localities Eligible to Host a Casino

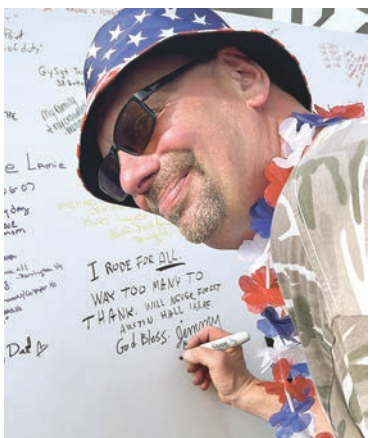
Virginia Senate Bill 675 on Casino gaming adds Fairfax County to the list of localities eligible to host a casino in the Commonwealth. In 2025, SB 675 will return to the Virginia General Assembly.

During the Viva! Vienna! event on Sunday and Monday, May 26–27, the No Tysons Casino vendor booth was a highly visited booth with a constant stream of people stopping at the tent.

Jennifer and Peter Falcone, activists from the Great Falls Citizens Association, and Sally Horn, chair of the Greater Tysons Citizens Association, shared their concerns with county residents, and many added their names to lists of those opposed to a casino in Tysons. People took advantage of the free t-shirts and bumper stickers that announced "NO TYSONS CASINO" in capital letters.

While efforts during the 2024 session of the Virginia General Assembly to kill bill SB 675 with a motion by Virginia Sen. Jennifer Boysko (38th District) to "pass by indefinitely" failed in a 9-to-5 vote with one abstention, the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee accepted the Senate Resources Sub-committee recommendation and voted to "hold over" Senate Bill 675 for the next legislative session in 2025.

Jeff McKay, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, stressed in a letter dated Jan. 26, 2024, to leaders in the Virginia General Assembly that the county did not seek authority to hold a referendum to be added to the list of eligible casino hosts. However, McKay has yet to say he will oppose a casino in Tysons. He did assert that the county would need to get a better split than first offered.



MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION  
Jimmy Cirrito, owner of Jimmy's Old Town signs the canvas.

For countless Sundays of Memorial Day weekends past, Jimmy Cirrito, owner of Jimmy's Tavern in the Town of Herndon, has led a Rolling to Remember motorcycle convoy to Washington, D.C. He does so to support bikers who want to honor and remember those who sacrificed their lives in service to the United States Armed Forces.

This year, when the bikers returned for drinks, food, and camaraderie, joined by family and friends, old and new, a large canvas stood prominently on an easel next to the beer booth.

A sign read, "Tell Jimmy why you rode today in one word; give him a sentence or two about who you are honoring, and say anything you want." This is the untold story of Memorial Day 2024, Jimmy's way.

— MERCIA HOBSON

## Why Did You Ride on Memorial Day?



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The crowd stands as the band plays, "God Bless the USA."

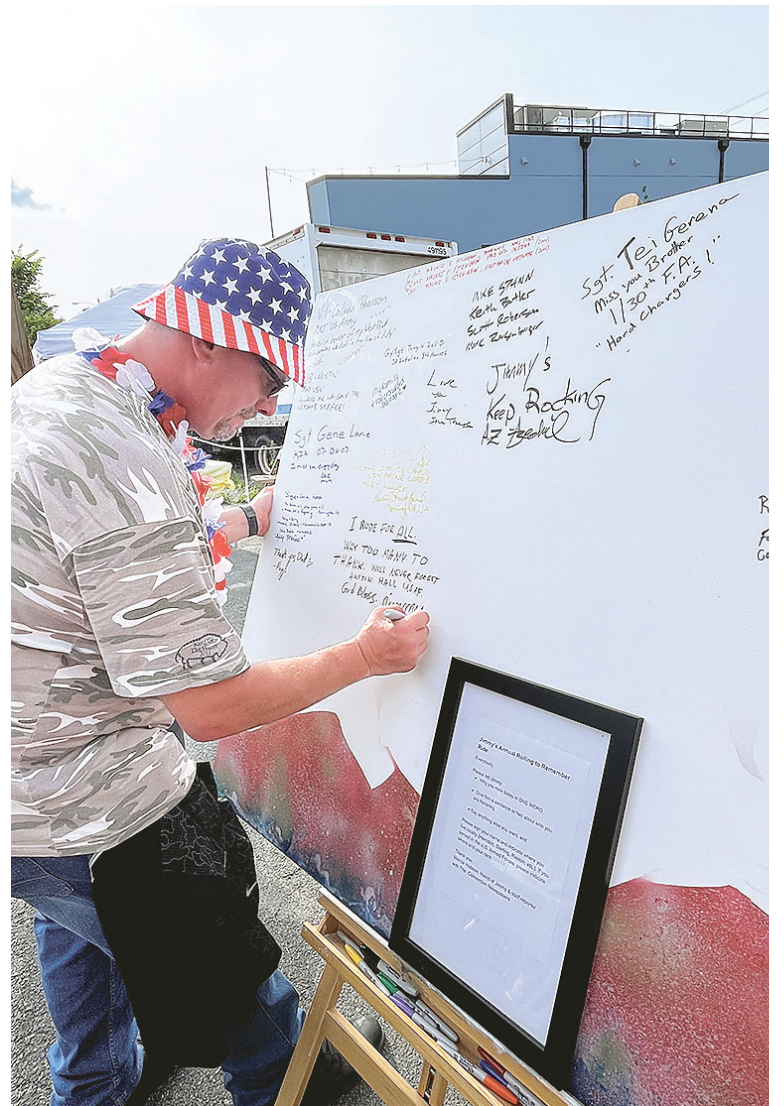


PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Jimmy Cirrito, owner of Jimmy's Old Town signs the canvas depicting mountains and seas in red, white and blue.



# VIVA! VIENNA! COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

## Rotary Club of Vienna Presents Viva! Vienna! and Memorial Day Service & Celebration

The Rotary Club of Vienna presented Viva! Vienna! over the three-day Memorial Day weekend 2024. With rides, games, and food, a Brewfest on Mill Street, two stages, a food court, and vendor booths, the club offered something for everyone. All proceeds from the event went to charity.

On Monday, the club presented its Memorial Day Service & Celebration. The community paid their respects and honored “American heritage by remembering the country’s dead of all wars ... These heroes gave their last full measure of devotion,” according to the Rotary Club of Vienna.

— MERCIA HOBSON



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Chipped ice is a treat for Buttons at Viva! Vienna! offered by her human, Jennie Melchior.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Parents and children check out the food court at Viva! Vienna!



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The merry-go-round is perfect for the not-so-brave-at-heart



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Waiting for the ride to open can seem like a long time for little ones.



PHOTO BY KATE PETERSEN

Madison Madrigals Sing “America the Beautiful”



PHOTO BY KATE PETERSEN

Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, Winsome Earle-Sears



PHOTO BY KATE PETERSEN

Brigadier General Kyle Robinson, U.S. Air Force



PHOTO BY KATE PETERSEN

Vienna Town Mayor Linda Colbert points to Air Force Academy-bound Thomas Adamson.



PHOTO BY KATE PETERSEN

President of the Rotary Club of Vienna, Mark Rogoff



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**-Werner Heisenberg**

## Announcements

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## Legals

### ABC LICENSE

Natty & Boom Group Inc trading as Sorn Thai, 6224E Old Dominion Dr., McLean, Fairfax County, Virginia 22101-4217. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Restaurant Beer, Wine, and Mixed Beverage license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Kamol Sripechpong, President. 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](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or (800) 552-3200.

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## Legals

### ABC LICENSE

SAK Tysons Hotel, LLC trading as Staybridge Suites (Tysons/McLean), 6845 Old Dominion Drive, McLean, Fairfax County, VA 22101-3725. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Hotel Limited license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. VIPUL KAPILA, 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](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or (800) 552-3200.

## TAX NOTICE CITY OF FAIRFAX

### REAL ESTATE TAX PAYMENTS ARE DUE

Real Estate tax bills have been mailed and are due  
**Friday, June 21, 2024**

We continue to receive a high number of tax complaints that either no paper tax bill was received, or that mailed payments did not make it to city hall.

**When paying, please consider using our 24-hour drop box located at 10455 Armstrong Street (at the front of City Hall, next to the flag poles) in lieu of the USPS. (Checks only, no Cash)**

### LATE PAYMENT PENALTY

To avoid incurring a 10%, \$10 minimum, late payment penalty and interest of 10% per annum, **payment in full must be received or postmarked by close-of-business on Friday, June 21, 2024**

Taxes may be paid online, by mail, or in-person to the City Treasurer's Office (City Hall, Suite 234) 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (excluding holidays)

### IMPORTANT

**Even if you do not receive a physical bill, to avoid late payment penalties you are still responsible for requesting a copy and remitting payment by Friday, June 21, 2024**

For Additional Information, please check the City website at [www.FairfaxVA.gov](http://www.FairfaxVA.gov) or call (703) 385-7900



# HERNDON: COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

## Post 184 in the Town of Herndon, Memorial Day Observance

The Town of Herndon held its Memorial Day Observance at Chestnut Grove Cemetery on Monday, May 27.

— MERCIA HOBSON



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

David Womack, American Legion Post 184 Herndon-Reston, gives remarks.

### BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 14

dementia. Meetings are gently facilitated. For more information and to get the Zoom link, contact Jack Tarr at jtarr5@verizon.net or 703-821-6838.

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, www.havenofnova.org or havenofnova@verizon.net.

Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group Meets from 1:30-3 p.m. the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

#### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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, or visit www.alnv.org.

Operation Paws for Homes, a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See www.ophrescue.org for information and all volunteer opportunities.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

At Chestnut Grove Cemetery, Mary Pickett of Herndon stops at the parade flag of her uncle, John Peter McCarter, United States Army, deceased in 1974.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

From left, Town of Herndon Councilmember Keven LeBlanc, Mayor Sheila Olem, and Vice Mayor Clark Hedrick

## Did You Hear That Other Shoe Drop?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Neither did I. But I sure felt it. The pain that I felt in my left side was somewhat reminiscent of the pain I felt 15 1/2 years ago – in my left side, when my cancer symptoms first presented. After a few days of left side pain, something unexpected happened: The pain migrated from my left side/ribcage to my right side/ribcage. By the weekend, more symptoms. I remember sitting on the couch at home watching television and not being able to bend over to stand up. Then when I couldn't expand my lungs to take a breath, I knew something was wrong. My symptoms weren't moderating, they were getting worse. Never a good sign. And so, we went to the Emergency Room on Jan. 1st no less. The rest, as you regular readers know, ad nauseum, is that yours truly became "Kenny with cancer."

Recently, that pain returned. A couple of days later, with the pain not subsiding, I realized, given my cancer history, that I should see my primary care physician and have him assess my symptoms. Which I did. He directed me to have an X-Ray. The results of which were inconclusive. And so, the next step in the diagnostic ladder was ordered: a CT scan. (As a cancer patient, my orders are always "Stat," meaning immediately, if not sooner.) The next day I received the CT results from the previous afternoon's scan and sure enough, unfortunately, the cancer had spread. Where it spread, and how much it spread were not really addressed by the radiologists. On these reports, released automatically, often before even my doctor sees the results, are replete with medical jargon describing what the scan shows. It certainly tells a story. However, it's not the whole story. (Certainly not one I understand, anyway). The whole story and/or a more detailed explanation of the scan comes when the oncologist follows up and summarizes the results. Six days later, including a weekend and I'm still waiting for that call, a call that the oncologist emailed me would be coming Thurs. or Fri. of last week. It's now Tues. Still no call. Certainly I realize I'm not his only patient, and I have been down this road for over 15 years, nevertheless; as much I compartmentalize these kinds of delays, and try to roll with the punches, the truth is, returning to the original scene of the crime, so to speak, has given me cause for concern. Not that I've ever been in remission, but neither have I been "spreading" cancer though my original characterization of stage IV which meant the cancer was inoperable and it had metastasized (meaning spread). Yet, here I am, a cancer survivor going on year 16. The papillary thyroid cancer, stage IV, had spread from my thyroid into my lungs at the beginning of this journey when the pain first manifested (see paragraph one). Which time has clarified as a slow-moving thyroid cancer, rather than the non-small cell lung stage IV, originally diagnosed. Given the results and language of the radiologist's report - that I can understand, it appears that the party (relative calm and control of my initial cancer diagnosis) is over. However, it's only speculation since I've not received a call back from my oncologist. Granted, I have some experience in this cancer department, but I learned a long time ago to wait until I've spoken to the oncologist and not overreact to facts not yet in evidence. And so here I sit waiting, semi patiently. Don't get me wrong, I'm not in a hurry to hear bad news. But I would like to hear something so I can move forward already. Because for the moment, I feel stuck. And 'stuck' is the wrong place for a cancer patient to be.

However, to be honest, I've been waiting/anticipating this day ever since I was first diagnosed back in Feb., '09. It was early March of that same year when I received my first of many infusions (I've estimated that I've been infused over 100 times). And after every quarterly assessment of my disease (in coordination with a CT scan), I always took good news in stride, never getting too high or too low because subconsciously I was preparing for this day. And this day is when the cancer begins to spread. Never a promising sign. (Neither is not hearing back from your oncologist in a timely manner.) It's easy to speculate – in the wrong direction when you've not received the actual details. But that's what cancer does. In addition to the physical damage, there's emotional damage. It's been my experience that cancer changes you emotionally, in ways that you never anticipated. Things matter – or they don't, it's difficult to know how you'll feel from one day to the next. But I always felt there was a next day so the stress of it was manageable, sort of. Now, however, it's been 15+ years since I was first diagnosed/"prognosed" and I can't help wondering if I've finally overstayed my welcome, if you know what I mean? Cancer is very often a killer. Who am I to beat the odds? I've always thought that the longer I live with cancer, the closer I'll be to not living with it. And I don't mean a cure, I mean its resurgence. And "spread" is very much 'resurgence.' It's a bad sign for sure. I just hope it's not a fatal one.

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





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**SOLD!**



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**SOLD!**



6709 Pine Creek Court  
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**SOLD!**



1562 Forest Villa Ln  
McLean, 22101  
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**SOLD!**



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

**SOLD!**



1639 Macon Street  
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