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Walking For World Peace

PAGE 13

Buddhist monks from the Thai Buddhist Vajiradhammapadip Temple in New York stop in Vienna, walking from Key West and finishing at Niagara Falls.

Globetrotters Deliver Award in Lorton

PAGE 6

Ascent of a Woman Commander

PAGE 8

Marking Juneteenth

PAGE 10

ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 14 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 18

PHOTO POSTED BY TOWN OF VIENNA, VA - GOVERNMENT

JUNE 5-11, 2024

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



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PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



The American Legion and VFW Color Guard.



Veterans saluting during the national anthem.



From left are Mac McCarl, Eric Parkhurst and Marcus Kuiper.

‘We Remember Those Who Sacrificed Their Tomorrows’

Fairfax City pays tribute to the fallen on Memorial Day.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

VFW Post 8469 Chaplain Marcus Kuiper gave the opening prayer at Fairfax City’s annual Memorial Day ceremony, last Monday, May 27. Held at American Legion Post 177, it was jointly hosted by both posts and attended by more than 100 people.

“We pray for those who gave their last, full measure of devotion – those who courageously laid down their lives for the cause of freedom,” said Kuiper. “Hear our prayers for those who put the welfare of others above their own and made the ultimate sacrifice.”

Attendees included Del. David Bulova (D-11th), Sen. Saddam Salim (D-37th), Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid, Fairfax City Mayor Catherine Read and City Councilmembers Billy Bates, Kate Doyle Feingold, Jeff Greenfield and Tom Ross. Mac McCarl, commander of VFW Post 8469, was the emcee.

“Memorial Day honors and mourns U.S. www.connectionnewspapers.com



Catherine Read speaking about POWs and MIAs.



Del. David Bulova



Sen. Saddam Salim



Sheriff Stacey Kincaid



Billy Bates



Jeff Greenfield

military personnel who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces,” said McCarl. “Shortly, we’ll read the names of all the Fairfax County fallen, as a sign of respect. Each of those names was a real person, with the same hopes and dreams that you all have. But they couldn’t see them through because of the sacrifice they made for this nation. Think of that as we read those names.”

He also mentioned the red paper poppies each attendee received and how they became famous during WWII in the poem, “In Flanders Fields,” referencing the red poppies growing over the soldiers’ graves. “It resulted in the poppy becoming a widespread symbol of remembrance,” said McCarl. “And I ask you on Memorial Day to wear them proudly as a sign of respect and talk about

their meaning with others.”

Bulova said words can’t express his deep gratitude to those who died in defense of America’s freedom, but he was humbled and grateful to speak at the ceremony. “This year our nation is celebrating an important milestone in our history,” he said. “On July 18, 1774, almost 250 years ago, 25 brave Fairfax County residents signed the Fairfax Resolves. They included George Washington, George Mason and 23 others whose names – like Gilpin, Gunnell and West – we see on streets today.

“The document represented a watershed moment for our nation. Not only did it reject the idea of the British Crown’s superiority, but it was one of the very first documents – right here in Fairfax – to lay out our basic,

Constitutional rights and also to condemn the institution of slavery.”

Bulova noted that, in 2026, America will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which declares, “All men are created equal ... with [rights to] life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” Yet while it was brave at that time for people to sign that document, he said, “They’re words on paper. What makes them powerful is that people were willing to fight and die for them. These words became the soul of the nation, inspiring generation after generation.”

“Today we thank everyone who fought to make these words real,” continued Bulova.

Poignant Stories of Wartime Bravery and Heart

Fairfax Councilmembers talk about America's heroes.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

During Fairfax City's Memorial Day ceremony, last Monday, May 27, two of the most poignant stories about America's fallen veterans were told by Councilmembers Kate Doyle Feingold and Tom Ross:

Allen Hoe

"As a 13th-generation veteran of military service, this event is very important to my family," said Kate Doyle Feingold, who served in the Marines. She then spoke about Allen Hoe, drafted to serve as a combat medic in Vietnam when he was 19. He returned home safely, but tragedy still struck his family.

"In 2005, his oldest son, Nainoa, was a first lieutenant and infantry platoon leader in Iraq," said Doyle Feingold. "He was leading a foot patrol when he was killed by sniper fire. He and his wife were only married for seven months, and she was a widow at 21."

Meanwhile, Hoe, his father, spent much of his life honoring slain service members and kept in touch with the mothers of people he'd witnessed die in Vietnam. A few months after his son's death, Hoe was asked to travel to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., for an event honoring Army nurses. He did so, wearing on his chest a button with Nainoa's photo on it.



Kate Doyle Feingold



Tom Ross

"He brought white leis with him from his home state [of Hawaii]," said Doyle Feingold. "As he walked up to the wall, he saw a female Army nurse in uniform and offered her a lei. As he placed it over her shoulder, she saw the picture of his son and recognized him. She then told Mr. Hoe that she was the combat nurse who was with him when he passed away."

"Not wanting her to feel guilty in any way, he told her his son was a warrior who knew what he was getting into and was willing to make the sacrifice. Mr. Hoe attributes this chance encounter at the wall as one of the miracles at the Vietnam Memorial. And I encourage everyone to learn about some of the service members we've lost."

Battle of Leyte Gulf

Ross, an Air Force veteran, spoke about the Battle of Leyte Gulf – the largest naval battle in modern history – fought in the Philippines in October 1944. More than 200,000 servicemen

and hundreds of ships fought for four days in an area encompassing more than 100,000 square miles.

"There were terrible battles; the Japanese were trying to stop American troops from invading the Philippines," explained Ross, who then related a particular incident. "One ship was captained by a Native American from Oklahoma," he said. "And he took his destroyer and went after Japan's gigantic battleships to stop them from destroying U.S. aircraft carriers and impeding Gen. MacArthur's invasion."

"He knew it was suicidal, but he and his crew of close to 400 men went head on with the largest battleship. Ultimately, they were destroyed and sunk, and about half the crew was thrown into the water – men of all ages and backgrounds, wounded and grasping for life. There were men who'd fought on the

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



At noon, veterans raised the flag from half staff to the top of the flagpole.

front line with the guns, men who'd supported them, as well as the cooks, stewards and maintenance people."

For more than 20 hours, they were all in the ocean together. "Many perished, some survived," said Ross. "But those we lost there – and in every other war in history – we remember today for their bravery, courage and for being one people together. May we carry that message with us out of today's event – that we are one nation, one people and we are all in this together to preserve the way of life we benefit from today. We're grateful for those who've served, and we commemorate their memories. May we never forget."

Fairfax City Pays Tribute to the Fallen on Memorial Day

FROM PAGE 3

"And we especially remember those who sacrificed their tomorrows and the possibilities that came with [them]." He said their weddings never took place, their memories weren't made, and their grandchildren never existed. All were replaced by empty seats at dinner tables.

"They did that so we could live in peace and live out our nation's promise and possibilities," said Bulova. "While we can never repay them, we can honor them. May God bless and watch over them."

Salim called Memorial Day a time to pay tribute to those who've "laid down their lives to protect our freedoms and ensure our safety. Let us never forget those brave soldiers who gave everything for our nation. Let their memories live on in our hearts and actions, and may we honor their sacrifice not just today, but every single day."

Mayor Read said the pain of America's POWs (Prisoners of War) and MIAs and their families, throughout history, must also be recognized. "MIA – Missing in Action, presumed dead – there are so many of our



Back row, from left, Veterans Jeff White, Ahsan Nasar and Tom Ciarula waiting to read the names of the fallen. Front row, from left, are Eric Parkhurst, Marcus Kuiper and bellringer Karen Cosgrove, an Air Force veteran.

military personnel lying in jungles and forests, lost at sea or on remote islands in the Pacific," she said. "And their families don't have the closure of knowing where they are, or what their last moments were like."

She also acknowledged the role of wom-

en who've supported the military since the Revolutionary War but haven't been honored for their service like men have. "Now women are losing their lives in airplanes and on battlefields, like their male counterparts, who've served and been recognized all along," said Read.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Residents with hands on hearts during the national anthem.

"But there were women who served in Vietnam and were probably some of the last people our soldiers and sailors ever saw in their last moments on earth. So I appreciate the fact that we're starting now to call out their names – sadly, among those who've lost their lives. And it's an important ritual

SEE MEMORIAL DAY, PAGE 16
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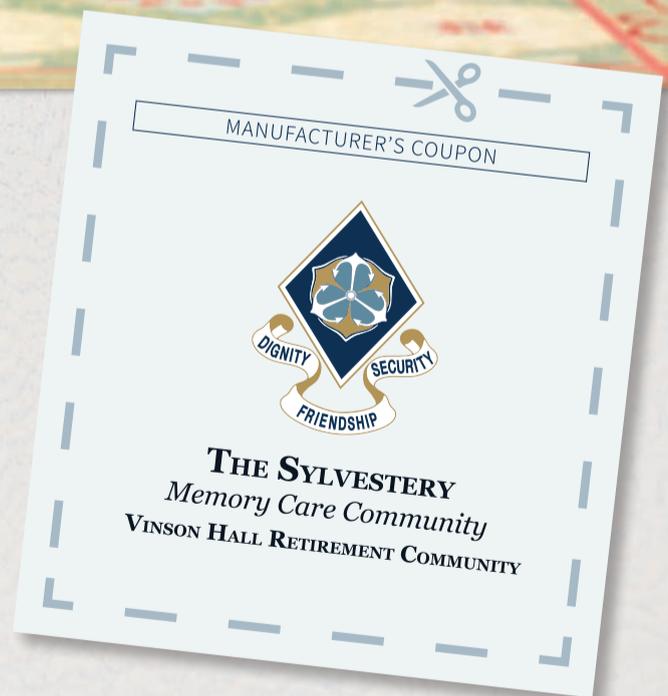
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Students in Lorton Win Praise From Harlem Globetrotters

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



The students of Laurel Hill Elementary School had a good time making the basketball video.

School basketball court turned into 'Court of Creativity' in Lorton.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The students of Laurel Hill Elementary School in Lorton put their ideas together to win the “Court of Creativity,” contest that involves basketball, creativity and the Harlem Globetrotters. On Monday, June 3, the Globetrotters came out to the school to present the award in person, along with the trick basketball antics that have made them famous over the last 100 years.

According to the contest parameters, each entry demonstrated the power of collaboration, creativity,

and sportsmanship. The students are glad to have learned these qualities with the project.

The Laurel Hill students let loose on their video with fancy dribbling, long shots and even the old bucket full of shredded paper splashed at the camera, like it was water – a traditional gag the Globetrotters have used through the years. In the end, Laurel Hill Elementary School was named Grand Prize Winner in this year’s creativity contest. “Court of Creativity,” encourages students at elementary schools to share how they can be creative in a way that combines education the Harlem Globetrotters and Jersey Mike’s Subs, the corpo-

rate message read. They all feasted on Jersey Mike’s food too.

The music on the video was “Sweet Georgia Brown,” a classic tune the Globetrotters have used through the years while they spin the ball on one finger, dribble through the legs, and make unbelievable shots from just about anywhere on the court. It’s an old jazz song dating back to 1925 that came out right before the Globetrotters were formed a year later and it seems to have stuck.

In 1926, The Harlem Globetrotters basketball team surprisingly won the World Basketball Championship in 1940 by beating the Chicago Bruins so people started taking them seriously. In 1948 and 1949, the Globetrotters went on to beat the World Champion Minneapolis Lakers of the NBA. The leg-



High fives for all.

endary Wilt Chamberlain, a basketball Hall of Famer, played a full season with the Globetrotters in 1958-59. In the 1970s a Saturday morning cartoon show was based

on the Globetrotters. Off the court, the organization remains steadfast in its commitment to be “Ambassadors of Goodwill,” and their visit to Laurel Hill expressed that attitude.



The students gathered in the gym to see the Globetrotters.



It was a court of creativity in Lorton.

ROUNDUPS

Juneteenth Ceremony, June 15, in Fairfax City

Fairfax City will hold a free Juneteenth celebration on Saturday, June 15, in Old Town Square, 10415 North St. Juneteenth National Independence Day is the day in 1865, June 19, when enslaved people near Galveston, Texas first learned they were free. President Abraham Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation freeing enslaved people on Jan. 1, 1863.

The opening ceremony is at 10 a.m. and will feature a variety of speakers, including Mayor Catherine Read, Deputy City Manager Valmarie Turner and Sen. Saddam Salim (D-37th). Then, from 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m., there'll be live entertainment on stage, as well as food and informational vendors, plus cookie decorating, crafts, facepainting and a balloon artist for children.

Police Investigating Death of Fairfax Man

A Fairfax man was shot and killed, May 21, in Fair Haven, and Fairfax County police are investigating his murder. They identified him as Arthur Edward Mann II, 38. Officers responded that morning at 6:07 a.m., to the Citgo station at 6241 Richmond Hwy. for a report of a shooting. There they found Mann suffering from a gunshot wound to the upper body.

He was declared dead at the scene. The suspect left before the police arrived. Preliminarily, detectives believe the suspect and victim were having a verbal argument at the gas pump before the shooting. They say the suspect then discharged a firearm, hitting the victim. The suspect is described as a Black man, approximately 5 feet, 6 inches and 40-50 years old, with short hair and a beard.

However, detectives are still investigating the circumstances that led up to the shooting and are asking the community in that area to review any home-surveillance footage to assist them. Anyone with information regarding this shooting is asked to call the Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 5.

Tips may also be submitted anonymously via Crime Solvers by phoning 703-246-4676 or going to <http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org/>.

Women Can Join Self-Defense Classes

Registration is now open for the Fairfax County Police Department's June self-defense classes for women. They'll be held June 11, 13, 18, 20, from 6:30-9:30 p.m., at the county Criminal Justice Academy, 14601 Lee Road in Chantilly, and participants must attend all four nights.

Women will learn essential crime-prevention and personal-safety information followed by hands-on, self-defense practice. Classes are free, but registration is required at <https://bit.ly/4bxVIIX>. If the classes are full, keep checking the link, in case someone cancels. Participants ages 13-17 must be accompanied by a registered, female parent/guardian.

Free Document Shredding on June 15

A free document shredding will be held Saturday, June 15, from 10 a.m.-noon, outside St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church, 6720 Union Mill Road in Clifton. (It's between Centreville High and Liberty Middle School).



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Meet Sully Police Commander, Major Jane Russell

Her distinguished law-enforcement career spans 27 years.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Major Jane Russell at her desk in the Sully District Police Station.



Major Jane Russell standing by some of her awards and a past police license plate.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Because of her dad's career in the Marines, Jane Russell grew up a "military brat," moving every two years. But when she went to college at JMU, she stayed in one place long enough to get a bachelor's degree in sociology. And it was there that she decided on a career in law enforcement.

"In college, I watched 'Cops' on TV and liked the idea of not being behind a desk and not knowing what my day would hold," she said. "I also wanted to interact with the community and take the bad guys off the streets."

Throughout her 27-year career as a police officer, Russell's done just that, and she's now the commander of the Sully District Station in Chantilly. Along the way, she's served in several different positions, beginning in 1997 as a patrol and K9 officer with the Herndon Police Department.

"Having a K9 was truly a highlight of my career," said Russell. "I got to take my dog, Tommy, to work and he was my buddy and lots of fun. But he was also fiercely protective, especially when it was just him, me and a bad guy in a building."

Eventually, though, she said, "I saw that the Fairfax County Police

Department had a larger playground and more opportunities to do a variety of things. However, it was a tough decision because I gave up my dog after having him for four years. And when I graduated from K9 school in 2002, we got the top dog-team award of our K9 training class."

Russell started with FCPD in 2004 in patrol at the Mason District Station – and in 2012, she was honored as its Officer of the Year for her overall performance. "I developed a sex-offender liaison program for the station," she said. "We wanted to make sure the officers knew where the sex offenders within our jurisdictions were living and working. I developed it for all the stations, and the officers were trained on the laws and requirements these people needed to abide by."

She also served on Mason's Neighborhood Patrol Unit. "Not only was it pro-active crime enforcement on our bikes, but we were also involved in public outreach," she explained. "I'd ride through Culmore – I speak Spanish – and developed friendships there, and it was really neat. When you're in a cruiser, people don't see your face; but on a bike, you get to interact on a more human level."

Russell was also promoted to sergeant in 2012 and went to the Franconia station. "I was still on

the streets, but in a supervisory role," she said. "Early on, I was on the scene of an officer-involved shooting – three of my officers discharged their firearms. And it was that day I realized what a significant responsibility I carried. That was a powerful experience. What I liked most about that job overall was that it was an opportunity to mentor new officers."

At the end of 2013, she was transferred to Internal Affairs as an investigator. "It was a tough job but important," she said. "I realized that we make mistakes; but as an agency, we have to police ourselves – and that's critical."

Afterward, said Russell, "I went on to have some fun. In November 2015, I briefly returned to Mason in patrol. Earlier, I'd put in to go to the Major Crimes Bureau and, after four months at Mason, I was selected for it."

There, she was a supervisor with the Child Exploitation Squad, dealing with cases involving child pornography, online solicitation of minors and human trafficking. And although the subject matter was difficult, she said, "You have a bond at work with your peers, but you have to leave the job at work and not take it home with you. I also had to monitor my people's mental health because that job can wear on you."

Furthermore, said Russell, "I

liked the camaraderie I had with those detectives. They were the most fun because you have to have some emotional levity and release. You deal with such sensitive, terrible and sad things, so you have to have that kind of outlet. Otherwise, the material would consume you."

Then in 2021, she was promoted to the commander rank of first lieutenant. "I hadn't put in for promotions before because I was having so much fun," she explained. The new rank sent her back to Mason – but this time, as assistant station commander – seeing things there from a totally different perspective than previously.

In that job, said Russell, "The focus is to interact with the commander and solve problems together, plus work closely with the officers – be present with them and make sure they have the tools they need. And I liked returning to leadership in a much bigger role."

She continued on that path when, in July 2021, she became assistant commander at the Criminal Justice Academy. She oversaw the mandatory in-service training for current officers – which included the driving track and firearms range – and supervised the new officers' basic training. "I enjoyed

their energy and excitement at going out and hitting the streets," said Russell. "That was a great job."

Next came a promotion to captain in March 2022, returning Russell to Internal Affairs – however, as the commander, instead of an investigator, as previously. "It was an important role in decision making," she said. "And it was an honor to be entrusted with it."

Then in July 2023, she became commander of the Violent Crimes Division, overseeing cold cases, homicides, sex crimes, child-abuse cases, domestic violence and armed robberies. "All my experience from when I was a supervisor at Major Crimes was valuable to me," she said. "And those were the most serious of cases."

Her entire career's worth of experience ultimately led Russell to coming to the Sully District Station in February as its newest leader. And shortly thereafter, she was promoted to major. At Sully, she's in charge of more than 70 officers who cover 70 square miles.

"This has been a dream job for me," she said. "I worked all those years in patrol, and this job lets me work with the community and interact with patrol officers again."

SEE MEET SULLY, PAGE 17

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE

Still images of the suspects.

Springfield Bike Store Burglarized Twice Police suspect the same pair in both incidents.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Burglars broke into the Bicycle Pro Shop in North Springfield twice in late May and the suspects were photographed by surveillance cameras, leading detectives from the West Springfield Police District's Criminal Investigations Division to believe the two burglaries are connected.

On May 21, officers responded to the Bicycle Pro Shop located at 5230 Port Royal Road in North Springfield for the report of a burglary that occurred around 4 a.m., FCPD said. The front door to the business was smashed and over \$9,000 worth of merchandise was stolen from the business.

On May 26, officers took another burglary report at the Bicycle Pro Shop. Two suspects forced entry into the store just after 5 a.m. by smashing the front door. The suspects left with nearly \$2,000 worth of merchandise. Detectives believe the two burglaries are connected, the FCPD said.

In the days following, there were no updates posted about these robberies and attempts to reach FCPD on the afternoon of Monday, June 3, were unsuccessful.

Detectives are asking anyone with information regarding this incident to call the West Springfield Police Station at 703-644-7377 and ask to speak with a detective. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone - 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

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COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE



FILE PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Tender BBQ ribs, Juneteenth 2022, Liberty Amendment Month, Town of Vienna, June 18, 2022



FILE PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly, Juneteenth 2022, Liberty Amendment Month, Town of Vienna, June 18, 2022

Count Down To Juneteenth 2024, Part of Liberty Amendments Month

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Emancipation Proclamation, by President Abraham Lincoln, effective on January 1, 1863, freed enslaved people in all places held by the Confederacy. On June 19, 1865, U.S. Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger issued General Order No. 3. Two and a half years after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, the order told Texans that every enslaved person in the Confederate States was now free rather than property of their owners. Juneteenth, a combination of June and June 19th, is the oldest known celebration commemorating the end of slavery in the United States, according to the National News Archives. It became a federal holiday in 2021.

Preparing to kick off its fourth Liberty Amendments Month on Saturday, June 15, the Town of Vienna will hold its first of sixteen events, the Juneteenth Celebration, hosted at the First Baptist Church of Vienna, 450 Orchard Street. The town's Liberty Amendments Month runs annually from June 15 to July 15. It presents various events ranging from talks, concerts, seminars, art exhibits, films, children's storytimes, fireworks, and more, each focusing on one of the United States Constitution Amendments. Liberty Amendments Month honors the passage of the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 19th Amendments.

According to Mercury Payton, Vienna town manager, the Virginia General Assembly took exceptional action in 2020 by officially recognizing the town's request to establish Liberty Amendments Month starting June 19. "The vote to establish this month-long event as a state-wide memorial was unanimous in both houses," Payton stated at the time. The 13th Amendment (1865) bans slavery. Anyone born or naturalized in the U.S. is a citizen under the 14th Amendment (1868); the 15th Amendment (1870)



FACEBOOK FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VIENNA. JUNE 21, 2021

Dancers, Juneteenth 2021, Liberty Amendment Month, Town of Vienna, image posted June 21, 2021

Fairfax County NAACP Juneteenth Celebration

Join us for the Third Annual Bull Run Juneteenth Commemoration, sponsored by Fairfax County NAACP and NOVA Parks

Date: Saturday, June 15

Time: 3 p.m.

Location: Bull Run Regional Park, Atlantis Waterpark

7700 Bull Run Dr, Centreville, VA 20121

This event is a special tribute to the largest emancipation before the Civil War, honoring the lives of the enslaved people and their descendants.

Come and experience:

❖ Reflections on Emancipation: Dive deep into the significance of this

historic moment.

❖ Words of Remembrance and Hope: Join Bishop Brett Fuller as he inspires us with uplifting words of hope that have carried generations through adversity and triumph.

❖ Music to Inspire: Enjoy the powerful rhythms and melodies that echo the spirit of freedom, strength, and unity.

❖ Stories of Freedom for Kids: Ignite curiosity and courage in the next generation and empower them to shape a better future.

❖ And don't miss out on the sweet finale! Stick around for the Ice Cream Social sponsored by Dominion Energy.

Let's come together to reflect, celebrate, and honor this significant moment in history.

www.novaparks.com/bullrunjuneteenth

grants voting rights to all citizens, regardless of race, color, or servitude; and the 19th Amendment (1920) prohibits denying the right to vote based on sex, giving women voting rights.

In 2022, The Connection reported that Rev. Dr. Vernon C. Walton, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Vienna and keynote speaker of the Town of Vienna's 2nd annual Juneteenth, said he wrestled with the "untampered celebration and unfortunate commercialization of Juneteenth." He remembered "the men and women aboard slave ships who did not go voluntarily and whose remains are at the bottom of the ocean... [and] the mothers who watched their children snatched and separated from them." He also thought about "enslaved workers who could still hear music in the air ... This celebration is born out of a painful reality rooted in deceit and deception."

Walton echoed King: "If America is to be a great nation, this must come true ... when we let freedom ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, from McLean to Alexandria, from Tysons to Gum Springs, from Great Falls to Herndon, from McMansions to tent cities, We will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, Black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants, and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, 'Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.'"

The Town of Vienna's four-hour-long Juneteenth Celebration 2024 will feature live music, food trucks, vendors, and a classic car and truck show. Once again, there is a planned ceremony at noon with distinguished speakers and elected officials. Check out all the freebies — a photo booth, children's books, moonbounce, and train rides — and the first 500 attendees will re-

COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

PARKS

MILITARY



SCREENSHOT FCPS

FCPS welcomes all families of students, including the 14,500 students connected to the military.

New: Veterans and Military Families Commission

On May 31, Fairfax County's Board of Supervisors introduced its newly established Veterans and Military Families Commission. According to the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, the commission will "identify the unique issues and challenges faced by Fairfax County veterans, active duty service members, military retirees, and their families to connect them with services and supports, address gaps in services and opportunities, improve access to service systems, and enhance the institutional structures across the continuum of care for the military community."

Christopher Pulley, Neighborhood and Community Service's Veterans Coordinator, and Air Force veteran, said, "There are so many issues affecting today's veterans." Among them affordable housing, food insecurity, affordable childcare, employment, mental health, and medical treatment."

Fort Belvoir is Fairfax County's largest employer. It is home to more than 45,000 active-duty military members, selected reserve members, and an estimated 65,000 veterans. More than 14,500 students in Fairfax County Public Schools are connected to the military, and many Fairfax County schools have been recognized by the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Council on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children as 2023 Purple Star Schools. The designation was awarded to 18 FCPS military-friendly schools in 2023 that demonstrated their commitment to meeting the needs of military-connected students and their families, according to FCPS.

On Tuesday, May 21, the Board of Supervisors named five commission-at-large board members: Robert Magielnicki, Michael S. Donovan, Angela Howard, Penny Gross, and Michael Halligan. The board has nominated and will confirm 13 more members, representing FCPS, George Mason University, and area military organizations, among others.

For additional resources, visit the Fairfax County Veterans page and the Veterans and Military Families Commission website.

— MERCIA HOBSON



SCREENSHOT VIA INSTAGRAM

Celebrating National Trails Day

U.S. Congressman Gerry Connolly joined the Fairfax County Park Authority to celebrate National Trails Day and the 10th anniversary of renaming the Cross County Trail to the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail. "This 41-mile trail is a true gem in our county, and its completion was one of my proudest moments in office," Connolly said on Instagram.

— MERCIA HOBSON

SCHOOLS

Where Might the School Bus Take Your Child?

FCPS examines 38-year-old boundary policies across the district.

On Tuesday, June 18, the Fairfax County School Board's Governance Committee will discuss and potentially act upon the proposal to amend Policy 8130 to change school boundaries. See School Board Policy 8130 Draft 5/15/2024 and School Board Policy 8130 Draft 5/16/2024. In an email from School Board member Robyn Lady (Dranesville) concerning "Follow up from the 5/20/24 Governance Committee meeting," she wrote, "I wanted to reach out and share details with you regarding my stance on the ongoing work around the Policy 8130 review by the Governance Committee."

In her letter, Lady says that when she joined the board, she had yet to learn how much money Fairfax County spent on transportation. After discovering that it spends nearly \$200 million annually on transportation, Lady scrutinized the division's boundary-drawing process more closely. "Given the overcrowding we have in myriad places across the division, I fully support the Governance Committee doing a holistic review of the countywide boundary," writes Lady. She noted that policy has not changed in 38 years.

As for the process, Lady explains that if the policy makes it out of the Governance Committee, the school board will schedule a boundary policy work session, followed by a school board vote at a regular meeting. If the board approves the boundary policy, the next step would be operationalizing the new policy, which could impact the school boundaries throughout the division.

"Since the current draft will require FCPS to do a holistic



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Could shifts in FCPS district boundaries alter the makeup of student populations in given schools create more inclusive, equitable educational environment? Could disparities in school demographics and resources between neighboring schools become points of contention?

review every five years, I cannot support (the) phasing of students beyond two years. While many of my colleagues hold their thoughts and opinions close to the vest, I believe in transparency and letting my constituents know what I am thinking," Lady writes.

Lady adds that FCPS developed a webpage, School Board Boundary Policy Review Information. One can find the latest information on why the boundary policy review may be linked to "better student achievement through instructional quality, budget optimization, and enhanced student well-being."

SEE SCHOOL BOUNDARIES, PAGE 12

THE CONNECTION ♦ JUNE 5-11, 2024 ♦ 11

COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

School Boundaries

FROM PAGE 11

Lady attached two documents: Best Practice Review Draft Boundary Policy 8130 (School Board Governance Committee Meeting March 12, 2024) and School Board Policy 8130 Draft 5/16/2024 with feedback requests, which, if approved, would supersede Policy 8130.7.

In a special bulletin for its members, the Great Falls Citizens Association president, John Halacy, wrote, "In the interest of transparency, GFCA is sharing the communication from Representative Lady, and I am encouraging our members to bring their concerns over the potential impact of school redistricting to the membership meeting on June 11 at 7 p.m. at the Great Falls Grange."

Halacy added that he understood boundary policy "is a topic of critical importance to the GFCA membership and to community residents, especially those with school-age children. ... Our School Boundary Task Force that has been examining this issue has sought data from the School Board staff on the criteria that would be used within its Policy 8130 to implement boundary changes. That data request is still open, and the Task Force has been directed to another source for the data."

According to GFCA, unless otherwise noted, all meetings/events are on the Zoom platform and open to the public. Email communications@GFCA.org for further information on GFCA Meetings and Events.

— MERCIA HOBSON

GREAT FALLS



SCREENSHOT GREAT FALLS GRANGE FOUNDATION

GFCA 2024 election will be held at the Grange on June 11.

GFCA Election; Opposition to Casino

On June 11, 2024, The Great Falls Citizens Association will hold its annual election at the Great Falls Grange, 9818 Georgetown Pike. Voting will start at 6:30 p.m. There were no candidates nominated on May 21. The GFCA board-approved slate candidates are: President - John Halacy; Vice President - Dave Conover; Secretary - Jennifer Falcone; Director - Candice Burt; Director - Winnie Frost; Director - Jerry Peters; and Director - Ed Phillips.

The GFCA Executive Board comprises five officers and 12 directors with staggered terms. Board members whose terms expire in 2025 are Henry Lippincott, Treasurer; Margaret Everett, Director; Dennis Huber, Director; Lisa Schlecht, Director; and Karen Washburn, Director.

A brief presentation will be at 7 p.m. to update members on several highlights, including the ongoing opposition to the proposed casino.

— MERCIA HOBSON



SCREENSHOT INSTAGRAM

Langley High School class of 2024 graduates at DAR Constitution Hall.

Congrats to Langley High School Class of 2024

Fairfax County Public Schools held the Langley High School Class of 2024 graduation at DAR Constitution Hall on Monday, June 3. Catherine Burns and Ryan Dadoo, Class of 2024 officers, presented the student address. "Go, leaving a positive mark on the world," Burns said. The recipient of this year's Principal's Award is Annabelle Bozarth.

The Connection welcomes any graduation photos that families can send in. Email to editors@connectionnews-papers.com subject line GRADUATION with school name. Please identify people in the photo, date and school.

Here are graduation dates and venues for other county schools.

- Annandale High School, Monday, June 3, 9:30 a.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Bryant High School & AIM, Wednesday, June 5, 4 p.m., Bryant High School
- Cedar Lane School, Friday, May 31, 4 p.m., Cedar Lane School
- Centreville High School, Wednesday, June 5, 9:30 a.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Chantilly High School, Friday, June 7, 9:30 a.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Davis Center, Friday, June 7, 10 a.m., Marshall High School
- Edison High School, Wednesday, June 5, 7:30 p.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Fairfax County Adult High School, Thursday, June 6, 5 p.m., Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology
- Fairfax High School, Tuesday, June 4, 9 a.m., Fairfax High School
- Falls Church High School, Friday, June 7, 2 p.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Hayfield Secondary School, Monday, June 10, 9:30 a.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Herndon High School, Wednesday, June 5, 2 p.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Interagency Schools, Thursday, June 6, 3:30 p.m., Woodson High School
- Justice High School, Thursday, June 6, 7:30 p.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Key Center, Thursday, May 30, 12:30 p.m., Key Center
- Kilmer Center, Friday, June 7, 10:30 a.m., Kilmer Center

- Lake Braddock Secondary School, Tuesday, June 4, 2 p.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Langley High School, Monday, June 3 at 2:30 p.m. at DAR Constitution Hall
- Lewis High School, Monday, June 3, 7:30 p.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Madison High School, Tuesday, June 4 at 10 a.m. at DAR Constitution Hall
- Marshall High School, Monday, June 3 at 10 a.m. at DAR Constitution Hall
- McLean High School, Tuesday, June 4 at 2:30 p.m. at DAR Constitution Hall
- Mount Vernon High School, Tuesday, June 4, 9:30 a.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Mountain View High School & AIM, Monday, June 3, 5 p.m., Centreville High School
- Oakton High School, Tuesday, June 11, 9:30 a.m., Eagle Bank Arena
- Pulley Center, Friday, May 31, 10:30 a.m., West Potomac High School
- Quander Road School, Thursday, May 30, 3:30 p.m., Quander Road School
- Robinson Secondary School, Monday, June 3 at 2 p.m. at Eagle Bank Arena
- South County High School, Monday, June 10 at 2 p.m. at Eagle Bank Arena
- South Lakes High School, Friday, June 7 at 7:30 p.m. at Eagle Bank Arena
- Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, Saturday, June 8 at 7:30 p.m. at Eagle Bank Arena
- West Potomac High School, Tuesday, June 11 at 2 p.m. at Eagle Bank Arena
- West Springfield High School, Thursday, June 6 at 9:30 a.m. at Eagle Bank Arena
- Westfield High School, Tuesday, June 4 at 7:30 p.m. at Eagle Bank Arena
- Woodson High School, Thursday, June 6 at 2 p.m. at Eagle Bank Arena

— MERCIA HOBSON

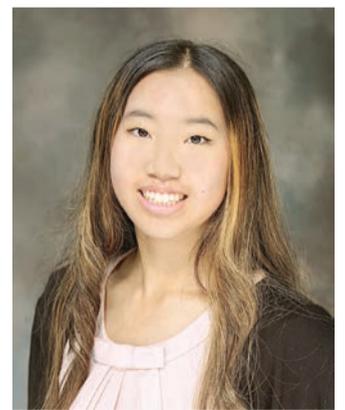
MCLEAN

Teen from School in McLean Works to Improve Drinking Water

The Potomac River, which supplies drinking water to the 5.1 million people, has become increasingly polluted. MITRE is working to develop a deployable sensor that will detect and remediate PFAS from natural waterways.

Fiona Xu, a senior at BASIS Independent McLean, is conducting her senior year school project through her internship at The MITRE Corporation, McLean Campus.

She is conducting a literature review of the use of sensor technology to clean up PFAS contamination and improve water quality in rivers and the potential applicability of electrochemical sensors with other types to conclude on the best potential practice of applying sensors to the Potomac. Her results will help MITRE develop sensors that can improve the water quality for the region.



Fiona Xu

— MERCIA HOBSON

COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

More Community News at a Glance, Page 19

RESTON

Wiehle Avenue Alternative 3

View the most recent ideas and provide comments via a survey offered by the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) research team. Based on comments from last November's workshop, the survey presents the three options elicited during a public meeting held on May 23, 2024. They include major improvements like lane reductions, larger walkways, landscaped buffers, specialized bike lanes, and roundabouts. Details and links here: <https://wp.me/pavEzK-1rJ>. View and complete the survey at <https://publicinput.com/r0480>.



FCDOT WIEHLE AVE. STUDY AT [HTTPS://PUBLICINPUT.COM/R0480](https://publicinput.com/r0480)

Plans are in process to make Reston's Wiehle Avenue safer for cyclists and pedestrians.

WORLD PEACE



PHOTO FRIENDS OF THE WASHINGTON & OLD DOMINION TRAIL

Posted May 29: "It was wonderful to see you on the W&OD today. May the rest of your journey be peaceful and joyful."

Buddhists Walk For World Peace

What distance would you be willing to walk in pursuing global peace? That might be the perfect question for six Buddhist monks from the Thai Buddhist Vajiradhammapadip Temple in New York. The renowned group began their walk from Key West on March 31, intending to arrive at Niagara Falls on June 30, covering almost 1,500 miles with the noble aim of promoting world peace.

Vienna was one of the destinations the monks chose to visit during their recent journey heading toward Washington, D.C. They stopped at the Vienna Community Center, where the locals embraced them, offering refreshments, food, water, and gifts. Buddhist monks rely on the lay community to provide the material things they need to survive. They demonstrate that peace is possible through the simple acts of kindness they receive from strangers along their journey. On Facebook, the Friends of the Washington and Old Dominion Trail reported that the monks have also traveled eastward on the W&OD Trail. Follow the monks on their Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1820405985126531>, with over 11,000 others.

— MERCIA HOBSON



PHOTO POSTED BY THE TOWN OF VIENNA, VA - GOVERNMENT

Six Buddhist monks from the Thai Buddhist Vajiradhammapadip Temple in New York stop in Vienna, walking from Key West and finishing at Niagara Falls.

VIENNA & OAKTON



FACEBOOK CONGRESSMAN GERRY CONNOLLY

Historical Marker unveiled for Oakton civil rights activist Lillian Blackwell



FACEBOOK CONGRESSMAN GERRY CONNOLLY

Celebrating with a group shot

First of Six Historical Markers Honoring Black/African American Experience

Over the weekend, Fairfax County's History Commission members unveiled the first of six new historical markers, each shedding light on an Black/African American community event, person, or site of historical significance, with one marker per magisterial district. Located in the Providence District, the marker honors civil rights activist Lillian Blackwell (1911–1963). Blackwell successfully sued to ban segregation in public schools, as well as segregated seating in movie theaters, and the denial of admission based on race.

Fairfax County School Board Chair Karl Frisch, who attended the unveiling, reported that students researched and submitted proposals for the historical marker program launched in 2022. A panel chose 14 finalists from 53 submitted proposals, and the History Commission chose the six markers for installation. Three South County High School students, Meron Fikru, Delano Telford, and Maddie Haag, nominated U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly, who also attended the event, said on Facebook that they celebrated a "heroic woman who fought for civil rights here in Fairfax County. ... Lillian Blackwell cared passionately about equity and access for all, and I'm proud that we have recognized her lasting contributions to our schools and county," he wrote. Blackwell was a Fairfax County member of the Human Relations Council, The Friends of the Library, NAACP membership chairman, founding member of the National Council of Negro Women, Black Women United for Action, and Fair Housing.

— MERCIA HOBSON

ENTERTAINMENT



illuminating the Natural World can be seen now through June 30, 2024 at the Reston Art Gallery in Reston.



Paws on the Plaza will be held Saturday, June 8, 2024 at Tysons Corner Center in McLean.

NOW THROUGH JUNE 30 Illuminating the Natural World.

Open weekends 12-5 p.m. At Reston Art Gallery and Studios, 11400 Washington Plaza West, Reston. Internationally recognized artist Rosemarie Forsythe presents her new exhibition of distinctive, colorful paintings portraying the magic of nature, science, and learning through imaginative compositions that are often inspired by 15th century illuminated manuscripts.

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 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.

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 or contact 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 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 16, 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. Rinku 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 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 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.

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) – 10-11 a.m.

July 15, 17 & 19, Mon/Wed/Fri, 10-11 a.m.

To Register: Call/Text instructor (703) 250-6930 for details and registration. E-mail: 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.

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 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, Cazhmier, Billy Twilde, and more. Come out and enjoy takeout and cocktails from our restaurants while jamming to your favorite groove!

ENTERTAINMENT

30TH ANNIVERSARY
TINNER HILL MUSIC FESTIVAL
 Falls Church City, VA
JUNE 8, 2024
 TinnerHill.org
 Follow Us @TinnerHillMusicFestival

See-I Band • JoGo Project • Ms. Niki's Music Class
Dance Party: DJs Bill Johnson & Beverly Lindsay-Johnson

SATURDAY JUNE 8
 11am - 8pm
 Cherry Hill Park
 Falls Church City
 For tickets & info: TinnerHill.org

PRESENTED BY
 Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation

The 30th Annual Tinner Hill Music Festival takes place on Saturday, June 8, 2024 in Falls Church.

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.

DANCE NIGHTS ANNOUNCED FOR LAKE ANNE LIVE!

Thursday Evening Concerts beginning June 6 through June 27, 2024 from 6 to 9 p.m. Sponsored by Lake Anne and Washington Plaza Merchant Association, at Lake Anne Plaza (Waterfront) - 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston.

SCHEDULE:

- ❖ June 6 (6 to 9 p.m.): Salsa Night! Learn how to dance the popular Salsa dance with famed instructor and DJ David Norton
- ❖ June 13 (6 to 9 p.m.): Swing Night! Gottaswing's Sue and DJ Gary! Basic swing lessons followed by classic big band tunes mixed in with your 50's and 60's rock & roll favorites and more!
- ❖ June 20 (6 to 9 p.m.): Salsa and Bachata Night! Learn to dance the popular Latin dances with instructor and DJ David Norton and dance the night away!
- ❖ June 27: Swing Line Dance! Learn Swing Line Dancing, including the always popular Charleston Stroll with Gottaswing's Sue and DJ Gary! DJ Gary will be spinning your favorite tunes from the 40's, 50's and up! Requests considered.

FREE CONCERTS AT BURKE LAKE PARK

Mark your calendars for 7 p.m. every Wednesday night from June 26th through August 21st at Burke Lake Park for an incredible line-up of bands, food trucks, 2 Silos beer, and Peterson's Ice Cream. The atmosphere is informal, so bring a picnic blanket, lawn chairs, and relax with friends and family.

SCHEDULE:

- June 26 - Randy Thompson Band
Food truck: Empanadas de Mendoza
- July 3 - The Nighthawks
Food truck: Roaming Coyote
- July 10 - Speidel, Goodrich, Goggin & Lille
Food truck: DC Slides
- July 17 - The Magic Trio
Food truck: Babu-Ji
- July 24 - The Skip Castro Band
Food trucks: DC Slides & Empanadas de Mendoza
- July 31 - The English Channel
Food trucks: DC Slides & Babu-Ji
- August 7 - The Road Ducks
Food trucks: Babu-Ji & Empanadas de Mendoza
- August 14 - SoHo Down
Food truck: Roaming Coyote
- August 21 - Riptide
Food truck: Roaming Coyote

TYSONS CORNER CENTER EVENTS

- ❖ Farm Harvest Fridays Every Friday at 2 p.m. - May 31 through October
Enjoy live music, a guided harvest from Annie, the Giving Garden ur-

Frank Lloyd Wright Birthday Celebration
 at Pope-Leighey House

June 8, 2024 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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

ban 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 15 and July 20 at The Plaza
 First set: 4-6:30 p.m. 2nd set: 7-9 p.m.
 Summer Concert Series will offer two live performance sets on each date, with the first band at 4-6:30PM 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 the restaurants while jamming to your favorite groove!

SUMMER SUNDAY CONCERTS IN THE PARK BY THE ALDEN

Due to the renovation of McLean Central Park, The Alden at the McLean Community Center's Summer Sunday Concerts in the Park will be held at Lewinsville Park this year. The free concerts will be presented on the porch of the historic house in the park at 4 p.m. on Sundays, June 16 through July 28. The park is located at 1659 Chain Bridge Rd.

SCHEDULE

- Sunday, June 16, 4 p.m. DMV Fam-Jam Allstars
- Sunday, June 23, 4 p.m. Elena Moon Park and Friends
- Sunday, June 30, 4 p.m. Backtrack Vocals
- Sunday, July 7, 4 p.m. The Gordon Sterling Trio
- Sunday, July 14, 4 p.m. Lil' Maceo
- Sunday, July 21, 4 p.m. The Billy Coulter Trio
- Sunday, July 28, 4 p.m. Justin Trawick

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 or call 703-854-1856.

SATURDAY/JUNE 8

Herndon Pride Festival. 12-5 p.m. At Arts Herndon. Featuring bands, Jazz, mocktails and food, drag, photo booth, drumming circle, skate demo and arts and crafts. More information and announcements on: artsherndon.org

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.

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. 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/FFXS-RR>, 703-425-9225.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 17

Fairfax City Pays Tribute to the Fallen on Memorial Day

FROM PAGE 4

for us to do every year in the City of Fairfax.”

Councilmember Bates said Memorial Day makes him think of his great grandfather who was a munitions specialist defusing bombs during WWII. Although he lived until his early 80s, a bomb explosion during his wartime service left him with serious health issues for the rest of his life and eventually led to his demise. After the blast, he was temporarily blinded. His vision later returned, but the damage to his body was permanent.

“It was a mustard-gas bomb; so in addition to the pressure from the explosion as he was working on it, he inhaled a significant amount of mustard gas,” explained Bates. “It caused a fluid buildup in his lungs and around his heart, and he spoke with a whisper due to a paralyzed larynx.” So, Bates told the crowd, “My heart goes out to everyone who’s lost someone, and I am eternally grateful for all of your sacrifices.”

Councilmember Jeff Greenfield referenced a speech future president James Garfield gave on May 30, 1868, at Arlington National Cemetery: “We do not know one promise these men made, one pledge they gave, one word they spoke. But they summed up by one supreme act the highest virtues of men and citizens. For love of country, they accepted death, and thus resolved all doubts and made immortal their patri-



Singing the national anthem are The Unmuted: from left, Lori Greenlief, Kate Weber, Martie Gilliam and Beth Kimlick.

tism and their virtue.”

“Memorial Day was originally called Decoration Day, from the early tradition of decorating graves with flowers, wreaths and flags,” said Greenfield. “And today, I want us to remember a few folks who were longtime City residents who made a difference, not only for our country, but for this community: Bill Sheads, Lou Frank, John Price, Eddie Camper and former City Mayor John Mason.” Then, to the veterans in the audience, Greenfield said, “God bless you and

God bless this great nation.”

Calling it “a somber day that touches all of us,” Sheriff Kincaid said, “Our freedom is not free. For those who’ve served, this day holds the most significance, while our country pays tribute to the lives lost in defense of our nation. Today and every day, we should honor and remember our fallen heroes and share stories of how they lived lives of duty, loyalty and courage.

“Whether you visit a cemetery or memorial, wear a red poppy on your lapel or simply

reflect during a quiet moment, remember all our men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice. President Harry Truman said, ‘Our debt to [them] can never be repaid. They earned our undying gratitude; let’s carry forward this legacy.’”

American Legion Post 177 Commander Eric Parkhurst said it warmed his heart to see how many people attended the ceremony and took a pause from the day’s festivities to stop and remember the fallen. “Oftentimes, it seems like our new generation has forgotten that part,” he said. However, he added, his faith was restored when he recently spoke at a Boy Scout Court of Honor and was pleased to discover that these Scouts knew the meaning of Memorial Day.

“When we’re gone, the legacy of those we lost in battle must continue,” said Parkhurst. “We sometimes take for granted all we have – nice cars and homes. A lot of our veterans don’t have homes. Let us never take for granted our soldiers, sailors and airmen who gave their lives for us to enjoy those freedoms we have today.”

Then, following the reading of the names, Chaplain Kuiper gave the closing prayer, saying, “Almighty God, today we honor our worthy men and women who gave their best when they were called to serve. Please bless our veterans and their families, fill their homes with Your strength and love, and help us to remember and respect their sacrifice.”

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Meet Sully Police Commander, Major Jane Russell

FROM PAGE 8

I'm also back in a uniform again, after being in business attire all those years."

In turn, the community welcomed Russell warmly. "People here are so appreciative of the officers and their work, and the officers feel that," she said. "We even post elementary-school kids' drawings in the hallway, and we're grateful when the officers are recognized."

As for the station personnel, she said, "I felt extraordinarily welcomed here by the officers and supervisors. My predecessors left me a great environment. And [Assistant Commander] Capt. Ryan Low and I get out as much as we can into the community to get eyes on places where there have been crimes or complaints."

Most of Sully's crimes involve crimes of opportunity – thieves stealing valuables people leave in plain view in unlocked cars. "Our crime numbers all year have been trending down, and I attribute that

to our officers being out and being seen before a crime can happen," said Russell.

Her leadership philosophy is twofold. Internally, it's about giving her officers the tools and motivation they need. "And that comes from their feeling valued and supported," she explained. "They know I care about them." In fact, she recently told them how proud of them she was for their issuing more than 400 warning citations – for things such as tailgating and other dangerous-driving behaviors – during the countywide Road Shark traffic-enforcement initiative.

Externally, Russell's carrying on the positive community outreach already in place by Sully's previous commanders. "I'm continuing to foster that relationship to make sure everyone feels safe in their homes and workplaces here," she said. "And we work closely with Supervisor [Kathy] Smith to address any community concerns to keep people's quality of life a priority."

The toughest part of her job, said Russell, is "only being one person and not being able to do everything I want. I have lots of great ideas." The best part, she said, is "being back in patrol doing what I love. We're in this thing together at this station, and I see the positive impact the officers have on this community, firsthand."

She recently married a fellow FCPD officer and has a daughter who followed in Russell's public-safety footsteps as a firefighter/paramedic in another Virginia county. "We're extraordinarily proud of her," she said. In addition, Russell just enrolled in a master's program for organizational leadership, for her own professional development. And in what spare time she has, she enjoys woodworking and hiking all over the country.

To the community, she says, "Thanks for your overwhelming support for the Sully officers. And please don't hesitate to reach out with any concerns; even if they seem small, they're important to you."

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 15

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.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 12

Community Health Fair. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At The Virginia, 9229 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. The Virginian Senior Living community in partnership with VHC Health, Inova

and Capital City Nurses will be holding a Community Health Fair featuring more than 50 local health providers offering free health screenings, health and wellness resources, fitness demonstrations, and nutrition education. Screenings for diabetes, blood pressure and vision, plus strength testing and mental health resources are just some of the important services that will be available. Hospitals, health service providers and organizations including Inova Care Clinic, Alzheimer's Association, Virginian Rehabilitation & Wellness, Parkinson's Foundation, and Insight Memory Care Center will be available to meet with attendees.

THURSDAY/JUNE 13

Matthew Bourne's "Swan Lake."

1 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Thrilling, audacious, witty and emotive, this "Swan Lake" is perhaps best known for replacing the female corps de ballet with a menacing male ensemble, which shattered conventions and took the entire dance world by storm. Winner of both Olivier and Tony Awards. Not rated.

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.

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FRIDAY/JUNE 14

Aurora Dance Fest. 7:30 p.m. At Capital One Hall, 7750 Capital One Hall Tower Road, Tysons Corner. Aurora Dance Festival is a vibrant evening of dance performances hosted by Gin Dance Company and featuring works by 10 companies and 14 talented choreographers. This event promises to be a delightful mix of contemporary ballet, modern dance, and the fiery passion of Flamenco from Southern Spain.

SATURDAY/JUNE 15

Fairfax City Juneteenth Celebration.

A free event to celebrate Juneteenth National Independence Day, the day in 1865 when enslaved people near Galveston, Texas first learned they were free.

OLD TOWN SQUARE LINEUP:

10 a.m. Opening Ceremony
11 a.m. T. Arnett with Top Shelf Band
12:20 p.m. Destiny Monee
12:45 p.m. Eddie Lee
1:15 p.m. Lemonade Dream
1:40 p.m. Soultri
2:15 p.m. Truth Speaks Volume
2:35 p.m. Melanie Bates
3 p.m. Jasmine Mills
3:45 p.m. Anthony Swamp Dog Clark Band



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DMV Fam-Jam Allstars
Sunday, June 16, 4 p.m.

Elena Moon Park and Friends
Sunday, June 23, 4 p.m.

Backtrack Vocals
Sunday, June 30, 4 p.m.

The Gordon Sterling Trio
Sunday, July 7, 4 p.m.

Lil' Maceo
Sunday, July 14, 4 p.m.

The Billy Coulter Trio
Sunday, July 21, 4 p.m.



Justin Trawick
Sunday, July 28, 4 p.m.



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COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE
MOUNT VERNON



SCREENSHOT THE DUNNE DISPATCH ON MAY 29

New Principals for Mount Vernon HS and Belle View ES

Mount Vernon representative on the School Board, announced in *The Dunne Dispatch* on May 29 two new principals to his magisterial district, (left) Katie Plunkit, Belle View ES, and (right) Carl Dimmick, Mount Vernon High School. “Both bring extensive experience and proven leadership as school administrators. I am excited to work with them to ensure all of our students receive a world-class education.”

— MERCIA HOBSON

50TH ANNIVERSARY

W&OD’s 50th Trail Anniversary Celebrations Continue into September

On Sept. 7, NOVA Parks’ (Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority) W&OD Trail will turn 50 years old, but until then, the park continues to mark its anniversary with activities. Next on NOVA Parks’ list is that folks can cheer on its W&OD-themed float at the City of Fairfax Independence Day Parade, on July 4, 10 a.m.–noon in downtown Fairfax.

Safety remains a primary concern with 70 road intersections along the W&OD Trail. Lately, an increasing number of intersections have been “grade separated,” with vehicles and trail users on different levels. Most recently, the new \$12 million fly-over Wiehle Avenue bridge in Reston is poised so that bikes and pedestrians who travel on the W&OD Trail don’t have to mix with vehicles. NOVA Park’s vision for the trail is to continue with enhancements to create dual parallel trails, one for pedestrians and one for cyclists. The first segment of dual trails opened in Falls Church and dual trails will be added to other urban areas along the trail. Visit novaparks.com/WOD50 for upcoming events and activities.

Once used primarily for weekend recreation, the W&OD Trail now serves over 2 million people annually as a carbon-free commute.

— MERCIA HOBSON



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The W&OD Trail is turning 50 years old.

Juneteenth

FROM PAGE 10

ceive a complimentary Juneteenth swag bag with goodies. Take the free shuttle up the road to the James H. Hayes Elks Lodge for the car and truck show. All models from 1999 and earlier are welcome. Free on-site registration starts at 10:30 a.m.; car show awards include Top 10, Mayor’s Choice, Pastor’s Choice, Sponsors’ Choice, and Best of Show. The Juneteenth vendor registration at the celebration is \$25 for nonprofit organizations and \$50 for companies. Sponsorships start at \$500. To register, email sseay@fbcv.org.

Juneteenth Ceremony, June 15, in Fairfax City

Fairfax City will also hold a free Juneteenth celebration on Saturday, June 15, in Old Town Square, 10415 North St. Juneteenth National Independence Day is the day in 1865, June 19, when enslaved people near Galveston, Texas first learned they were free. President Abraham Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation freeing enslaved people on Jan. 1, 1863.

The opening ceremony is at 10 a.m. and will feature a variety of speakers, including Mayor Catherine Read, Deputy City Manager Valmarie Turner and Sen. Saddam Salim (D-37th). Then, from 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m., there’ll be live entertainment on stage, as well as food and infor-

mational vendors, plus cookie decorating, crafts, facepainting and a balloon artist for children.

The Town of Vienna has scheduled additional events for the first half of Liberty Amendment Month through the end of June. June 18, 10 a.m., Town Green: Kids on the Green and Storytime; June 18, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall: From Idea to Law Panel with Delegate Siebold; June 26, 9:30 a.m.: Textile Museum Day Trip (DC Fight for Freedom Exhibit); June 28, 5:45 p.m.: Summer Concert and Children’s Readers Theatre, Town Green; and June 29, 3:30 p.m.: Naturalization Ceremony Seeman Auditorium, Vienna Community Center. See the full calendar of events at www.viennava.gov/liberty.

Diversion Before Immersion



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

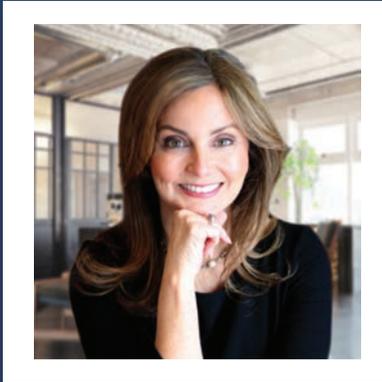
Soon, as in approximately one hour, I will begin my new thyroid cancer treatment regimen: two pills twice a day and one other pill once a day. This pills are what’s called “targeted therapy,” as opposed to chemotherapy. There are no trips to the Infusion Center and no other needles. It’s me and the pills, at home. The prescription says that I am to take the pills either an hour before eating or two hours after eating. Moreover, that schedule should remain consistent: what pills I take when. As for side effects, there are many. However, the two most likely effects are a skin rash and nausea; medications for which I’ve already picked up at the pharmacy along with the two cancer drugs. I am locked and loaded as they say – ready to do battle, so to speak. When will I know if this protocol has been effective? It’s been my 15 ½ years of cancer treatment that has led me to this conclusion: what I feel or don’t feel, generally speaking, is not necessarily an indicator of good or bad. The tale of the tape will manifest every quarter when I lie down for my recurring PET scan. This scan may only be a moment in time, but what a moment! The oncologist summarizes the radiologist’s report and advises Team Lourie what the immediate future holds. Typically, this is an in-person sit-down with my doctor. Though I will have received the report in advance of this meeting, there is a lot of medical jargon contained and until the oncologist summarizes it for me, I am at a loss to say definitively whether my warranty has been extended or not.

Over these years, I have been treated with many cancer drugs, some infused, others in pill form. I have received chemotherapy and have taken “targeted therapy.” The treatments had various side effects and resulting quality of life. When changing medicines, the doctor can’t know for sure how the patient will react living forward. In fact, my oncologist has suggested to me on more than one occasion - when a medicine change was warranted because the cancer had spread; that if I was feeling good, it might be time to take a break from treatment and take that vacation I’d always dreamed of. His thinking: there’s no telling if I’ll feel better or worse in the future with the medicine change. Despite his suggestions, I have never stopped treatment unless the oncologist mandated it for some health reason, (kidney damage, as an example as a particularly problematic/current side effect). And so today, we restart. And since I will likely have cancer stories to share, the rest of this column will not be about cancer. It will be about my pet peeve in life: drivers who back into parking spaces rather than pulling in head first.

I have asked friends about their preference. Many do prefer backing in. For the life of me I can’t see it. The opinions I received were not the least bit compelling, especially considering the neck-turning and side-splitting (almost literally) challenges of backing in when headfirst offers no such difficulty. Craning my neck and twisting it from side to side to judge the space between my car and any adjacent cars just so when I leave the space, I’ll have a clear path out. Granted, it is a clearer path than the headfirst parker, but I maintain that the difficulty of backing out into the common area of the parking lot pales in comparison to the demands of trying to back into a much narrower space. What’s the rush anyway? What’s the emergency that compels the backwards parker to need a quick unencumbered exit? Whatever time/convenience they feel they gained driving forward exiting their parking space, they definitely lost with the time it took to back in. Moreover, when a headfirst parker exits, he/she has the entire width of the common area (driving aisles) to back into compared to the contrastingly narrow space for the back parker to navigate in the first place. The process may be slower, but I’m sure it’s not nearly as slow as the driver who backs in.

It seems much ado about nothing. What is the back-parker worried about anyway? Does the driver have “A need for speed?” This isn’t “Top Gun” and the driver isn’t Tom Cruise. It’s the mundane task of driving, and even more mundane task of parking your car in a parking lot in a timely manner. I don’t get the strategy. To me, it’s a colossal waste of time. It’s this kind of minutiae that regularly occupied my mind pre-cancer. My mind isn’t as free now to meander when my cancer world is interfering. Ordinarily, my droning on about the kind of non-cancer/non-serious stuff that I am writing about this week was my operandi. My diagnosis changed all that. It became difficult to write about anything other than cancer. That’s because a cancer diagnosis has a way of taking over one’s mind and body. And given the precarious situation that I find myself in now: papillary thyroid cancer and stage IV chronic kidney disease, I may feel less inclined to write about nonsense, and even less amused with my circumstances.

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



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