

THE CONNECTION

CENTRE VIEW ❖ Chantilly ❖ Great Falls ❖ Herndon ❖ McLean ❖ Oak Hill ❖ Oakton ❖ Reston ❖ Vienna

Rita Peralta and Ben Wiles at Riverbend Park in Great Falls with their pup Martha. “My wife and I love hiking year-round with our pup, Martha, at Riverbend Park in Great Falls. There are miles of dog-friendly trails and amazing views of the Potomac River,” says Ben Wiles, chief of staff for Supervisor Jimmy Bierman, Dranesville District. County as seen through the eyes of dogs, page 11.



NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE 2024-2025

PHOTO BY DAVID FENNEL

SEPTEMBER 18-24, 2024

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COMMUNITY GUIDE

Every Year Is Election Year in Virginia



Early voting starts Friday, Sept. 20; Election Day is Nov. 5

BY MARY KIMM
THE CONNECTION

Aside from bringing kindness and generosity into your community on a daily basis, there are few things more important than voting, especially in Virginia. It requires dedication to sign up for a mail-in ballot or head to the polls at least once a year, and more often twice since primary elections are also critically important. And it required dedication and research to identify all the candidates and who you feel will best represent you.

This is a big year. Presidential elections historically draw the largest turnout. There are also important local issues and races on the ballot, including ballot questions. We'll let you know here what's on the ballot. But first ...

To vote, you must be registered to vote.

Every voter should check their voter registration status at your current address. Even if you voted recently, a process of purging some voters from the rolls means that you still need to check to be certain. You can check here.

<https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/Voter-Information>

<https://fairfaxvotes.org/home/>

After you are certain you are registered to vote at your current address, the next most important task is to make a plan to vote.

Early voting begins Friday, Sept. 20. Virginia is one of the best states for no excuse early voting, with a long period to cast your ballot. It's always good to vote earlier to be sure nothing gets in your way, like illness or earthquake or hurricane or snowstorm (ok that's really unlikely). Make an event of it; plan to meet friends and family at Fairfax Government Center in the early days of early voting, then go out for coffee or lunch. Or maybe you'd rather vote quietly at home, in which case you can vote by mail. Request a mail-in ballot today and write on your calendar the day you plan to fill out and mail in your ballot.

If you have problems or concerns while voting, stay at the polling location and call

the Voter Protection Hotline (844) 4VA-VOTE (844) 482-8683

Deadline To Register To Vote In This Election

Traditional method: Online or Postmarked by Mail by Oct. 15

- ❖ Online: 11:59 p.m. on Oct. 15. Register online using the Virginia Department of Elections Citizen Portal.

- ❖ **By Mail:** Postmarked on or before Oct. 15. Download a voter registration application.

- ❖ **In Person Through Oct. 15:** Register at the Fairfax County Office of Elections.

It's best to be registered by Oct. 15 so that you can vote a regular ballot and not a provisional ballot.

Same Day Voter Registration Deadlines, in Person

- ❖ **Oct. 16-Nov. 2:** Voters may complete a same day registration at any early voting location and vote a provisional ballot. Provisional ballots are counted, and your vote will count if you do this.

- ❖ **On Nov. 5 Election Day:** Voters may only complete a same day registration and vote a provisional ballot at the precinct in which they reside. Find your precinct.

Last Day to Request a Vote by Mail Absentee Ballot: Oct. 25 by 5 p.m.

Visit Vote by Mail for more information. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/absentee-voting-mail>

Absentee ballots are mailed to voters beginning Sept. 20.

Deadline for Return of Vote by Mail Absentee Ballots:

- ❖ **Nov. 5 by 7 p.m.:** In person at the Office of Elections or by ballot drop box.

- ❖ **Nov. 8 by noon:** By mail if postmarked on or before Nov. 5 Election Day.

- ❖ **Early Voting in Person:** Begins Sept. 20, ends Nov. 2

- ❖ Visit Early Voting for more information. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/early-voting>

Early Voting: What You Need to Know

- ❖ In-person early voting will be available from Sept. 20 through Nov. 2 for the Nov. 5 General Election

- ❖ Only Fairfax County registered voters may vote at any Fairfax County early voting location.

Early Voting Locations, Dates and Times

Fairfax County Government Center 12000 Government Center Pkwy, Room 251, Fairfax, 22035	Sept. 20 – Nov. 2 Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Saturdays (Sept. 21, Oct. 19, Oct. 26, Nov. 2): 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sunday (Oct. 27): 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
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Mt. Vernon Governmental Center 2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria, 22306	Sept. 20 – Nov. 2 Monday – Friday: 1 p.m. – 7 p.m. Saturdays (Sept. 21, Oct. 19, Oct. 26, Nov. 2): 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sunday (Oct. 27): 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
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North County Governmental Center 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston, 20190	Sept. 20 – Nov. 2 Monday – Friday: 1 p.m. – 7 p.m. Saturdays (Sept. 21, Oct. 19, Oct. 26, Nov. 2): 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sunday (Oct. 27): 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
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13 Additional Locations	Oct. 17 – Nov. 2 Monday – Friday: 1 p.m. – 7 p.m. Saturdays (Oct. 19, Oct. 26, Nov. 2): 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sunday (Oct. 27): 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
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LOCATION	ADDRESS
Burke Centre Library	5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke 22015
Centreville Regional Library	14200 St. Germain Drive, Centreville 20121
Franconia Governmental Center	6121 Franconia Rd, Alexandria 22310
Great Falls Library	9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls 22066
Herndon Fortnightly Library	768 Center Street, Herndon 20170
Lorton Community Center	9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton 22079
Mason Governmental Center	6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale 22003
McLean Governmental Center	1437 Balls Hill Rd, McLean 22101
Jim Scott (formerly Providence) Community Center	3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax 22031
Sully Governmental Center	4900 Stonecroft Boulevard, Chantilly 20151
Thomas Jefferson Library	7415 Arlington Blvd, Falls Church 22042
Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library	7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church 22043
West Springfield Governmental Center	6140 Rolling Road, Springfield 22152

- ❖ Voters must present an acceptable ID or may sign an ID Confirmation Statement.

- ❖ Curbside voting is available for eligible voters.

- ❖ Absentee by mail voters may vote early in person if they choose. If you received a ballot in the mail, you must bring it with you and surrender it to vote in person. If

you received a ballot but do not bring it with you, you may vote a provisional ballot. Mail ballot dropboxes are available during early voting location operating hours.

- ❖ **Same-day registration** is available between Oct. 16 and Nov. 2 at early voting locations. Voters submitting a same-day reg-

SEE ELECTION DAY, PAGE 4

About The Connection Newspapers in 2024

STILL IN THE MIDST of the crisis which never ends, we at the Connection still hear the call to serve our communities, with a bit of wonder that we are able to continue given very limited resources. We still seek to fulfill our mission by continuing to publish, still printing thousands of copies of our weekly papers every week, and distributing thousands more digitally, with more reach via social media and our website. Certainly our approach and methods are different now.

It's still our mission to share the joy of our communities. You can find some of that joy every week, and in this community guide. Discover the great places according to the dogs, and history and pleasures provided by the legacy of the former Occoquan Workhouse and Lorton Reformatory, the Workhouse Arts Center and Laurel Hill Park. We share the joy of volunteers addressing hunger and so many other needs.

It's still our mission to provide information about how to help and where to get help; to tell the stories of the helpers, and of those who are hungry. It's still our mission to tell the stories of those working for social and racial justice, and battling income inequality.

It is our mission, set out in the first amendment of the U.S. Constitution, to press (pun intended) local government for transparency, although this is more and more difficult. The public has a right to expect transparency from local institutions. The founders clearly anticipated the ongoing need for the press to help in this role.

Your community Connection newspaper is published by the independent, locally owned Local Media Connection

Find What You Need

- ❖ ONLINE: www.connectionnewspapers.com
 - ❖ Digital editions of the week's papers are available at www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/PDFs
 - ❖ Past issues of the Connection back are available at <http://connectionarchives.com/PDF/>
 - ❖ Advertising information, Special Section details here www.connectionnewspapers.com/advertising Email sales@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9431
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 - ❖ ON INSTAGRAM <https://www.instagram.com/connectionnewspapers/>
- See our "stories" on Facebook and Instagram every day for highlights of events, news, pets and more.
- ❖ LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Email to editors@connectionnewspapers.com
 - ❖ Events for our calendar, email to calendars@connectionnewspapers.com or online www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/

LLC. Our flagship paper, the Alexandria Gazette Packet, is perhaps the oldest continuously publishing paper in the country, beginning in 1784.

We are blessed with remarkable, award-winning staff, contributing writers and photographers who are dedicated to our mission. Most have been writing for the Connection/Gazette for years, some for more than a decade (or two, or three). Each brings areas of interest and expertise. Check the bylines. Don't miss Bonnie Hobbs, Mercia Hobson, Jeanne Theismann, Janet Barnett, Michael Pope, Mike Salmon, Susan Laume, Glenda Booth, Eden Brown, Shirley Ruhel and others.

Local newspapers, including the Connection Newspapers,

are facing an existential threat from the combination of nationwide downturn in newspaper advertising that has been worsening over several years, compounded by the economic crisis.

Revenue has not nearly rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, and we are going to need more help to keep going. We will renew calls for contributions and subscriptions. <https://gofund.me/8484a551>

If you value local news and you have a budget for advertising and promotion, please endeavor to spend some of it with local newspapers including ours.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Election Day

FROM PAGE 3
istration will vote a provisional ballot.

❖ **Questions?** Email earlyvoting@fairfax-county.gov or check our FAQs.

ON THE BALLOT:

- US President/Vice President (4-year term)
- US Senate (6-year term)
- US Representative (2-year term, 1 each in Districts 8, 10, 11)

Local Races

- Herndon Town Council (Herndon town residents only)
- Herndon Town Mayor (Herndon town residents only)
- City of Fairfax City Council
- City of Fairfax Mayor
- City of Fairfax School Board
- One Proposed Constitutional Amendment
- Two Proposed Fairfax County Bond issues (transportation bonds, public safety bonds)

President and Vice President

- Vote for only one
- DEMOCRATIC PARTY
 - ❖ Kamala D. Harris, President and Tim Walz, Vice President
- REPUBLICAN PARTY
 - ❖ Donald J. Trump, President and JD Vance, Vice President
- GREEN PARTY
 - ❖ Jill E. Stein, President and Rudolph T. Ware III, Vice President
- LIBERTARIAN PARTY
 - ❖ Chase R. Oliver, President and Mike ter Maat, Vice President
- INDEPENDENT
 - ❖ Claudia De la Cruz, President and Karina Garcia, Vice President
- INDEPENDENT
 - ❖ Cornel R. West, President and Melina Abdullah, Vice President

Member United States Senate

- Vote for only one
- ❖ Timothy M. Kaine - D
- ❖ Hung Cao - R

Member House of Representatives 8th District

- Vote for only one
- ❖ Donald S. Beyer, Jr. - D
- ❖ Jerry W. Torres - R
- ❖ David R. Kennedy - I
- ❖ Bentley F. Hensel - I

Member House of Representatives 10th District

- Vote for only one
- ❖ Suhas Subramanyam - D
- ❖ Mike W. Clancy - R

Member House of Representatives 11th District

- Vote for only one
- ❖ Gerald E. "Gerry" Connolly - D
- ❖ Mike L. Van Meter - R

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

To Be Voted On at the Nov. 5, 2024, Election

ONE QUESTION
Should the Constitution of Virginia be amended so that the tax exemption that is currently available to the surviving spouses of soldiers killed in action is also available to the surviving spouses of soldiers who died in the line of duty?

EXPLANATION FOR VOTERS

Present Law
Generally, the Virginia Constitution requires that all property be taxed. It also sets out specific types of property that may be exempted from taxation. Currently, the Virginia Constitution allows the General Assembly to exempt from taxation the principal place of residence of the surviving spouse of any sol-

dier who is determined by the U.S. Department of Defense to have been killed in action.

Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendment would expand this current tax exemption so that it is available to all surviving spouses of soldiers who are determined by the U.S. Department of Defense to have died in the line of duty, including those who have been killed in action.

A "yes" vote will allow the surviving spouse of a soldier who died in the line of duty to claim the same real property tax exemption on their principal place of residence that is currently only available to the surviving spouses of soldiers who are killed in action.

A "no" vote will not allow such additional surviving spouses to claim the real property tax exemption.

Two Fairfax County Bond Issues

TRANSPORTATION BONDS
Shall Fairfax County, Virginia, contract a debt, borrow money, and issue bonds, in addition to the transportation improvements and facilities bonds previously authorized, in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$180,000,000 for the purpose of financing Fairfax County's share, under the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact, of the cost of constructing, reconstructing, improving, and acquiring transportation improvements and facilities, including capital costs of land, transit facilities, rolling stock, and equipment in the Washington metropolitan area?

VOTE YES OR NO

PUBLIC SAFETY BONDS

Shall Fairfax County, Virginia, contract a debt, borrow money, and issue bonds in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$126,000,000 to provide funds, in addition to funds from public safety facilities bonds previously authorized, to finance, including

reimbursement to the County for temporary financing for, the costs of public safety facilities, including the construction, reconstruction, enlargement, renovation and equipment of civil and criminal justice facilities, police training and operational facilities and stations, fire and rescue training facilities and stations, including fire and rescue stations owned by volunteer organizations, and the acquisition of necessary land?

VOTE YES OR NO

TOWN OF HERNDON

Candidates for the office of Mayor and Town Council for the 2025-2026 term are:

HERNDON MAYOR

- Vote for one
- ❖ Pradip Dhakal
- ❖ Keven LeBlanc (Both currently serve as councilmembers. The town's current Mayor, Sheila Olem, is not seeking reelection)

HERNDON TOWN COUNCIL

- Vote for six
- Candidates for the six Town Council seats for the 2025-2026 term:
 - Naila Alam,
 - ❖ Tamim Chowdhury,
 - ❖ Cesar A. del Aguila,
 - ❖ Kelvin Garcia,
 - ❖ Clark A. Hedrick,
 - ❖ Michael T. Lloyd,
 - ❖ Stevan M. Porter,
 - ❖ Soma Ramesh,
 - ❖ Alexis "Alex" Reyes.

(Alam, del Aguila and Hedrick serve on the current Town Council. Current Councilmember Donielle Scherff is not seeking reelection.)

See sample ballot for City of Fairfax candidates for Mayor, City Council and School Board.

NEWS

Toni Zollicoffer Chief Equity Officer



Toni Zollicoffer

Toni Zollicoffer has been appointed chief equity officer for Fairfax County, effective Monday, Sept. 30. This role is a key component in advancing the One Fairfax policy, a racial and social equity initiative adopted by the Board of Supervisors to ensure that equity is at the core of all public policies and services. Zollicoffer succeeds Karla Bruce, the county's first chief equity officer, who retires next week.

Zollicoffer has been with the Fairfax County Department of Family Services as the director of Domestic and Sexual Violence Services (DSVS) since May 2018, and brings over 25 years of leadership experience dedicated to improving outcomes for populations disproportionately affected in areas such as housing access, interpersonal violence and mental health to this new position. Her work has also been instrumental in embedding racial and social justice into the county's violence interruption and prevention strategies, ensuring equitable outcomes for all residents.

As chief equity officer, Zollicoffer will lead the county's efforts to address disparities and promote fairness across all public policies and services. The One Fairfax policy aims to ensure that every resident, regardless of their background or circumstances,

can fully participate in the county's economic, social and cultural life.

"Toni's exceptional track record in advancing equity and her deep understanding of community needs make her the ideal choice for this role," said County Executive Bryan Hill. "I am happy for the overlap with Ms. Bruce, who has been one of my closest thought partners during the past seven years."

In her new role, Zollicoffer will oversee the integration of equity principles into the county's policies and programs, collaborate with community stakeholders and provide guidance on addressing barriers to opportunity. She will also play a key role in the One Fairfax Community Roundtable, which supports the county's commitment to equity by bringing together diverse voices to inform and shape policy.

Prior to her role with DSVS, Zollicoffer served as deputy director of victim services for the Executive Office of the Mayor in Washington, DC, and held senior positions at So Others Might Eat (SOME), Inc. Her education includes a certificate of advanced graduate studies and a master's in clinical community counseling from Johns Hopkins University. She is also a licensed professional counselor and has been recognized for her work in social justice and community health.

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Another **THE CONNECTION** Community Partnership

Centreville Immigration Forum 2024 Honorees

Celebrating diversity at annual dinner.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Kicking off Hispanic Heritage Month, the Centreville Immigration Forum held its annual dinner fundraiser celebrating diversity and a night of community at the International Country Club Fairfax on Sept. 17. The event honors the non-profit organization's commitment to opportunity and acceptance to all.

During the event, CIF recognized its 2024 honorees: Karol Escalante Herrera, director of Immigrant Affairs for Fairfax County; Juan Andres, former vice president of Moderna; and Elena De León, fashion designer and influencer.

De León is an Indigenous Mayan Ixil woman from Nebaj, Guatemala. She is an

entrepreneur, creator, and designer who creates clothing that combines traditional weaving with modern trends that celebrate her culture and history.

Andres Mascuñana is a Spanish citizen who has worked as a pharmaceutical executive for over 35 years in Spain, the United Kingdom, the US, Puerto Rico and Switzerland. His career in developing and manufacturing medicine included work with Eli Lilly, Novartis, and Moderna.

Escalante is Fairfax County's director of Immigrant Community Affairs. She is part of the One Fairfax team and has experience working on immigration, community engagement, public policy, diversity, inclusion, and strategic planning topics. Escalante served as a diplomat in the Foreign Service of Honduras, with her last post in Chicago as



Elena De León



Juan Andres Mascuñana



Karol Escalante

CENTREVILLE IMMIGRATION FORUM

accepts and provides opportunity for all immigrants.

Support CIF's mission through donating, hiring and volunteering, all great opportunities to engage in a vision of community that provides acceptance and opportunity for all.

Your donation helps Centreville Immigration Forum continue its great

work in the community. CIF is able to facilitate job placements, and offer trainings at low to no cost through community generosity. Contributions are key to our success in equity, justice, and inclusion that realizes our vision of a community that provides acceptance and opportunity for all.

Learn more on Facebook @CentrevilleImmigrationForum or Instagram @theCIFva. <https://centrevilleimmigrationforum.org/>

First Food Collection of New School Year

Event held during National Hunger Action month.

More than 600 area Food For Neighbors volunteers stepped up to tackle student hunger in Fairfax County Saturday, Sept. 14, by collecting and sorting over 19,600 pounds of food and toiletries for public school children. In addition to donations from more than 1,490 households, FFN received food drives from the Fairfax County Health Department and Gold's Gym. Among others, volunteers at the event sites included employees of bartaco, Salesforce, and Ventera as well as members of the Kiwanis Club of Tysons, National Charity League, Young Men's Service League, and Girl Scout Troops #4425 and #5208.

"This school year with Food For Neighbors, I look forward to seeing the direct impact of our efforts as we help more teen students gain access to reliable meals," said Darlene Christopher, who manages the FFN Springfield Area. "I'm excited to work with our community to expand our reach and ensure that teens in Fairfax County can focus on their school work and not worry about where their next meal will come from."

"Kiwanis' mission is to serve children, so this is a very meaningful and impactful volunteer opportunity for our members," said Past President Jen Wolff, to help "tackle teen food insecurity in our Northern Virginia community."

Food For Neighbors, soon entering its ninth year, helps schools establish in-house food pantries and mobilizes local communities to fill them with food and toiletries donated through the nonprofit's Red Bag Program.

Centreville Area Manager Heather Ellison said, "Centreville and Chantilly are so fortunate to have such an amazing turnout today. We have wonderful food donors and volunteers. The majority are students who are repeat sorters here to make a difference in the lives of their peers."

Karen McGuinness, who manages the FFN South County, echoed that sentiment, saying, "I am so excited for South County to return for its second year as a collection and sorting site. We started off small but we are growing and now providing to our middle school as well. It's so great to be expanding and feeding the teens that need it most in our area."

Kristin Simons, General Manager of bartaco in Reston, joined a number of employees volunteering and providing lunch for hardworking community members rolling up their sleeves in Herndon. "We are really excited we can continue our partnership with Food For Neighbors this year," she said. "We were happy to support FFN with our Giving Taco campaign. We look forward to coming up with creative ways to support the mission in the future."

Despite Northern Virginia being among the most affluent areas in the state, over one in three students in Fairfax County and more than one in four students in Arlington and Loudoun counties qualified for free or reduced-price school meals during the 2023-2024 school year. Food For Neighbors works to ensure that food is readily accessible to students during the school day and to take home over weekends and holidays.

"We want all children to start out the school year fully ready to learn," said Karen Joseph, Founder and Executive Director of Food For Neighbors. "To reach their full potential, students need to concentrate on their classes, not on the growling in their stomachs." Experts say food insecurity affects memory, mood, and motor skills.

"September is Hunger Action Month—a time when communities in towns big and small come together to help ensure that no one goes hungry," continued Joseph. "And once again, Northern Virginia residents have generously given their time and donations to help students in neighborhood schools. We are deeply grateful for their help and for the profound impact they have on so many young lives."

Throughout its service area in Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun counties, Food For Neighbors collected and sorted over 26,000 pounds of donations bound for 47 partnering schools. To learn more about Food For Neighbors and join more than 3,000 Red Bag donors and over 3,500 volunteers, visit <https://www.foodforneighbors.org/get-involved>.

Food For Neighbors, 11710 Plaza America Dr #130, Reston, VA 20190

contact@foodforneighbors.org www.FoodForNeighbors.org

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FOOD FOR NEIGHBORS



The Centreville High School sorting location enjoys the support of several service organizations, including the National Charity League, pictured here.



After a morning of sorting food at Herndon Middle School, employees from bartaco of Reston treat their fellow volunteers to lunch.

RCC's Preference Poll Candidates 2024

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

There are four Reston Community Center (RCC) Preference Poll candidates vying for three open positions on its Board of Governors.

Voting continues until Sept. 27 at 5 p.m. Mail-in ballots must be received by 5 p.m. on Sept. 26. The candidates are William G. Bouie, Lisa Sechrest-Ehrhardt, Mahnaz Weldy and Malka Wickramatilake.

When asked how their leadership would enhance RCC's efforts to unite the community by providing opportunities for enriching leisure experiences and connections that reach out to all to foster inclusiveness and a sense of belonging, the four candidates responded in part as follows.

William G. Bouie — Our diversity is a strength that is unique, embraced, cherished, and to be celebrated... I will continue to work with the residents and the County to ensure consistency of programming... and to engage the business community so that they receive the inherent value in working with the Community Center and its programs.

Lisa Sechrest-Ehrhardt — As a DEI consultant, I inform individuals, organizations, and communities about their strengths and highlight the power of diversity... My desire to serve on the RCC Board of Governors is to ensure that all Reston residents are included in and benefit from the great programs and events RCC offers.

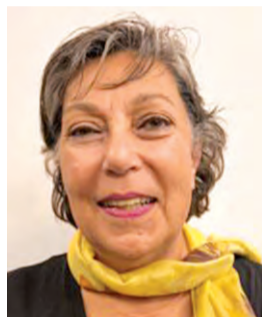
Mahnaz Weldy — My experiences as an analyst for the U.S. government and as an artist have given me a unique perspective on encouraging inclusive environments. My work with Moms Against Poverty and the Iranian-American Women Leadership Foundation



William G. Bouie



Lisa Sechrest-Ehrhardt



Mahnaz Weldy



Malka Wickramatilake

involved collaborating with diverse groups to achieve a common goal.

Malka Wickramatilake — As an executive at Tennis Channel and book editor, my expertise in organizing and communicating brings people together for projects globally and locally... It is important to hear both established and new voices and further make RCC the heart of our community where everyone can explore activities, events, and interests.

For additional information, visit <https://restoncommunitycenter.com/info/board-of-governors/preference-poll/preference-poll-candidates/>

BULLETIN BOARD

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

MONDAY/SEPT. 23

Car Free Day. Car Free Day is a free event observed on September 23 this year. Commuters and residents in the Washington, DC region are encouraged to participate in Car Free Day by working from home or choosing alternative modes of transportation, such as biking, walking, scootering

or public transit, for the day. To join the fun and make a positive environmental impact, fill out the free pledge form at <https://www.carfreemetrodc.org>. Whether you're already car-free or looking to explore alternative options, take the pledge to go car-free or car-lite

(carpool, vanpool) that day. Every participant helps promote a cleaner, greener commute. Those who take the free pledge will be entered into a free raffle for a chance to win great prizes.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

Vote David R. Kennedy for the U.S. Congress



Hi Friends! I am a "We the People" Independent who will always fight for the quality-of-life issues that matter to you. Together, we can reject divisive politics ... and embrace our common good!



Learn more at www.DaveKennedy2024.com

Paid for by David R. Kennedy for Congress



BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

Reston Association members are encouraged to provide comments on the association's 2025 Capital and Operating budgets at this public hearing.

Thursday, Sept. 26, 6:00 - 6:30 p.m.
RA Conference Center
12001 Sunrise Valley Drive

Visit www.reston.org for additional details.

PUBLIC NOTICE

In-Person Public Hearing on the McLean Community Center's FY2026 Budget
(July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026)

McLean Community Center Governing Board
Wednesday, Sept. 25, 6:30 p.m.

Small District 1A-Dranesville residents who wish to speak at the Public Hearing are asked to call 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, to be placed on the speakers' list. The draft budget proposal will be available on the center's website and copies can be picked up at the center's reception desk beginning on Thursday, Sept. 12.

Written comments may be delivered to the McLean Community Center (see address below) marked "Attention: Executive Director," or sent by email to feedback@mcleancenter.org. Written comments may be provided after the Public Hearing through Monday, Oct. 14.



McLean Community Center
1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean VA 22101
703-790-0123, TTY: 711
mcleancenter.org

Supervisors Approve New Requirements for Data Centers

Stricter standards elicit reactions during and after vote.

By **MERCIA HOBSON**
THE CONNECTION

On Sept. 10, following extensive community engagement efforts that helped shape the final recommendations presented to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors, the Board approved the long-awaited Data Center Zoning Ordinance by a vote of 8-2.

“What we’re doing here is taking a quantum leap forward to put in place restrictions on data centers that come close, as close as we can, to meeting the concerns that people have raised with us about data centers,” Board Chairman Jeff McKay said.

The amendment revises the permissions and adds or revises the use-specific standards for data centers to address issues of compatibility with surrounding uses, noise, and aesthetics while introducing stricter standards.

At the board’s March 5 meeting this year, the board approved advertising a 4-cent FY 2025 real estate tax rate increase for the County Executive’s FY 2025 Fairfax County Advertised Budget. The board enacted a budget that raised the tax rate by 3 cents.

State law restricts how localities can raise revenue. As the county’s commercial tax revenue has declined, Fairfax County supervisors realized the county needed new tax revenue to help fund community services.

In this high-tech region, there is demand for more data centers and a growing number of applications



Chairman Jeff McKay.



Supervisor Pat Herrity.



Supervisor Andres Jimenez.



Supervisor Walter Alcorn.

to build them in Fairfax County. Meanwhile demand for commercial office space is shrinking.

The board supported data centers despite resident concerns about noise, property values, and environmental impacts during the Sept. 10 public hearing. The Planning Commission recommended a 200-foot setback from residential areas and Metro, and the board debated whether to treat data centers as by-right uses or require special exceptions. Discussions highlighted the need for balanced regulations to protect residents while fostering economic growth.

Supervisor Pat Herrity (Springfield) said data centers must be “properly located and screened to reduce the impact on our residents.” Although the ordinance was not exactly what Herrity wanted, he “supported the motion as a step in the right direction to achieve that balance.”

In his statement released after the vote, Chairman Jeff McKay also used the word “balanced.” McKay said the board took “a balanced approach. ... The board based its action on public input with aggressive but fair standards, which made a quantum leap forward in modernizing our zoning ordinance.”

Two supervisors, Andres Jimenez, representing the Mason District, and Walter Alcorn, representing the Hunter Mill District, voted against the amendment reg-

Key Changes for Data Center Approval

The previous zoning ordinance permitted data centers in various commercial and industrial districts, with specific standards for equipment enclosure and building size. However, the newly approved amendment introduces stricter guidelines, including:

Equipment Enclosure: In all districts where data centers are allowed, all equipment must be enclosed or screened by a wall or similar barrier to reduce visual and noise impacts.

Size Thresholds: Limits on the size of by-right data centers are retained where they previously applied and now the I-4 District has a size limit as well. Larger developments require special exception approval, except in the I-5 and I-6 Zoning Districts

Residential Setback: Data center buildings must be at least 200 feet from the lot line of an

adjacent or abutting residential district or property. Equipment such as back-up generators must be 300 feet from the lot line of residential property or separated from the lot line of a residential district or residential property by the data center building. Lesser distances may be allowed with special exception approval.

Distance from Metro Stations: Data centers must be at least one mile from a Metro station.

Noise Studies: Pre- and post-construction noise studies must be submitted to ensure compliance with the Noise Ordinance.

Building Design: Main entrance features, façade variations, and other architectural elements are required to enhance the visual appeal of these industrial buildings.

SOURCE: FAIRFAX COUNTY

ulating data center placement in Fairfax County.

Jimenez said this is county-wide ordinance, his focus is on the unique challenges Mason District residents are facing. He noted that “added measures would be critical in addressing concerns specific to our community.”

Alcorn said his vote was in the spirit of compromise to try to “protect some of the Hunter Mill residents.” Some residents voiced concerns regarding noise, building design, the environment, and proximity to residential areas.

Alcorn proposed an amendment that could have required some data

centers in the pipeline to comply with some of the new zoning ordinance, but it was defeated 8-2. This was a bitter setback for some residents who have been fighting data centers proposed in their areas.

In his statement, Herrity outlined the new Zoning Ordinance. It restricts the right to build data centers by-right (without a public zoning process) to parcels zoned heavy industrial (I-5 and I-6), requires a 200-foot setback from residential lot lines; it requires a noise study, and sets height and size requirements by zoning classification without a special exception process.

According to Herrity, the new zoning amendment grandfathers applications that were in process at the initial public hearing on July 16 into the old ones, as is typical with new zoning rules.

However, like Alcorn and Jimenez, Herrity expressed concern. In his statement, Herrity addressed the new requirement to “locate data centers outside of a one-mile radius around Metro.” Herrity said that certain Metro areas, such as the Franconia-Springfield Metro, “contain heavy industrial land that is not suitable for residential development within that radius.”

Tyler Ray, President of the Bren Pointe HOA Board, a coalition of Bren Mar residents who have opposed the Plaza 500 data center for two years, said the board favored deep-pocketed data center developers over residents by approving the proposal. The board approved “denying residents the basic right to a public hearing on massive data centers that will be placed next door to them.”

Video of the Public Hearing on the Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment Re: Data Centers is available at https://video.fairfaxcounty.gov/player/clip/3475?view_id=7&redirect=true. It begins at time stamp 4:32:55.



PHOTO: CORNERSTONES

Cornerstones Seeks Cook Volunteers and Donors

Cornerstones seeks volunteers to prepare nutritious hot meals and bagged lunches for guests at the Temporary Overnight Shelter in Reston. To cook or donate, send an email to volunteer@cornerstonesva.org or nate.king@cornerstonesva.org.

— MERCIA HOBSON

Transportation Projects in the Southern Part of Fairfax County

Some still in planning stage, others underway.

By **MIKE SALMON**
THE CONNECTION

A project that impacts thousands of commuters a day is the Fairfax County Parkway Widening Project on the northbound lanes in the Fairfax Station area. The project adds another lane each way for about four miles of Fairfax County Parkway between Nomes Court and Route 29. This stretch of the parkway sees lots of

traffic during the day and it was determined that the current two-lane configuration was not adequate to handle the volume of cars. The project is scheduled to be completed in mid-2027.

Part of the parkway widening project is an interchange at Fairfax County Parkway and Popes Head Road to relieve a big bottleneck during rush hours. The \$82 million project is currently underway to raise Pope’s Head

SEE TRANSPORTATION, PAGE 9

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

COMMUNITY GUIDE



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The future Bus Rapid Transit on Richmond Highway will be known as "The One."

Transportation Projects in the Southern Part of Fairfax County

FROM PAGE 8

Road over Fairfax County Parkway, eliminating the stop light and a big traffic jam that occurs each morning and evening during rush hour.

Another project under construction in the south county area is the intersection improvements at Franconia Road and Rose Hill Drive. Elements of this \$534,000 project include a flashing yellow arrow on westbound Franconia Road, signalized crosswalk and ramp upgrades to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Projects in design in southern Fairfax County include intersection improvements at Newington and Cinder Bed Road, intersection improvements at Telegraph Road and Hayfield Road, and a bridge replacement on Walker Road where it crosses Piney Run south of Springfield.

A recently completed project is the implementation of Burke Centre Shopping Center Left Turn Restriction in Fairfax County. The attention to this began last May in response to crash fatalities when cars pulled out of the shopping center to turn left.

A \$241.6 million project at Frontier Drive near the Springfield Town Center has been talked about for years but so far, no funding has been identified for this project so there has been no progress so far. The project entails ramp reconstruction where Frontier Drive is accessed near the Franconia-Springfield Metro station, and continuing Frontier Drive through the station to connect to Loisdale Road on the other side.

There is one project under review by VDOT that they call a "megaproject," and that project is aimed at extending the express toll lanes 11 miles from the Springfield

Interchange across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge into Maryland. This project is considered a public-private partnership which will be ultimately funded by tolls.

On the other end of the Capital Beltway, transportation planners are building project 495 NEXT to extend the express/toll lanes up to the American Legion Bridge and Potomac River into Maryland on the northern end. Updating and widening the American Legion Bridge is on hold right now as the Maryland DOT pursues federal grants for the project. The funding level remains consistent in the draft Consolidated Transportation Program currently relative to last year's final CTP, MDOT said. "However, given the overall fiscal situation that the Department faces, we are considering further phasing of the work related to the American Legion Bridge," they added. Phasing means delaying in this case.

Bus Rapid Transit on Richmond Highway

The federal government recently approved the Richmond Highway Bus Rapid Transit project to enter the Engineering Phase. The BRT will feature a 7.4-mile dedicated bus lane from Huntington Metro Station to Fort Belvoir. The \$937 million project includes nine stations, in addition to pedestrian and bicycle accommodations and is expected to be operational by late 2031.

This BRT system is part of Supervisor Dan Storck's "Embark Richmond Highway," plan which includes pedestrian, bike and road improvements along with affordable housing and commercial space so people can work close to where they live, reducing the reliance on a lengthy commute.



Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

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

Jurisdiction	East State ID	Route #	Route Name	Culvert	Effective Date
SCOTT	16850	689	LUNSFORD MILL RD	STREAM	9/4/2024
FRANKLIN	7869	641	CALLAWAY RD/ ROUTE 641	BLACKWATER RIVER	8/29/2024
RUSSELL	16339	67	SWORDS CREEK RD	BIG LICK CREEK	8/27/2024
LEE	10795	612	ROUTE 612	WALLENS CREEK	8/27/2024
HANOVER	9529	656	MOUNT HERMON RD	CAMPBELLS CREEK	8/21/2024
BEDFORD	2872	735	ROCK CLIFF RD/ ROUTE 735	DIFFICULT CREEK	8/13/2024
TAZEWELL	18610	642	ROUTE 642	CROCKETT'S COVE CK	8/12/2024
GREENE	9005	636	GOOSEPOND RD	SWIFT RUN	8/7/2024
ROANOKE	15104	758	CARSON RD/ROUTE 758	BRANCH GLADE CREEK	7/29/2024

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

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit vdot.virginia.gov and navigate to Traffic and Travel/For freight operators/Truck restrictions. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov or the Load Rating Program Manager, Manjil Devkota 804-786-4064.

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

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Herndon Armors Up Amendment For Downtown Redevelopment

Did 7-year agreement merry-go-round leave town unprotected?

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The original Comprehensive Agreement on Nov. 1, 2017, between the Town of Herndon and developer Comstock Herndon Venture LC “had notable gaps that heavily favored Comstock,” said Herndon Councilmember Pradip Dhakal on Sept. 15. The agreement has undergone five amendments and four extensions to the Outside Satisfaction Date (OSD), including the most recent extension on Sept. 10.

“Had we not approved the OSD extension to Dec. 10, Comstock would have issued a Notice Not to Proceed,” Dhakal speculated. “[It] would have likely triggered a lengthy unwinding process. Given the contract’s complexities and the potential for litigation, it could have taken years for the town to regain control of the land, possibly leaving it undeveloped for a prolonged period.”

Dhakal and Councilmember Keven LeBlanc are the two candidates for town mayor in the upcoming general election. They provided comments separately in writing centering them on the agreement, its amendments, extensions to their “outside satisfaction dates” and lack thereof, and the impact of global and national events on the seven-year wait for Comstock to get financing and construct the planned redevelopment.

The town and Comstock entered into the Comprehensive Agreement on Nov. 1, 2017, to redevelop the 4.675-acre town-owned downtown parcel into a mixed-use town center, a project with an arts center, and associated parking under the Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act of 2002 of the Code of Virginia.

According to LeBlanc, the town worked on additional protections in the Sept. 10 extension that allowed the town a much better exit plan and unwind if something were to go wrong; that was the key



SCREENSHOT HERNDON DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT

Rendering of planned Herndon Historic District.

to protecting the town. “If we had not signed and agreed to move the OSD to Dec. 10, we would have been in default; we would have owed millions of dollars as a town, and then we would have had about a decade to unwind and bring it back.”

Leblanc explained that the extension is part of the fifth and most recent amendment to the agreement, and includes contractual safeguards intended to shield the town from monetary and litigation risks. He added that the 2017 contract became “problematic,” making the town vulnerable and unprepared for the challenging and ever-changing national and international environments.

When asked what would happen this time if national and international events prevented Comstock from meeting the OSD dates, LeBlanc

NEXT STEPS

- ❖ September 2024 - Complete Revisions to Comprehensive Agreement
- ❖ January 2025 - Bond & Construction Loan Financing Term Set
- ❖ January 2025 - Start Site Work (Duct Bank)
- ❖ March 2025 - Bond & Financing (Construction Cleared to Proceed)
- ❖ April 2025 - Ground Breaking
- ❖ July 2026 - Garage Open to Public
- ❖ Mid-2027 Project Completion

HISTORIC HERNDON NEIGHBORHOOD

Comstock promo:
273 Luxury Residences
17,000+ SF of Boutique, Restaurant and Retail Cafe Space
Arts Center with indoor/outdoor spaces
Arts Plaza and Walkways
330 spaces Town Parking
396 spaces Residential/Retail
Pedestrian/Bicycle-Friendly Adjacent to W&OD Trail
3 Public Plazas with Outdoor Seating and Dedicated Art

lanc said that the council worked to include more exclusive penalties and outs for the town in the Dec.

10 agreement.

Dhakal said the current council worked “diligently to introduce

risk mitigation strategies. They are meant to minimize the town’s exposure.” However, according to Dhakal, some details cannot be publicly shared now. “Extending the OSD was a decision made in good faith by the council, with the belief that the project can still move forward using 2024 figures and serve the best interests of both the town and Comstock,” said Dhakal.

The much anticipated and long-delayed Herndon Downtown Redevelopment project by Comstock Herndon Venture LC might begin in early 2025, according to Comstock’s Next Steps, as written in a slide presentation offered by Chris Clemente of Comstock Herndon Venture LC, during the town council meeting on Aug. 13.

Did 7-Year Agreement Merry-go-round Leave Town Unprotected?

FROM PAGE 10

This is contingent upon the continued drop in interest rates and other variables nationally and globally. On Sept. 10, William “Bill” Ashton II tempered project go-ahead expectations during a town council meeting. In the final hours of his seven-year tenure as town manager, Ashton opined that the project “could collapse” if interest rates did not decrease. The Stafford County Board of Supervisors has named Ashton the new county administrator.

The Herndon Town Council approved Resolution 24-G-52 on Sept. 10, 2024, by a vote of 5-1, with Councilmember Donielle Scherff dissenting. “My good faith in this is gone,” Scherff said.

The Resolution authorized the Mayor to sign a “letter amendment” to extend the outside satisfaction date to Dec. 10, 2024. That meant the town and Comstock finalized their Amended and Re-stated Comprehensive Agreement 2024. This included provisions requiring the closing of financing for the project to occur no later than March 31, 2025, and initiation of construction of the project to happen on the property no later than April 30, 2025, subject only to cer-

tain limited conditions.

In the film Groundhog Day, television weatherman Phil Connors finds himself trapped in a time loop, reliving Feb. 2 during the annual Groundhog Day event in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. The Town of Herndon, its councils, and Comstock have been in a “time loop” since 2020, repeatedly acknowledging and agreeing to extensions to the outside satisfaction date.

A historical overview reveals that after the town officially closed on transferring 4.7 acres of town-owned land to Comstock Holding Companies on Dec. 20, 2020, there followed four extensions and one pause:

- ❖ Dec. 21, 2021 - Letter Amendment to extend the outside satisfaction date to April 30, 2022;
- ❖ April 29, 2022 - Comstock exercises its contractual right to a 24-month Market Pause of the outside satisfaction date;
- ❖ April 25, 2024 - Letter Amendment to extend outside satisfaction date to Aug. 15, 2024;
- ❖ August 13, 2024 - Letter Amendment to extend outside satisfaction date to Sept. 10, 2024; and
- ❖ Sept. 10, 2024 - Letter Amendment to extend outside satisfaction

date to Dec. 10, 2024.

[Source: Agenda Item 6a Herndon Town Council Meeting Sept. 10, 2024]

In his comments a month earlier, on Aug. 13 during the council meeting and his slide presentation, Herndon Downtown Redevelopment, Clemente said they encountered impacts beginning in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by surges in building costs and inflation in 2021. According to Clemente, ten additional federal rate increases in 2022-2023 pushed the federal funds rate to rise to 5.5 percent. It would be at the highest level in 22 years. The market responded by raising the interest rate on commercial loans to almost nine percent. In January 2024, Comstock rebid construction costs for the redevelopment project. Costs increased by 65 percent. In April 2022, Comstock exercised its right to a Market Pause, as outlined in the agreement and provided a delay notice from April 30, 2022, to August 15, 2024.

The presentations shocked many residents, who voiced their opinions at the next public hearing. Instead of a 16,265-square-foot arts center, its rendering showed a 4,265-square-foot arts

center, reduced by approximately 75 percent as part of the Historic Herndon District neighborhood. [Source: Comstock 8.13.24, Herndon Downtown Redevelopment] Comstock indicated two retail sections in its presentation, one at Station Street, 3,600 square feet, and the other at Elden Street, 14,000 square feet. Initial redevelopment plans called for 17,300 square feet of retail. The rendering has three residential buildings: BLVD W & OD, which has 94 units; BLVD Elden, which has 120 units; and BLVD Arts, which has 59 units, totaling 273. The Arts Center remains as initially planned, a cold, dark shell that Comstock is not responsible for finishing.

However, Comstock was hopeful, according to Clemente, that it could get approvals for bond and construction financing. That would enable its Davis Companies to begin site work on a utility duct bank in January and break ground in April 2025.

The town council unanimously passed resolution 24-G-46 to approve extending the Outside Satisfaction date to September 10, 2024. Ashton later said that on September 10, the deal came down to appealing to Comstock and that

they were protecting the town. He added that with the town extending the deadline, it would be up to Comstock to follow through.

Comprehensive Agreement Documents

Comprehensive Agreement for the Herndon Redevelopment Project (2017)

First Amendment to Comprehensive Agreement (December 3, 2020)

Second Amendment to Comprehensive Agreement (December 21, 2021)

Delay Notice (April 29, 2022)

Third Amendment to Comprehensive Agreement (April 25, 2024)

Fourth Amendment to Comprehensive Agreement (August 14, 2024)

Fifth Amendment to Comprehensive Agreement (September 10, 2024)

Other Project Documents

Comstock Presentation to Town Council August 13, 2024 (PDF of presentation)

Comstock’s Architectural Design Plans

Downtown Site Map

Downtown Master Plan

Downtown Pattern Book

St Peter’s in the Woods Community Forest

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

The Old Growth Forest Network recently designated St. Peter’s in the Woods Episcopal Church Sanctuary Forest as a “Community Forest.” The Old Growth Network’s program recognizes community forests which might be younger than “old growth” but are closely tied to the fabric of their communities and serve as ambassadors to larger, wilder forests, that are farther away or harder to visit for some. These forests are situated where they can be expected to be preserved.

Under the Network, an “old-growth forest” is one that has developed over a long period of time without disturbance, creating unique ecological features. There are very few old growth forests remaining, especially in the East. Most original forests have been logged. In the Mid-Atlantic most were cut before or during the Civil War, for agriculture, timber, or fuel. There are no federal or government agency protections for ancient forests, and most Americans will never see one. In 2007, the private non-profit Old Growth Forest Network organization was founded and began work to identify an ancient forest in each county in the United States which could sustain tree growth; about 2,370 counties. The organization was founded by Marylander Joan Maloof, an environmental scientist and author of several books on the environment. Trees within the Network have formal protection in place that ensures that their trees and ecosystems are protected from commercial

logging.

St. Peter’s is the third Community Forest designed in Virginia; and the first in Fairfax County. Stacey Remick, a congregant and Virginia Master Naturalist, who led the project to seek Community Forest status, shared that the St Peter’s forest is largely managed “by benign neglect.” The forest is allowed to just be, without use of pesticides; without removing dead trees; and without removing leaves. The natural processes create habitat for the living things that make homes in both healthy and old trees, in soil enriched by decay, and in leaf beds. The benign woods management is one of several actions the church is taking to improve the environment, their energy efficiency, and their impact on the planet. The congregation also plants more trees, places bluebird boxes, uses reusable eating utensils and plates, conducts energy audits, replaces incandescent light bulbs, maintains door weather stripping, and more.

The recognition event held Sept. 14 included a walk of the forest meditation trail and church grounds. The grounds include two native gardens, a forested memorial garden, and a food garden that supplies food for local pantries. Brian Kane, representing the Mid-Atlantic region of the Old Growth Network, presented the recognition sign. The network inducted 18 forests in 2023, and 15 others this year.

Kane called on participants, by Sept. 20, to join in asking the Forest Service to strengthen President Biden’s Executive Order for protections, by finalizing stronger standards to pro-

tect old-growth forests. This could end commercial logging of old-growth forests, and combat the extreme historic losses of these forest through robust protection of mature trees from logging. For information on adding your comments to the draft protections, see <https://www.oldgrowthforest.net/add-your-comment>

Fairfax County’s Hemlock Overlook, a 400 acre woodland along Bull Run, was identified

as a rarity in 2023 by the Old Growth Forest Network. Its stands of Eastern Hemlocks, some as old as 250 years, became the first in the county recognized in the Network. That park also is home to old growth Sycamore and Tulip Poplars.

A dozen Virginia forests have been designated within the Old Growth Forest Network. (<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/may/05/hemlock-overlook-park-recognized-old-growth-forest/>)

The St, Peter’s Sanctuary Forest can be visited at 5911 Fairview Woods Drive, Fairfax Station.

Herndon’s Mayoral Candidates To Face Off At Forum

On Monday, Sept. 30, from 7:30 to 9 p.m., Cornerstones and the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce will host the Town of Herndon Mayoral Candidate Forum at Trinity Presbyterian Church, 651 Dranesville Road. Andy Lacher, board director of Cornerstones will moderate a community panel to ask candidates Pradip Dhakal and Kevin Leblanc about their platforms and visions for serving the town’s community.

To submit candidate questions for consideration and register to attend the forum, email advocate@Cornerstonesva.org by Wednesday, September 25.

In Virginia, early in-person voting for



Kevin LeBlanc

Pradip Dhakal

the 2024 general election begins Friday, Sept. 20, six weeks before Tuesday, Nov. 5, Election Day.

The mayoral candidates’ websites are <https://pradip4herndon.com/> and <https://www.keven4herndon.com/issues>.

— MERCIA HOBSON



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANTHONY AMOS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

“Dogs are encouraged to participate in our Summer Concert Series at Burke Lake Park, where dogs look forward to treats supplied by Supervisor Herrity,” saysarena M. Monterrosa, Legislative and Human Services Aide, Office of Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity

“I love meeting our 4-legged friends at Grist Mill Park for our Annual Ides of Bark Dog Festival every March with dog vendors, wagging tails, and fun.” Dan Stork, Mount Vernon District Supervisor



PHOTO BY DAVID FENNEL

“My wife [Rita Peralta] and I love hiking year-round with our pup, Martha, at Riverbend Park in Great Falls. There are miles of dog-friendly trails and amazing views of the Potomac River,” says Ben Wiles, chief of staff for Supervisor Jimmy Bierman, Dranesville District



PHOTO COURTESY OF LISA GOLDMAN

Lisa Goldman, a Fairfax County resident, said the family dog, Tank, took full advantage of Dog Day at Lake Fairfax’s Watermine and enjoyed brunch at the dog-friendly Tatte Bakery and Cafe at Reston Town Center.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

Mount Vernon Estate; Bunnyman Brewing, Lorton:

“My family and I are long-time members of Mount Vernon and enjoy bringing our dog Margo to walk the estate grounds. Leashed dogs are permitted throughout the property during regular daytime hours. You can explore a few trails, and we particularly enjoy walking through the working farm with sweeping views of the Potomac River. Bunnyman Brewing recently opened a second location at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton. This location is conveniently within walking distance from our new shelter, Fairfax County Animal Shelter (FCAS), Lorton Campus. It is surrounded by miles of hiking trails through Laurel Hill Park and adjacent to the Cross County Trail. Bunnyman is the perfect place to unwind with an excellent craft beer and plenty of space to hang out with your four-legged friends. You will often see FCAS staff and volunteers there after taking our shelter dogs on a hike.”

— FAIRFAX COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER DIRECTOR REASA CURRIER

Fairfax County Is Doggone Friendly

Our county seen through the eyes of our dogs.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Learn where to go, what to do, and get there car-free with your fur baby.

Have you noticed there are a lot of dogs in Fairfax County? Whether you have lived in Fairfax County for a while or are new here, many of the 880,416 adults in the county view their dogs as family members. According to the county, in 2024, there are 87,000 registered canine fur pals. That means one dog per nearly ten adults in the county. For two-adult households, the ratio increases to one in five. And doesn't it seem like more?

It is not unusual to see dogs at restaurants, breweries, stores, parks, historic sites, and events in Fairfax County, some even specifically for dogs. In the spring, the Mount Vernon District Ides of Bark features games, awards, food, events, and health evaluations. There are yearly dog swim events in the fall when the county's pools close for the season.

Supervisor Kathy Smith, Sully District, said she and her family have an eight-month-old Great Dane, and he is growing fast — already 120 pounds. “We are learning all about him, and he is learning about us as well. I encourage everyone to bring their dogs to Parktoberfest on Oct. 5 in EC Lawrence Park. There will be food, vendors, music, and a relaxing atmosphere,” said Smith.

Don't miss the Braddock Bark festival in May.

The Howl-o-Ween Dog Festival by the Reston Association is coming up on Saturday, Oct. 19. Dog owners can enjoy “Yappy Hour” with alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. Human and pet visits with Santa always



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

“Doggie Maggie” Jimenez is “fiercely private and doesn't frequent public spaces,” said Eleanor Rogers, communications director, Office of Mason District Supervisor Andres Jimenez. “Instead, Maggie prefers spending time with her adoptive family in Fairfax County’s Mason District, where her dad is the supervisor. Maggie’s favorite activities include protecting the backyard garden from birds, taking long walks, and dressing up with her two sisters. Maggie would like to remind you that shelter pups can be a great fit for your family, even if your backyard is infested with birds.”

prove fun for people and pets.

Where are some of Fairfax County’s dog-friendly dog parks?

Leashed dogs are always welcome in all Fairfax County Park Authority’s parks. Owners of well-mannered dogs who enjoy a calm run or friendly romp can take advantage of the county’s dog parks. A sample of dog parks and restaurants in Fairfax County follows.

Visit <https://www.fxva.com/blog/post/dog-parks-in-fairfax-county/> for the full list of dog parks, dog-friendly restaurants, pet-friendly hotels, and pet-friendly travel ideas.

DOG PARKS

❖ Alexandria: Grist Mill, 4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy. Picturesque surroundings offer seventy-five acres of playing fields, garden plots, playgrounds, trails, and more.

❖ Burke: Monticello, 5315 Guinea St. The gravel surface has designated areas for large and small dogs, water bowls, and benches for humans. Children can visit the outdoor fitness “playground” and Challenge Course.

❖ Chantilly: Rock Hill District, 15150 Old Lee Rd. A large area for dogs on a gravel/dirt surface adjacent to the enclosed dog park is a large grassy area and a lake. Bring water.

❖ Fairfax City: 11000 Berry St. There are water fountains for the pups, park benches, and a fenced exercise/run area.

❖ Herndon: Chandon, 900 Palmer Ave. There is a fenced-in gravel/dirt play area, additional space for small dogs under 25 lbs, restrooms, and a water source.

❖ Oakton: 10033 Blake Ln. Smaller Park offers a grassy, fenced-in field area with no water.

❖ Reston: 11300 Baron Cameron Ave. There are two designated spaces for big and small dogs, a gravel or dirt play area, a water supply, and communal bowls and toys. Other facilities include restrooms and sports fields.

❖ Springfield: 7550 Reservation Dr. South Run has one large play area.

❖ Tysons: 1600 Capital One Dr. Eleven stories in the air, designed with artificial turf to maintain clean paws.

❖ Vienna: 700 Courthouse Rd. SW in Moorefield Park, nearly 10 acres of land More information at <https://www.fairfax-county.gov/parks/offleash>

What about some dog-friendly restaurants in Fairfax County?



PHOTO COURTESY OF JILLIAN O'SHEA

“We love Frying Pan Farm Park because it's a wonderful place to be outside with our dog Teddy, and the park also offers an indoor, off-leash dog play area too.” — Jillian O’Shea, Hunter Mill District Supervisor’s office staffer

- ❖ Reston Lake Anne: Kalypso’s Sports Tavern
- ❖ Fairfax: Hamrock’s Restaurant
- ❖ Chantilly: Mellow Mushroom stone-baked pizza
- ❖ Clifton Cafe: A European bistro with a patio
- ❖ Great Falls: Mookie’s BBQ
- ❖ Herndon: Jimmy’s Old Town Tavern has the best wings in Virginia.

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMES WALKINSHAW

“Our dog, Chi Chi, who is blind, loves to go to our neighborhood playground with our son and his toddler friends. While she can't see, she loves to lay in the grass and listen to them play.” — James Walkinshaw, Braddock District Supervisor

❖ Vienna: Bear Branch Tavern

Can my dog come with me on the Fairfax Connector and Metro?

In Fairfax County, Fairfax Connector provides bus service. Riders can transport small dogs and animals in a closed pet carrier. The buses permit the use of service animals. For more information about Fairfax Connector: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/connector>. WMATA provides transit services throughout the metropolitan Washington region, including Metrorail, Metrobus, and MetroAccess.

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com



PHOTO BY THE LUSK FAMILY

“I enjoy walking with my rescue dog Ore around Huntley Meadows Park and the Olander and Margaret Banks Neighborhood Park, both in the Franconia District of Fairfax County. Ore was rescued from Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria.” — Rodney Lusk, Franconia District Supervisor

You can transport a pet on Metrorail and Metrobus if you keep it in a secure container. WMATA permits the use of service animals. For more information about WMATA, visit <https://wmata.com>.

See Fairfax County Like You Never Have Before

Volunteers and staff of Fairfax County Animal Shelter share their favorite dog-friendly places.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Connection asked Reasa Currier, the director of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, to find out if the volunteers and staff there would be willing to share the places in the county they frequently take their dogs or those in need of a walk to get them used to being outside of the shelter. It benefits both the dogs and their people.

Those who commit their lives to improving the lives of homeless dogs, whether for a few hours or a lifetime, are the best individuals to ask for advice on where to take a dog on an adventure. From gorgeous Lake Mercer at Fairfax Station, to sweeping views of the Potomac River from Mount Vernon Estate, to a place to unwind with craft beer, newcomers and longtime residents find Fairfax County dog-friendly.

Get your dog or volunteer at the Fairfax County Shelter to walk a dog, and you'll see your community in a new light.

MORE DOG-FRIENDLY PLACES, PAGE 14



Frying Pan Park, Herndon: “I love taking dogs there. Easy trails with lots for them to see and smell. You can walk them past Kidwell Farm if they enjoy meeting people, or park at church and go through woods. Nice stream where they can cool off too. I took Piper, a deaf dog from the shelter, on a pack walk there years ago. That’s where her new family saw her. They came to adopt her after we returned.” Piper was adopted from the Fairfax County Animal Shelter in 2016.

DOG-FRIENDLY PLACES

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER



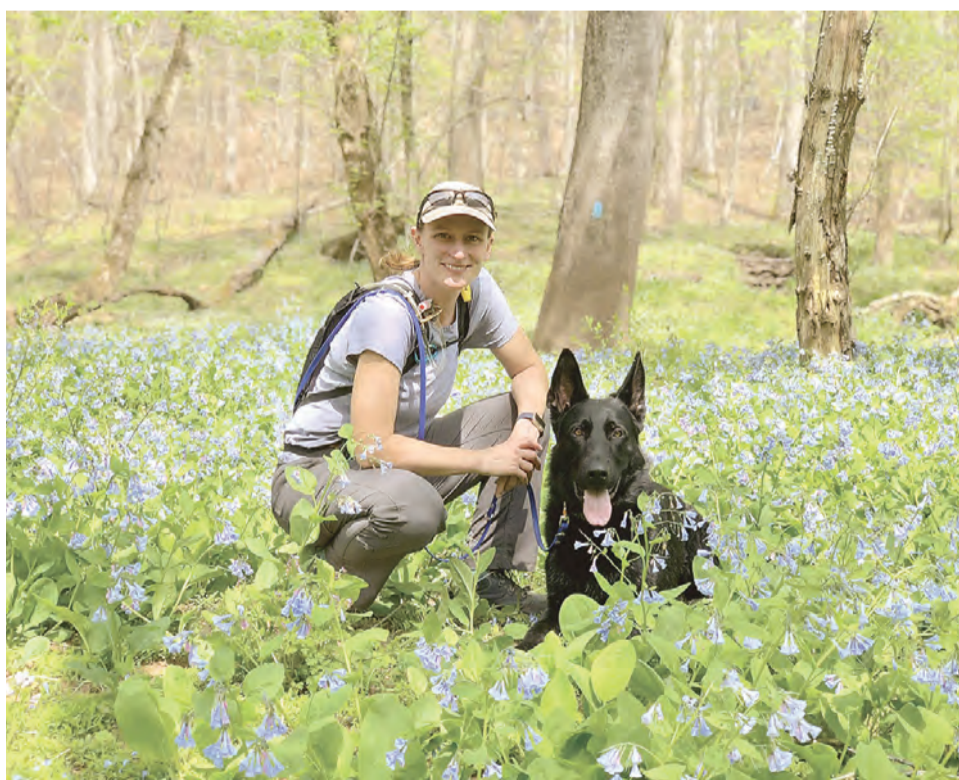
Mason Neck State Park, Lorton: “Mason Neck has bald eagles and beautiful views of the water!” This is Cooper with his mom, Cindy, Fairfax County Animal Shelter Customer Care Manager, at Mason Neck Park. Cooper was adopted from the Fairfax County Animal Shelter in March 2024.



Lake Mercer, Fairfax Station: “It’s a beautiful, tucked-away trail that goes around a lake, through the woods, and by a stream. It’s a 3.5-mile, easy loop without much traffic, and the views are gorgeous! The top of the dam is perfect for picture taking. I regularly take my dog Bodie there, as well as shelter dogs and my dog walking group because it’s a nice, quiet trail.” — Fairfax County Animal Shelter Volunteer



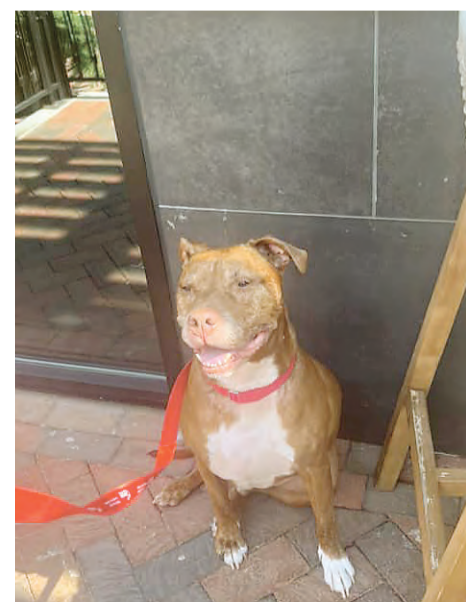
Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, Chantilly: “Lots of good trails, always nice flora and fauna, and not crowded.” The dog is Shadow.



Hemlock Overlook Regional Park, Clifton: “It’s an easy walk to great trails along the water. Family-friendly, and you pass by the Paradise Springs Winery.” The dog’s name is Kona. In the photo is Autumn Manka, Shelter Behavior Program Manager, is with her dog.



Burke Lake Park, Fairfax Station: “About a 5 mile loop. Relatively uncrowded on weekdays. Lots of shade in the summer and water for wading.” Bronson was adopted from the Fairfax County Animal Shelter in 2022. In this picture, she’s on a ‘Power Hour’ adventure with one of our volunteers.”



Reston Town Center: “As a resident of Reston (for now), I have to say Reston Town Center. Makers Union is particularly friendly to dogs!” About Fogo de Chao in Reston: “Their bar/patio menu is the best deal in Reston and they allow dogs.” Cliff was adopted from the Fairfax County Animal Shelter in August 2024. In the photo, Cliff is outside of Fogo de Chao in Reston.

USGS Headquarters in Reston Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Where and what USGS studies may surprise you.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) celebrated the 50th dedication anniversary of its headquarters in Reston on July 12. USGS is the sole scientific agency of the United States government and a fact-finding research organization under its parent agency, the U.S. Department of the Interior.



PHOTO USGS.GOV
Sarah J. Ryker, Ph.D.,
USGS Associate
Director for Energy
and Mineral Resources



SCREENSHOT
Supervisor James
Walkinshaw
(D-Braddock)



SCREENSHOT FAIRFAXCOUNTY.GOV

Lake Accotink in Springfield

Currently, the agency studies the sediment load in Springfield's man-made Lake Accotink, tells sources how much lithium the U.S. imported last year, and operates the world's Earth-observing satellite program, Landsat.

In a one-on-one interview with The Connection, Sarah J. Ryker, Ph.D. of the U.S. Geological Survey, described the Reston campus of its headquarters as "a lovely spot."

The 105-acre parcel is home to native insects and mammals of many varieties and diverse native Virginia vegetation. Ryker said that the offices on the lower floors of the building offer tranquil views of deciduous trees that change seasonally, and from the upper floors, staff and visitors can watch flybys by the local bird population.

It may not be common knowledge what programs USGS operates within the United States, including Fairfax County, and globally. A hint is that USGS's motto is "Science for a changing world." Fairfax County's Lake Accotink is changing.

Within days of the USGS celebration, at a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County, held on Tuesday, July 16, Supervisor James Walkinshaw (D-Braddock) moved that the Board concur with the staff recommendation and authorize a four-year Joint Funding Agreement between the County and the USGS for \$1,140,200 for fiscal years (FY) 2025 through FY 2028.

"This partnership with USGS will install gauges, so we will actually know how much sediment is entering the lake and how much sediment is leaving," Walkinshaw said. USGS would generate data to inform future management strategies for Lake Accotink.

Substantial sediment load delivered from Accotink Creek into the 55-acre Lake Accotink, a reservoir built by the U.S. Army Corp., has caused an increase in sediment deposition in the lake over numerous decades. The Connection reported that the lake was only two feet deep. Walkinshaw's motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Ryker said that USGS' streamgages have operated for over 100 years. They provide USGS with valuable data for trend analysis, flood and drought prediction, as well as in-



PHOTO USGS.GOV PUBLIC DOMAIN

USGS's main tower of its headquarters in Reston features an eight-pointed star shape that symbolizes the cardinal points of a compass.

formation on water supply, climate change, and land-use changes.

The USGS is known globally for its long-term commitments. According to Ryker, USGS has flagship datasets and operates the world's longest-running Earth-observing satellite program, Landsat. In cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and its science agency, the USGS, NASA launched the first Landsat satellite on July 23, 1972.

Additionally, USGS has committed to using its energy and mineral resources to create long-term public data sets. USGS collects data on the flow, a changing phenomenon in geology at great depths.

"We look at the origin of energy and mineral resources over time, geologic time, but also, actually, we have a component to us that collects the nation's official statistics on the supply and the trade of mineral commodities," Ryker said. She explained that the USGS provides official statistics quoted by Bloomberg and the Wall Street Journal.

"Anytime you see a quote that says how much the nation's economy came from construction materials last year or how much

lithium the US imported last year, those statistics come from the USGS energy and mineral resources mission area," Ryker said.

Fairfax County Park Authority's Lake Accotink is in skilled hands with USGS. Hope-

fully, the family-friendly fun at the 60th-anniversary celebration at Lake Accotink Park, held on Saturday, Aug. 24, with boat rentals and more, will continue for generations to come.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

FRIDAY/OCT. 18

Transportation Breakfast and Seminar: 7:30 to 10 a.m. At Fairview Park Marriott, 3111 Fairview Park Dr, Falls Church. The Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance is proud to announce our 20th Annual What You Need to Know about Transportation breakfast and seminar. They are hosting Will Pines, Maryland Department of Transportation SHA Administrator and Stephen Brich, Virginia Department of Transportation Commissioner as our keynote speakers. There is an all-star panel of speakers including Matt de Ferranti, Northern Virginia Transportation Commission Chair, and DJ Stadler, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority CEO. What You Need to Know is the primary transportation event in the Region and the fastest

download of essential information you need to make key decisions about the future of your business in the DC area.

SUPPORT GROUPS

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 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.

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.

COMMUNITY GUIDE

The Closet to Mark 50 Years of Service

Seeks former scholarship recipients; reach out.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Closet Of The Greater Herndon Area, Inc., is celebrating its 50th anniversary on Oct. 23, 2024, at 6 p.m. at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 750 Peachtree Street, Herndon.

Since 1974, The Closet has awarded \$779,000 in scholarships, \$44,000 in 2023. As part of their celebration, organizers are looking for former Closet Scholarship recipients. They want to know "What you are doing with your career post-high school." Please reach out via Facebook.

The Closet's upcoming celebration is its way of sharing and commemorating the half-century mark. The faith-based, volunteer-driven organization has been an integral part of the community, impacting lives through its non-profit thrift shop.

The nonprofit thrift shop was



Tales from the Crypt Magazine
This is a 5-volume bound set of the Tales from the Crypt magazine in a slipcase box.

founded in 1974 by a handful of churches to assist low-income families by selling used clothing at nominal prices. The Closet's mission has expanded to become a significant resource for the greater Herndon area. It continues to be a source of low-cost clothing and household necessities for families and individuals on a tight budget, and also gives away clothing at no cost to truly needy individuals.

Profits from The Closet go to grants to support local community service organizations as well as

post-secondary education scholarships for students from local high schools. In 2023, in addition to \$44,000 in scholarships, The Closet awarded grants of \$118,000 to local social service nonprofits. See a list at <https://theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/about-the-closet/>

The Closet has become a favorite with a wide range of shoppers, from those needing essential clothing items and household goods at bargain prices, to collectors and antiques buffs who check The Closet's shelves for unusual books,



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The Closet to mark its 50th anniversary.

plates, and collectibles at a fraction of retail prices. On shopping days, eager shoppers often begin lining up outside before the store opens.

For more details and activities to

celebrate the anniversary, visit its website and Facebook page. You can also learn about their available treasures and those that others have purchased.

WHERE TO GIVE LOCALLY

Where to Give for Local Impact

Local nonprofits serve critical roles in the community, and they need your help.

A new survey by No Kid Hungry Virginia shows that more than three-quarters of Virginians (78%) say groceries have become harder to afford in the last year and 62% of families have had to decide between purchasing food and paying for another essential bill, such as rent, utilities, gas or home or car repairs.

Also parents of K-12 students are more likely to sacrifice healthy foods in response to costs, with 55% buying less or no produce or 54% buying less or no protein. Nearly half of Virginians (42%) report at least one sign of food insecurity, such as not having enough to eat, eating low-quality food or eating a limited variety of food due to cost.

Two-thirds (68%) of Virginians would worry about their ability to afford food if faced with an unexpected \$1,500 expense.

The need extends beyond hunger.

There are literally thousands of ways to give locally. Here are a few ideas. Please let us know what we have missed and any corrections. Send corrections or updates to mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com with "Give Locally" in the subject line.

❖ Alice's Kids (@alicewillhelp) aliceskids.org P.O. Box 60, Mount Vernon, VA 22121 When a child is raised in poverty they suffer both publicly and privately. When that same child can't afford to pay for the band field trip, a pair of glasses, a chorus outfit or a new pair of shoes, these are indignities that are evident to their classmates. Alice's Kids pays for these relatively inexpensive items in the hopes of preserving the dignity of the child. <https://aliceskids.org/>

❖ Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that feeds, clothes and educates children in need. Assistance League's philanthropic programs touch the lives of thousands of children at 11 Title I schools in Northern Virginia, serving children most in need at selected schools in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria. To learn more

about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, contact info@alnv.org or visit www.alnv.org

❖ Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington Fairfax Area operates clubs in two of the neediest areas of the county, Culmore, Mount Vernon/Route 1 corridor, and Chantilly/Herndon, focusing on character and academic success. <https://www.bcgw.org/club-page/fairfax-county-region-our-impact/>

❖ Britepaths Britepaths' services stabilize low-wealth working families, build resilience through financial empowerment and workforce development, and provide supports for children. Britepaths.org <https://britepaths.org/>

❖ Centreville Immigration Forum, a safe, organized center where residents and contractors can negotiate work arrangements with day laborers. Centreville Square Shopping Center, 5944 Centreville Crest Ln, Centreville, VA 20121. Phone: (703) 543-6272

website: www.centrevilleimmigrationforum.org and email contact@theCIFva.org

❖ Closet Of The Greater Her-

ndon Area is a nonprofit thrift shop in downtown Herndon. The Closet recently awarded over \$20,000 in grants to seven local non-profit organizations: Cornerstones, Fellowship Square, Herndon-Reston FISH, Meridians Recovery, Mobile Hope of Loudoun, South Lakes High School PTSA Food Pantry, and Herndon Woman's Club in support of Wreaths Across America. The Closet is a source of low-cost clothing and household necessities and also gives away clothing at no cost to truly needy individuals. 845 Station Street Herndon, VA 20170 (703) 437-7652. Email TheClosetInc@verizon.net Web: theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/

❖ Comfort for America's Uninformed Services (CAUSE) ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation for all that they have done. Mailing address: 4201 Wilson Blvd., #110-284, Arlington, VA 22203, CFC #33011, Phone 703-591-4965, cause-usa.org

❖ Committee for Helping Others (CHO), Vienna, organized in 1969 by a group of churches and individuals in the Dunn Loring, Merrifield,

Oakton, Vienna community to provide simple, loving charity to those in need. Coming up, holiday bike drive. 703-281-7614, www.cho-va.com

❖ Community Foundation of Northern Virginia www.cfnova.org The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia works to respond to critical need and seed innovation in our region. Your gift helps us make grants in our focus areas of interest while also bringing a spotlight on the benefits of community philanthropists www.cfnova.org/for-donors/donate-now

❖ Cornerstones, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, www.cornerstonesva.org.

Nonprofit providing support and advocacy for those in need of food, shelter, affordable housing, quality childcare, and other human services. Programs and services include the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, Emergency Food Pantry, Hypothermia Prevention Program, Gifts for Kids and annual Coat Drive. www.cornerstonesva.org

❖ Ecumenical Community Help-

SEE GIVE LOCALLY, PAGE 17
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

COMMUNITY GUIDE

Foundation makes \$75,000 Grant to McLean VFD

Single largest donation in history of MVFD to help purchase new fire engine.

On the anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Patricia A. Henriques Charitable Foundation made a \$75,000 grant to McLean Volunteer Fire Department. This, the single largest donation in the 103-year history of the department, is to help purchase a new, state-of-the-art fire engine to enhance MVFD's fire, rescue and emergency medical services to the community.

The check was presented to MVFD President Patricia Moynihan by Bob Freda, an estate planning attorney and MVFD administrative volunteer.

"My admiration for McLean Volunteer Fire Department is well known, and it was always noted by my dear friend and colleague Pat," Bob said. "For forty years, she lived by the Pentagon, and making this grant to assist the heroes of this department on the 23rd anniversary of the attack would thrill her. Personally, it's very moving to me to be the bridge between her undying spirit and the

spirit of this great department."

Patricia Moynihan, the MVFD President, said the department is "very grateful for this extremely generous donation. This donation, the first of our multi-year efforts to raise \$500,000 for the purchase of a new fire engine, will go a long way towards helping us reach our goal."

With the expected delivery of the new fire engine in 2027, "We will go from one to two fire engines to serve the people of McLean and greater McLean area," she said. "This added capability will allow us greater flexibility to respond to emergencies as the number of residents and businesses in the area continues to increase."

The charitable foundation's benefactor, Patricia A. Henriques, passed away in 2020, and her charitable foundation is managed by Bob Freda and his wife Tricia.

Patricia Moynihan, MVFD President, and Bob Freda.



WHERE TO GIVE LOCALLY

Where to Give for Local Impact

FROM PAGE 16

ing Others (ECHO), 703-569-9160. Open to receive donations at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Provides food and financial assistance to those in short-term emergencies, and provides clothing and household goods to low income families. www.echo-inc.org.

❖ FACETS helps parents, their children and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty in the Fairfax area, a partner in efforts to end homelessness in Fairfax County. FACETS is always in need of donations and volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities.

Contact Haylee Davis at hdavis@facetscares.org.

703-865-4251 or volunteer@facetscares.org. www.facetscares.org. 10640 Page Ave., Suite 300, Fairfax VA 22030

❖ Fairfax City Area FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help) FISH provides funds and volunteers to serve the needy and elderly in the greater Fairfax City area of Fairfax County. FISH responds to requests for life's necessities: food, clothing, financial assistance for delinquent rent, mortgage, utility bills, gasoline, and prescriptions. 703-222-0880 fairfaxfish.org/

❖ Fellowship Square provides housing, help, and hope to financially vulnerable older adults, many

who struggle to make ends meet on just Social Security fixed-incomes that average just \$10,000/year. Reston-based Fellowship Square provides affordable housing, services and wellness/social programs enabling 850+ low-income seniors to age in place safely, securely and with dignity in one of the nation's most expensive regions. Financial donations help residents with healthcare and medication costs, groceries, transportation and other support, while donation of items from our detailed wish-list ensures residents have essentials for daily living such as batteries, blankets, pill organizers, reading glasses & more. Volunteer opportunities also abound. Learn more at www.fellowshipsquare.org or email info@fellowshipsquare.org

❖ Food For Neighbors is a local, grassroots nonprofit that focuses on engaging communities to support their local schools and address student hunger. See more about FFN in this edition.

11710 Plaza America Dr #130 Reston, VA 20190 contact@foodforneighbors.org www.FoodForNeighbors.org

❖ Food for Others Located at 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-207-9173. 2938 Prosperity Ave. info@foodforothers.org. Food for Others distributes food to more than 1,800 local families in need each week. Drop off food at our Merrifield Warehouse, 2938 Prosper-

ity Ave, Fairfax, VA 22031. Monday through Friday from 9:30am to 5pm. www.foodforothers.org

❖ Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter. Each year, nearly 5,000 pets, including cats, dogs, small mammals, reptiles and livestock, come to the Fairfax County Animal Shelter. Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter funds important needs throughout the Shelter such as behavioral training and dental or medical care beyond what the shelter's budget can provide. generalinfo@ffcas.org 571-212-9858 www.ffcas.org/

❖* Friends of Guest House Northern Virginia offers structure, supervision, support and assistance to female ex-offenders who want to improve their lives and break the cycle of incarceration. Friends of Guest House offers the only program for women of its kind in Northern Virginia. One East Luray Ave., Alexandria, VA 22301-2025, 703-549-8072, info@friendsofguesthouse.org, friendsofguesthouse.org/

❖ Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia transforms the lives of lower-income families in need by providing affordable homeownership opportunities in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax and Falls Church. Learn more at www.habitatnova.org.

❖ Herndon-Reston FISH (Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help), 336 Victory

Drive, Herndon, 703-391-0105 herndonrestonfish.org Herndon-Reston FISH has assisted local residents in short-term crises since 1969. 703-437-0600.

❖ Homestretch, to empower homeless parents with children to attain permanent housing and self-sufficiency by giving them the skills, knowledge and hope they need to become productive participants in the community. Since 1990 Homestretch has helped over 2,000 families achieve permanent housing and self-sufficiency. 303 South Maple Ave, Suite 400, Falls Church, VA 22046 Phone: 703-237-2035 homestretchva.org

❖ Lamb Center, www.thelambcenter.org, day center for homeless, Fairfax City. 703-691-3178. See more about TLC housing people experiencing homelessness in City of Fairfax.

❖ LINK, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more. holiday@linkagainsthunger.org. 703-437-1776 www.linkagainsthunger.org.

❖ Lorton Community Action Center (LCAC) provide low-income individuals, senior citizens, and families residing in Fort Belvoir, Lorton, Newington and other portions of southeast Fairfax County with access to basic needs and the opportunity to empower themselves. <https://lortonaction.org/>

❖ Mount Vernon At Home, 703-

303-4060, www.mountvernonathome.org. Mount Vernon At Home membership helps connect senior members of our community. Neighbors helping neighbors with volunteer support is the power of Mount Vernon At Home. The group fundraises all year to make this possible and count on the generosity of the community.

❖ NAMI Northern Virginia (National Alliance on Mental Illness) works to raise awareness and provide education, advocacy, and support programs for people living with mental illness, families, students, educators, law enforcement, and the public throughout our neighborhoods. Many excellent programs. NAMI Northern Virginia serves Fairfax, Falls Church, Arlington, Alexandria, and Loudoun www.nami-northernvirginia.org/ HelpLine: (571)458.7310, Email: info@nami-nova.org

❖ National Capital Food Bank, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia, (571) 482-4770. www.capitalareafoodbank.org

❖ Neighborhood Health, 6677 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA 22306. Treats the whole person through medical, behavioral health and dental programs. It has 10 clinics throughout Arlington and Fairfax counties. Participating with all insurance including commercial, Medicare, and Medicaid, 703-535-5568, www.neighborhoodhealthva.org

WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER

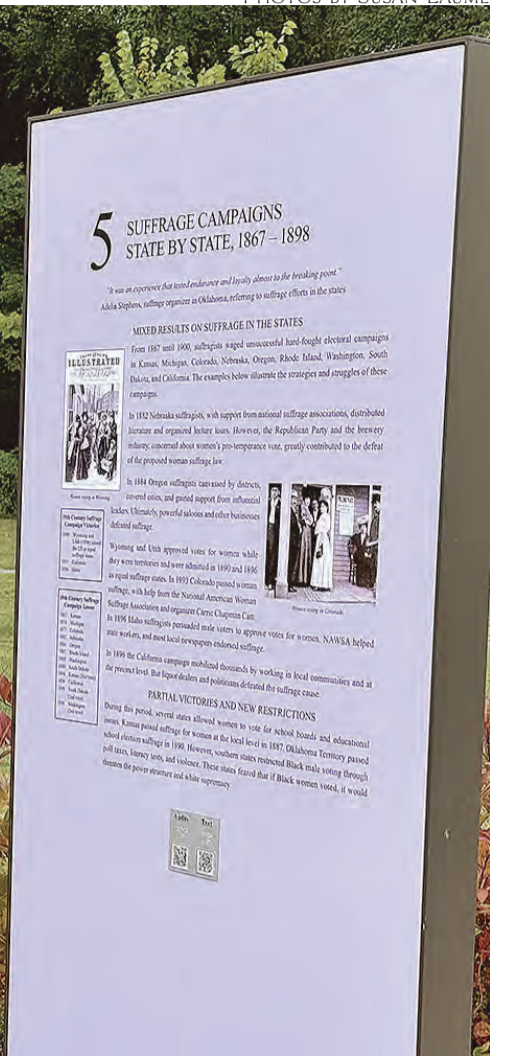
PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME



Guard towers dating from the Occoquan Prison years capture the style of a Medieval pavilion and now stand on repurposed prison grounds.



Research assistant Sydney Worrell takes notes at one of 19 informational panels at the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial, as fact check before a book publication.



Art and Nature Share Space

South county's Lorton is home to Workhouse Arts Center and Nature Park.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Encompassing hundreds of acres in south Fairfax County, the Workhouse Arts Center and Laurel Hill Park in Lorton now occupy land that was once the District of Columbia Workhouse and Reformatory.

The Workhouse was known historically as the Occoquan Workhouse because of its proximity to the river. During its reformatory years beginning in 1910, it operated without walls to house those charged with less serious crimes in D.C., such as public drunkenness. In later years, as the Occoquan Prison, stronger security measures were added for its role in housing those with more serious offenses, until the prison closed in 2001. Several prison buildings and its land are repurposed today to provide housing, entertainment, and recreational use. Historic buildings of the prison era, preserved under the National Register of Historic Places, still can be seen.

Today the Workhouse Arts Center provides an innovative collaboration of the arts, including art galleries, classes, theater,

music performances, the Lucy Burns history museum, lectures, and community events. Free events include Second

Saturday Art Walks with tours of the campus explaining past building use, and the Learning at Lunch lecture series with speakers on historic topics. Ticketed performances include seasonal ones, such as the "Haunt - Twisted Tales of Terror," running Oct. 4 to Nov. 2; and "Dracula - A Comedy of Terror" running now through Oct. 27.

For a list of all events and times, see <https://www.workhousearts.org>.

Recently opened on the Arts Center quad is the Bunnyman Brewery Cafe, offering micro brews and food. The location here moves the brewery closer to the origins of its urban naming myth about the escaped bunnyman. The Brewery is hosting an Oktoberfest celebration on Sept. 28 with a polka band and German fare.

Of particular significance to history, in November 1917, the Workhouse held several imprisoned suffragists, known as the Silent Sentinels, for engaging in the first ever picketing of the White House. In the "night of terror" the women were subjected to psychological intimidation and physical violence. The women were force fed in an attempt to end their hunger strike. That harsh treatment helped turn public opinion



Kenena Hansen Spalding, and other guest speakers, offer a series of historical lectures at the Workhouse Arts Center.

about the right of women to vote, leading to the passing of the 19th Amendment, guaranteeing the right in August 1920. The Turning Point Suffragist Memorial is located near the site of women's incarceration, on the grounds of the Occoquan Regional Park.

The prison complex in its reformatory years, following 1910 land acquisition, was designed by architects Snowden Ashford and Albert Harris. They used the Colonial Revival style popular in America during the early twentieth century. The style was used to recall the values of the nation's founders, and in this case, contributing to the reformatory nature of the prison's philosophy. As



The Lucy Burns Museum provides a look at the efforts of suffragists and life at the reformatory and prison.

described in the National Historic Register, "the metal roofs of the octagonal towers are designed with deeply concave facets that resemble tent fabric. Architecturally, they resemble medieval forms such as decorative fabric pavilions used at outdoor equestrian events in the Middle Ages, as well as the tower forms of some Northern European castles. The allusion creates an ambiguous appearance: a highly controlled enclosure that also has some architectural resemblance to highly-romanticized cultural icons in other parts of the world. The aesthetic design of the towers is just bold enough that the searchlights and other accoutrements added to monitor prisoners are much less obvious than those on the other towers throughout the prison grounds."

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WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME



Friends Eleanor Gomolinski-Ally, Patty Marceron, Peggy Woods, and Cynthia Cope enjoy a performance on the Workhouse quad for Women's Equality Day in August.



Workhouse performances include annual fright nights, not for the weak off heart; this year - "Haunt - Twisted Tales of Terror"



Mary Church Terrell is one of several suffragist recognized for her work in securing the right to vote for women in the United States at the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial.



Ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*) nesting nearby can be found flying over the park to reach their fishing destinations on nearby waters.

Inmates manufactured the bricks used in most of the buildings on the site, using material extracted from the Occoquan River. The dominating high brick wall and guard towers still stand elegantly near the reformatory's baseball diamond. The field was the site of complimentary shows for the inmates by many famous performers of the time, including Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Frank Sinatra and Ray Charles.

Some of the prison complex, including its buildings, have been converted to private housing and shops in the Liberty area. The remainder of the property is devoted to the 804 acre Laurel Hill Park. The park is used for a variety of recreational activities including, disc golf, equestrian ring, walking, mountain biking, and hosts an innovative children's playground. The park is home to native plants and animals. County forest and



Laurel Hill Park is habituated by many of nature's beauties, including this Red Spotted Purple Butterfly (*Limenitis artemis astyanax*)



Teams of Laurel Hill Park volunteers work regularly on Saturday mornings to assist in caring for the park, offering a community service opportunity

meadow restoration is ongoing in the park. Volunteer efforts contribute to managing invasive plants, increasing Osprey nesting sites, and maintain a native plant pollinator garden. A rest facility is now open on the

park's Central Green.

Visitors can enter the park at entrances at Snowden Ashford Drive, Furnace Road, or at the intersection of Workhouse and Lorton Roads.

ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THRU OCT. 13

Life's a Stitch. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Life's a Stitch x4 looks at 4 very different ways that art quilts and fiber sculpture can use both humor and drama to express character and story. Website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/lifes-a-stitch>



The Reston Multicultural Festival takes place on Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024 at Reston Town Center in Reston.

NOW THRU OCT. 27

“Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors.” At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. September: Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. October: Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 4 p.m. Special October Twilight Performances: Dracula show combined with admission to the haunted trail that same evening. Filled with clever wordplay and pop culture references, Dracula is a gender-bending, laugh-out-loud reimagining of the gothic classic. In the treacherous mountains of Transylvania, a meek English real estate agent takes a harrowing journey to meet a new and mysterious client, the most terrifying and ferocious monster the world has ever known: Count Dracula! Famed female vampire hunter, Jean Van Helsing, and company chase Drac from Transylvania to the British countryside to London and back. Visit www.workhousearts.org.



“Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors” takes place Sept. 6 to Oct. 27, 2024 at Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton.

office at 703-854-1856.

to register: <https://unitedwaynca.org/tee-up-for-equity/#tab-1>

“SURVIVE UNPLUGGED’ AT SULLY HISTORIC SITE

Dive into the past with the Park Authority’s “Surviving Unplugged” series at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. It’s where history comes alive through hands-on activities that teach you the secrets of sustainable living and self-sufficiency. Whether it’s foraging for wild edibles or mastering the art of ancient crafts, these sessions will leave you inspired to incorporate timeless skills into your modern life. Sessions are \$15 per person for each class.

Knots and Rope: Sunday, Sept. 29, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Master the ancient art of rope making and knot tying in this unplugged survival class. Learn to make ropes from string and tie essential knots for shelter, rescue, and many more.

Weaving and Wool: Saturday, Nov. 9, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Explore the world of textiles before department stores. Enjoy a make-your-own experience with working wool into felt and learn basic weaving techniques to make useful items.

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 18

Tee Up for Equity. 11 a.m. At Topgolf Loudoun, 20356 Commonwealth Center Dr, Ashburn. Support United Way of the National Capital Area’s Loudoun County Regional Council by joining this annual Tee Up for Equity signature event! Enjoy an afternoon of golf, raffles, and more while contributing to United Way NCA’s programs that promote health, education, and economic opportunity for the Loudoun County community and beyond. Event cost: \$200. Visit the website: teeup@uwnca.org. How

THURSDAY/SEPT. 19

The 17th Annual Erin Peterson Fund Golf Tournament. At Westfields Golf Club, 13940 Balmoral Greens Avenue, Clifton. In memory of Erin Peterson who died 17 years ago in the Virginia Tech shooting. The faithful donations and participation have enabled them to give away 168 scholarships to date. They provide facilitation and sponsorship to the Westfield High and Stone Middle schools Young Men’s Leadership Group (YMLG), and Girls Reaching for Academic & Culture Excellence (GRACE) groups. EPF Koats for Kids program provides new coats to kids at Centreville Elementary and Stone Middle Schools. EPF gave away 24 new coats this year. For registration information go to: www.erinpetersonfund.org.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 19

Sorensen Gross HOPE Golf Tournament. 8:30 a.m. At Hidden Creek Country Club, Reston. Benefitting Hope for the Warriors. The tournament begins at 8:30 a.m. with check-in and a putting contest, opening ceremonies at 10 a.m., and a 10:30 a.m. shotgun start. Each entry fee includes breakfast, lunch and an awards dinner with a full round of golf. Sorensen Gross Construction Company was founded in 1925 and focuses on commercial, industrial, educational, medical, municipal, and multi-family residential building applications. Visit eventbrite.com/e/sorensen-gross-provides-hope-tickets-814094648007?aff=oddttd-creator.

SEPT. 20-21

Perchfest. At The Perch. At Capital



A Thai Festival will be held Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024 at Tysons Corner Center in McLean.

One Center, 1805 Capital One Drive, Tysons Corner. Perchfest will feature mini golf in the clouds, local music, craft beer from Starr Hill Biergarten, a local fitness class, Celebrate Fairfax’s presents curated pop-up shop featuring artisans and community vendors — and with a Shrekastic twist! This weekend kicks off Broadway in Tysons Season Four at Capital One Hall with five performances of Shrek the Musical Sept. 20 - 22 Visit the website: <https://www.capitalonecenter.com/events/capital-one-center-presents-perchfest-fall-a-shrekastic-music-mini-golf-festival>

Anniversary. From 1990 to 2024, OFC has served the community—first as Fairfax County’s first fire station and now through programs for youth, such as the After School Program and 5th & 6th Grader Dances. This open house/festival features a variety of free games, crafts, music, food, amusements, giveaways and more.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

WB&A Northern Virginia Toy Train Show. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Greater Springfield VFD, 7011 Backlick Road in Springfield. Train layouts and a kids corner will be featured. Free train appraisals and “train doctor” available at the show. Door prizes drawing hourly. Admission is only \$5.00; free for WB&A members, Firemen and Military; and children under 12 and Scouts in uniform when accompanied with paid adult.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

Reston Multicultural Festival. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Reston Town Center, Reston. The annual Reston Multicultural Festival celebrates our rich diversity through song, dance, food and art. Learn about our mosaic of cultures as the community gathers for a delightful day in Reston Town Center. If you are interested in being part of the entertainment or storytelling, or craft vendors (quality product representing a culture) application forms will be on the website. All are encouraged to dress in attire that shares their pride in their cultural roots. Visit <https://restoncommunitycenter.com/>

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

2024 Taste of Annandale. 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Eileen Garnett Civic Space, 7200 Columbia Pike, Annandale. This free, family-friendly festival features live music and dance, food trucks and other food vendors, children’s performances and activities, a 5-K race, beer and wine, a chili cookoff, a pet contest, local businesses and organizations, and more. Visit this page for more information: <https://tasteofannandale.com/>

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

National Dance Day 2024. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Old Town Square, 10415 North Street, Fairfax City. This free family-friendly event will feature a wide variety of dance

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS WITH SUPERINTENDENT DR. REID

Your voice matters, and Superintendent Dr. Michelle Reid wants to hear from you! This fall, a series of Community Conversations will be held across the school division. These events are an opportunity for you to share your thoughts and ask questions regarding Fairfax County Public Schools. Events are planned for the following dates from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.:

- Monday, September 23, at Newington Forest Elementary School.
- Monday, September 30, at Mount Vernon Woods Elementary School.
- Monday, October 14, at Fairhill Elementary School.
- Monday, October 21, at Virginia Run Elementary School.
- Wednesday, October 30, at Herndon Middle School.

NOW THRU OCT. 6

“The Waverly Gallery.” At 1st Stage in Tysons Corner. Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. In this 2019 Tony Award nominee for Best Revival of a Play, Gladys, the elderly matriarch of the Green family, has run an art gallery in a small Greenwich Village hotel for many years. The management wants to replace her less-than-thriving gallery with a coffee shop. General admission tickets are priced at \$25 (limited availability), \$40 (limited availability), and \$55. Student, educator, and military tickets are \$15. Tickets can be purchased online at www.1ststage.org or by calling the 1st Stage box

ENTERTAINMENT



The 2024 Taste of Annandale festival will take place on Saturday, Sept. 21, 2024.

groups performing outside at Old Town Square. Many will be teaching mini-lessons, too! This year they'll be joined by three exciting dance groups from George Mason University including the famous Masonettes Dance Team. At 2:30 p.m., you can join us onstage as they learn the official 2024 National Dance Day routine and then perform it all together (or watch others and cheer them on!) Visit the website for more information: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts> or contact us at megan.dubois@fairfaxva.gov or 703-273-6097.

FAMILY SKATE AND DANCE NIGHT

This fall, the Family Skate and Dance Nights at Franconia Rec Center will feature a lively schedule. Skaters of all ages will enjoy the festive themes, tasty food and fun music of these skate nights hosted by the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Join the fun and break out your quad skates, inline skates or dancing shoes (bring your own skates/footwear) and take a spin around Franconia Rec Center's gym floor. Each skate night includes music from a guest DJ, as well as food, snacks and drinks available for purchase (Please note that outside food/drink not permitted). Tickets for everyone (skaters, dancers, spectators and chaperones) cost \$10 and can be purchased in advance online. Or you buy them at the door for \$15.

SCHEDULE:

Sept. 21: Come on Skaters, Let's Go Party! (Barbie themed) (6-9 p.m.)
Oct. 26: Halloween Costume Party (6-10 p.m.)
Nov. 16: Franconia Hold 'Em Skate and Dance Night (Country Night) (6-9 p.m.)
Dec. 21: Holiday and Ugly Sweater Skate and Dance Night (6-9 p.m.)

SPICE UP YOUR FALL WITH FOOD EVENTS IN FAIRFAX PARKS

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journey through Fairfax County parks. Whether you want to dress up for a tea party, learn what plants in your yard are edible, or explore the world of campfire cooking, they've got the activity you're looking for!

Sunday, Sept. 22, 10 a.m.-noon. Practical Plants - Foraging for Herbal Remedies: Riverbend Park, \$12,
Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024, 10-11 a.m. or 2-3 p.m. and Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024, 10-11 a.m. or 2-3 p.m.
Animal Tea Party: Frying Pan Farm Park, \$10,

MONDAY/SEPT. 23

DBIA Mid-Atlantic Region Annual Golf Tournament. 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. At 1757 Golf Club, 45120 Waxpool Road, Dulles.

Golfers Registration:

Individual: \$190 (\$225 after 9/13)
Foursome: \$760 (\$850 after 9/13)
Owner's: \$75

Note that it is a:

9:00 am Shotgun Start
Captain's Choice (Best ball)
Continental Breakfast, Lunch on the Course and Reception will be provided

Register here: bit.ly/4c4C5Yu

TUESDAY/SEPT. 24

Tennis and Pickleball. At River Bend Golf and Country Club. Grab a partner and join us for a fun and competitive day of tennis, pickleball and socializing. Compete in the women's tennis tournament in the morning or coed pickleball in the afternoon. Trophies will be awarded to the winners. You can also come and watch the tournament action or cheer on the Tennis Pros as they play an exciting exhibition match in the afternoon. Following the afternoon session, there will be a reception with appetizers, beverages, music and more!

SEPT. 26-29

Annandale Book Sale. 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. At George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Thousands of books, CDs, DVDs, and more at the George Mason Friends Fall Book Sale. Offering a preview sale on Wednesday evening, September 25, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

for a \$20 entry fee per adult. Visit the website: georgemasonfriends.blogspot.com

FRIDAY/SEPT. 27

Cold War Virginia. 12-1

p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Join Francis Gary Powers as he discusses his new book, *Cold War Virginia*, and how the Workhouse site fits in the mix. Books available to purchase on site; signing follows talk. Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/learning-lunch-cold-war>

FRIDAY/SEPT. 27

Late Night Research. 5:30-11 p.m. At City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Conduct after-hours genealogy research in Fairfax County Public Library's Virginia Room. Staff and volunteers will be on hand to connect you with resources. Research independently or attend genealogy classes. Email: Christopher.Barbuschak@fairfaxcounty.gov

FRIDAY/SEPT. 27

Mariam Homes GALA. 7-11 p.m. At Fairfax Country Club, 5110 Ox Road, Fairfax. They raise money to build homes for disabled individuals. Cost is \$100. Visit www.marianhomes.org.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 28

Creepy Crawly Fun. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Lake Accotink Park, 5660 Heming Ave., Springfield. Bug Fest—an exciting, hands-on event that celebrates the fascinating world of insects – whether you're intrigued by butterflies, beetles or creepy crawlies. This family-friendly event offers a variety of interactive games, activities and learning opportunities for people of all ages.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 28

U.S. Army Chorus Concert. 6-7:30



The Perchfest will be held Sept. 20-21, 2024 at Capital One Center in Tysons Corner.



Circus Vazquez performs Sept. 20 to Oct. 7 at Tysons Galleria in McLean.

p.m. At Westwood Baptist Church, 8200 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. The Army Chorus performs a free concert at Westwood Baptist featuring a variety of patriotic, pop, Broadway, folk and classical music as the church celebrates its 60th anniversary. Visit the website: westwood-baptist.org

SATURDAY/SEPT. 28

Harvest Happenings. 10 a.m. to noon. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Celebrate autumn with your family locally! Harvest Happenings is an indoor-outdoor festival with live entertainment, a petting zoo, crafts and games. Patrons can visit our pumpkin patch and purchase a pumpkin to decorate.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 28

RA's Community Yard Sale. 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. At 12010 Sunrise Valley Drive (near the Reston Wegmans), Reston.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 28

G34.3 Brewing Oktoberfest! 12-9 p.m. At 8532 Terminal Road, Suites L, M, N, Lorton. Visit the brewery for a day filled with beer, food, and fun as they celebrate the Bavarian tradition in style. Get ready to enjoy a wide selection of craft beers brewed right here on site, along with delicious German-inspired cuisine from the Alpine Chef to satisfy your cravings. Don't miss

out on live music and door prizes throughout the day.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 28

Fall Into Wellness. 12-3 p.m. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Kickstart your morning with Food For Others annual 5K from 8-11 a.m. From 12-3 p.m., experience an afternoon packed with wellness activities including an Aerie Offline/American Eagle Athleisure fashion show, engaging wellness demos, giveaways, raffles and activations from Tysons Corner Center retailers. Stay active with trainer-led workouts featuring a Mommy & Me Fit4Mom Class, Pilates Demo with Club Studio, One Life workout and Lululemon led cool-down. Refuel with complimentary bites from Barrel & Bushel's new lighter menu.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 28

Arts by George! 5 p.m. At GMU's Fairfax Campus, Fairfax. The annual ARTS by George! benefit, presented by George Mason University's College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA), returns in 2024 with multiple award-winning actress and singer Lea Salonga as the headliner. The philanthropic event raises vital support for student scholarships in visual arts, dance, music, theater, game design, film, and arts management, as well

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 23

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FROM PAGE 21

as for the Mason Community Arts Academy, Green Machine Ensembles, and the Great Performances at Mason season at the Center for the Arts. Visit <https://cfa.gmu.edu/>

SUNDAY/SEPT. 29

Nike Missile Air Defense Talk.

3-4:30 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Alan McKie will speak on the Nike missile air defense system at Lorton. Sponsored by the Burke Historical Society.

SEPT. 29 TO OCT. 31

Haunted Wine Tours. Sunday to Thursday. 6:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m. At the Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Hwy., Centreville. Join in a lantern-led journey through the historic grounds. During this one-hour outdoor walking tour, sip on our acclaimed Virginia wines as you encounter the spirits of the battlefield as they come to life, sharing their chilling stories of long ago.

OCT. 4 TO NOV. 2

Workhouse Haunt: Twisted Tales of Terror.

Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, plus Halloween night. Gates open at 6:30 p.m. Back for its 11th season, one of Northern Virginia's most popular Halloween events is bringing even more scares (and laughter) to its creepy outdoor walk-through trail. The Haunt will lead guests on a frightening journey that brings them along the abandoned, historic buildings of the former prison, where they will encounter terrifying characters and sights and sounds that are not for the faint of heart. This year's theme, Twisted Tales of Terror, features more than a dozen creepy live-action scenes portraying classic fairy tales gone wrong, including Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel, Pinocchio and more. To keep everything moving along, guests will travel in small groups via a timed entry. While waiting for their timeslots, or following their trail experience, guests can enjoy Halloween fun in the Rizer Pavilion: DJ-mixed music (Fridays, Saturdays, and Halloween Night); refreshments at the bar, including Halloween-themed alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks; sweet and savory food truck treats; and Halloween art and trinkets in the Haunt Pop-up Shop. Tickets are on sale now; prices start at \$25 per person. Visit www.workhousearts.org for schedule and event details.

SATURDAY/OCT. 5

Oktoberfest. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. On Historic Church Street in the Town of Vienna. Oktoberfest celebrates its 15th anniversary this year with the biggest festival yet! More vendors, more food, great music and entertainment, plenty of free kids' activities and locally-sourced beer and wine selections. Oktoberfest will feature live entertainment on three stages: Beer Garden, Town Green, Center Street Beer



Haunted Wine Tours will be held from Sept. 29 to Oct. 31, 2024 at The Winery at Bull Run in Centreville.

Garden Stage; Large Beer/Wine Garden featuring: Caboose Brewing Company, Hawk and Griffin, Norm's Beer and Wine, Settle Down Easy Brewing, and Vienna Vintner. Visit the website: www.viennaoktoberfest.org.

OCT. 5-6

LEGO-Based Train Show. Saturday noon to 4 p.m.; Sunday 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area LEGO Train Club (WamaLTC) members will hold a two-day LEGO based train show at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. All trains, buildings and scenery in the display are built from LEGO bricks. Donations of unwanted LEGO pieces and sets are appreciated to help support WamaLTC's efforts to bring fun and education to all ages through its activities. Admission: museum members, free; adults 13 and over, \$5; children 5-12, \$3; under 4, free. Seniors (65+ and military (active & retired), \$4. For more information on the museum and show events phone 703-425-9225. Visit the website: www.fairfax-station.org

SUNDAY/OCT. 6

2024 Friends of Reston Fall 5K. At Browns Chapel Park, Reston. Join the Friends of Reston for their 4th Annual Fall 5K, to help raise funds for their scholarship and enrichment programs. All proceeds for this event support the Friends of Reston, a 501(c)3 supporting organization of Reston Association. Race will start at 8:00 a.m. Registration Fees: 5K - \$45 September 1 through October 1; \$50 October 2 through Race Day. 5K (14 & Under) - \$30 September 1 through October 1; \$35 October 2 through Race Day. Online registration will close on Thursday, October 3 at 8:00 p.m. Visit <https://potomac.enmotive.com/events/register/2024-friends-of-reston-fall-5k>

SUNDAY/OCT. 6

The Heart Collectors. 7:30 p.m. At Earp's Ordinary, 10420 Main Street, Fairfax. From acoustic harmony lead ballads to Bowie-esque sonic soundscapes, Australian four piece 'Epic Folk' group The Heart Collectors capture the essence of inspiration, honesty of love, and the nature of the cosmos in their music. Info at <https://focusmusic.org/shows#sun-10-6-the-heart-collectors-fairfax>

SUNDAY/OCT. 6

Miles for Migraine. 9:30-11:30 a.m. At Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. This is a 2-mile Walk, 5K Run and Relax event to support Migraine and Headache Awareness, Treatment and Research. Come connect with your local migraine and headache community, listen to speakers and visit sponsors in the festival area. Dress up in your best purple flair for a chance at a fun prize. Visit the website: <https://dc.milesformigraine.org/>

SATURDAY/OCT. 12

Arctober Fest. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, Chantilly. This free, family-friendly event offers a unique opportunity to dive into the fascinating world of archaeology and learn about the incredible archaeological resources found in Fairfax County. Arctober Fest visitors will engage in an array of interactive, hands-on activities guided by expert archaeologists.

SUNDAY/OCT. 13

Clifton Day. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. In the Town of Clifton, 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton. Now celebrating the 56th year of Clifton Day, the annual town event celebrates the beauty and charm of the beloved town of Clifton. Join in experiencing the magic of arts, crafts, entertainment, and food they have in store. Live music, children's activities, pony rides, a beer and wine garden, and other delicious food and beverage choices add to the fun. Visit the website: www.Cliftonday.com

age choices add to the fun. Visit the website: www.Cliftonday.com

SUNDAY/OCT. 13

Paws in the Park. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Oronoco Bay Park in Old Town Alexandria. Place your business in front of thousands of pet lovers this fall, all while supporting our mission to help Alexandria's animals. They are looking for sponsors and vendors for our annual Paws in the Park event on October 13th in Old Town Alexandria. The free event features entertainment and music, food and drink, kids' activities, silent auction, and so much more.

OCT. 19-20

The "21st Annual Great Falls Studio Tour 2024" is just around the corner! The artists are gearing up to make this year's event another unforgettable experience. Be sure to visit <http://greatfallsstudios.com> for all the details — download the brochure, grab your map, and get ready to explore the magic of creativity in action.

SATURDAY/OCT. 19

9th Annual Tour de Mount Vernon. TDMV Ride 8:30 a.m.; Youth and Family Ride at 9 a.m. Starting and ending at Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. Early bird special! Register for the 9th Annual Tour de Mount Vernon by August 31 for a discounted rate and be guaranteed a pair of Tour de Mount Vernon socks! #Tdmv2024 Register now: <https://buff.ly/46VNVtx>

NOV. 8-9

"Beauty and the Beast." At 7 p.m. at Ernst Theatre in Annandale. Oakcrest School will stage Disney's "Beauty and the Beast." Through the enchanted story of a beloved classic fairytale set in a "poor provincial town," Belle encounters a young prince trapped under a spell that can only be broken by the power of love. Learn more at Oakcrest.org.

The Negative Effect



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not that I don't think about cancer/having cancer every day, but on well-balanced days, at least those thoughts are not hourly. And it's on those occasions when the hours belong to me, that my mind can wander outside these cancer constraints and think non-cancer thoughts. Many of which serve as the basis/origin of the non-cancer columns I write sometimes. And recently, I've been mentally blocked, hardly wandering at all. Somewhat worrisome. But then the reason I haven't been thinking too many non-cancer thoughts hit me. This is one of those "cancer-centricity" weeks: Tuesday I have lab work. Thursday, I have a P.E.T. scan. Next Monday, I have an in-person/in-facility appointment with my oncologist to assess and discuss it all. A "three-for." And on the days when there's no specific cancer activity, there is preparation for, reaction to, and worry about any and all of the consequences of being a cancer patient under active treatment. How does all this make me feel? You can imagine, I'm sure. But as the late Philadelphia comedian David Brenner used to joke: "It's not the mosquitos you can hear that you should worry about. It's the ones you can't hear."

As with cancer, it's a rollercoaster of unpredictability where the only guarantee, given the numbers of appointments, lab work, scans, infusions, et cetera, is that there are no guarantees. What you feel today may mean something or nothing at all. Conversely, what you don't feel may likewise mean something or nothing. Today's result leads to tomorrow's activity. Treatment could change or not and you, as the patient can only wait for the results to know how you're really doing. And until your oncologist summarizes the results for you, emotionally you're sort of on a precipice. Comfort level? There is none. Cancer is the big dog, and it rarely gets off the porch. And that's pretty much what I know. There's so much more that I don't know. And it isn't until I have one of these cancer-centric weeks when all this information is thrown at me that it really reminds me how little I know and how precarious my situation is. I'm hearing/reading all sorts of medical jargon, medical data and medical mumbo jumbo and though I've read it/heard similar things for 15-plus years, I can't make sense of it when I should be making dollars of it, if you know what I mean?

It's these weeks, when I feel my life is on the line, so yes, I worry. There's no more denying it. My cancer is front and center/top of mind (bottom too). And though I've been down this road many times before, the longer I live/experience one of these weeks, the more likely I feel that I'm running out of the good fortune I've experienced all these years. I mean, at some point, you use up your luck, don't you? And since given a two-year prognosis in late Feb. 2009, my luck allotment must be nearing zero. I mean, it's been 15 and half years. Who am I to break the bank of prognosis?

Yet here I sit/type all these years later writing my pen how someone initially diagnosed with stage IV non-small cell lung cancer (reclassified to stage IV papillary thyroid cancer in year 11-ish) thinks and feels about the day-to-day life efforts to assimilate a previously certain death diagnosis/scenario to one where my death is less certain, but inevitable, nonetheless. A misdiagnosis and a chronic kidney disease side effect will do that to you. And it's all never more obvious; the good, bad and ugly about my disease/diagnosis, than during one of these hell-type weeks when I fear that my luck will finally run out.

It's all of this reality that clogs my creative juices. All my subconscious can think about is what happens if. And 'what happens if' is not funny. What damage has occurred in my body because of the cancer I haven't a clue. I'll find out soon enough and that's what scares me; what I can't see or hear.

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