

# THE CONNECTION

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



Veronica Sachse, 12 of Vienna, wears her second-place medal in the 12-15 category at the Mid-Atlantic Fleadh. It is her ticket to the Irish World Championships.

## Vienna Harper Off to Ireland

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## Beloved Officer to Retire

PAGE 4

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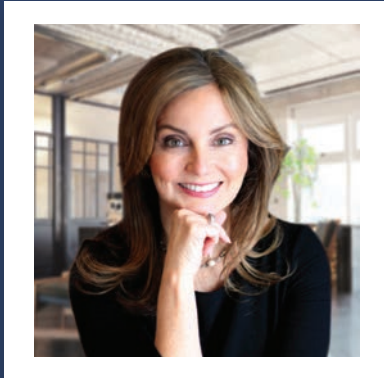
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JULY 26 - AUGUST 1, 2023

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## Director of Police Review Panel to Resign

**Richardson served less than 18 months in the newly created position.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**S**teven Richardson, executive director of the Fairfax County Police Civilian Review Panel for slightly less than 18 months, will resign voluntarily on Aug. 1, 2023, a county spokesperson confirmed on Monday, July 24. No reason for Richardson departure was given.

“I am extremely disappointed to learn of Steven Richardson’s resignation. Steven has been a very strong advocate and champion for transparency in the work of the panel, and relentless as it relates to community engagement,” said Dr. Vernon C. Walton, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Vienna. “While I am not aware of all the day-to-day operations, I am extremely concerned about the narrative around the reason for the abrupt resignation and whether or not it was voluntary.”

Walton serves on the Fairfax County Police Reform Matrix Working Group. He and nine other members presented a proposed action plan on May 12, 2023, to Rodney Lusk, chair of the Safety and Security Committee of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. The plan was titled “Community Recommendations for More Equitable Policing in Fairfax County.”

The Board of Supervisors appointed Richardson effective Feb. 28, 2022. He previously served as operations captain for the George Washington University Police Department and also served as criminal magistrate for North Carolina’s Judicial District 26; project manager and courts and corrections senior advisor for the Cook County, Illinois Sheriff’s Office.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will not designate an interim director. The panel’s work will be continued under the coordination of the Chairman of the Panel, the remaining panel staff members, and the

help of the Office of the Independent Police Auditor, the county spokesperson said. The panel will continue to function normally and have access to all information to avoid delays in reviewing investigations.

According to Walton, the panel’s effectiveness will largely be determined not by its executive director, whoever it is, but by its ability to function with full independent investigative authority, which the Board of Supervisors must authorize. The state statute now permits the panel to have independent investigative authority, but did not at the time the panel was formed.

“If Fairfax County wants to remain in the forefront, this must be done immediately. A framework has been provided by the Police Reform Matrix Committee established by Supervisor Lusk,” said Walton.

“Steps have already been taken to ensure a seamless transition until a review of the position is completed and the Board of Supervisors determines the next steps,” the spokesperson said.

The nine-member panel reviews completed Police Department investigations into complaints alleging abuse of authority or serious misconduct.

The matrix working group recommends expanding the panel’s authority:

“Effective July 1, 2021, the Virginia General Assembly gave localities the authority to substantially increase civilian oversight. Other Virginia jurisdictions of Arlington, Alexandria, Richmond and Virginia Beach have passed ordinances providing expanded authority, as have many large urban jurisdictions nationally. The State of Maryland enacted a law similar to Virginia’s, but made oversight boards mandatory.

“As such, the MWG is recommending a two-pronged approach that grants some expanded authority immediately, while also directing the CRP [Civilian Review Panel] and the IPA [Independent Police Auditor] to draft a coordinated plan for implementing full expanded authority by a certain date.”

Richardson could not be reached for comment.

For more on the Police Civilian Review Panel, see <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecivilian-reviewpanel/>



Steven Richardson, executive director of the Fairfax County Police Civilian Review Panel, will resign on Aug. 1.

## The Closet of The Greater Herndon Area, Inc. Announces 2023 Scholarship Recipients

**I**n 8 July 2023 (Herndon, VA) - The Closet of The Greater Herndon Area, Inc. (“The Closet”), recently announced the distribution of scholarships totaling \$48,000 to 34 local students. The 2023 recipients include:

### Dominion High School

Nevaeh Evian Boykin  
Kayla Anne Cooper  
Selvin Alexess Hernandez-Martinez  
Kamaya Renee McLendon  
Muad Abdulrahman Nashnoush  
Sara Isabella Paz  
Yennifer Rodriguez Barrera  
Melanie Vasquez

### Herndon High School

Sneha Aryal - UVA  
Allison Pamela Dubon-Abrego  
Cora Kwilowski  
Eduardo Naula

### Mountain View High School

Fani Benitez Gonzalez  
Abdulai Kargbo

### Park View High School

Kevin Josue Guillen-Ruiz  
Tajryan Sultana Haque  
Kyle Mirra  
Zam Zam Mohammed  
Cynthia Mora  
Sarah Osborne  
Madeleine Seang  
Elizabeth Zapeda Contarero

### South Lakes High School

Harris Adam  
Martha Afoakwa  
Shanneil Dixon  
Mason Linck  
Adelaide Takyiwaa  
Natnael Tsige

### Westfield High School

Anderson Garcia  
Olamide Jennifer Gbadawiyu  
Alexis Morgan  
Pranav Praveen Kumar  
Xavier Robinson  
Bhargav Garre Venkata

In total, The Closet has donated close to to \$2.4 million in grants over the past 49 years and \$779,000 in scholarships.

The Closet is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. through 5 p.m., and Monday and Thursday evening from 5 – 8 p.m.

The Closet is a non-profit thrift store located in Herndon, VA. Founded in 1974, The Closet currently has twenty faith-based congregations participating. The Closet donates to the community by providing grants and scholarships to benefit low-income families in Fairfax and Loudoun counties.

For more information about The Herndon Closet, visit <http://theclosetofgreaterherndon.org>.



# Some Very Big Shoes to Fill

## MPO Sabrina Ruck is honored before retiring.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

For MPO Sabrina Ruck, the last couple months have been quite eventful. First, she was honored as both the Sully District Police Station's Officer of the Month and Quarter. And then her colleagues and the community feted her at a luncheon in honor of her impending retirement.

Her awards were announced at a recent meeting of the station's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). During the presentation of Officer of the Quarter for January, February and March, CAC Co-Chairman Tom Pickett praised Ruck's "common sense about people." He also described this Crime Prevention Officer as "humble, not concerned about status and someone who shares her successes with others."

In her letter nominating Ruck for that honor, then station commander, Capt. Rachel Levy, wrote, "Sabrina is a dedicated member of the FCPD and the Sully District Station. It has been my privilege to work with her since I arrived at Sully in March of 2022. Sabrina is an instrumental part of the team at Sully and diligently works to keep this community safe."

Furthermore, added Levy, "She constantly goes above and beyond in her job, whether it's helping members of the community or her fellow officers. She anticipates the needs of the station and often puts plans into action before many of us have even thought of them. Sabrina is retiring this summer and is going to leave some very big shoes to fill."

Speaking directly to Ruck during the ceremony, Levy told her, "It's truly been an honor to be your commander and see how you've transformed this community. Thank you for everything you've done."

In nominating Ruck for Officer of the Month for May, 2nd Lt. Scott Reynolds, the station's Neighborhood Patrol Unit supervisor, also stressed her dedication and the many ways she's helped "create a safer community" in the Sully District.

"Her outreach on [digital platform] Nextdoor keeps the community informed of crimes happening within

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Sabrina Ruck with her award and Bill Keech at her retirement luncheon.

their neighborhood, and she often will provide safety tips, as well," wrote Reynolds. "She informs her supervisors and officers of what's going on throughout the Sully District, so everyone is aware of what to look out for."

He also noted that Ruck attends several community meetings and helps advise community members about crime trends or issues within their neighborhoods. "She has been a great asset as the Crime Prevention Officer and to the Sully District Station," said Reynolds. "She is well-deserving of this award."

Her colleagues and local residents agree, and they expressed their appreciation for Ruck during a retirement luncheon for her at the station. Carol Robinson knows her through the Centreville Day Planning Committee.

"She's been part of the committee for many years," said Robinson. "We're so fortunate to have had her for so long in the Sully District. She's brought such enthusiasm and commitment to helping all of us in the district. Because of her participation in Centreville Day, the Safety Expo portion has enlarged exponentially. And she's also ensured the attendance of McGruff the Crime Dog for the parade and for photo ops."

SEE RUCK HONORED, PAGE 11



Flanked by Capt. Rachel Levy and Lt. Matt Dehler, MPO Sabrina Ruck (center) is honored as Officer of the Quarter.



Sabrina and Brian Ruck



John Greenhaugh gives Sabrina Ruck a framed certificate from the CAC.

# MPO Ruck Looks Back at Her Career

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Growing up in the Sully District, Sabrina Ruck's parents were both Fairfax County school teachers. And while that wasn't her chosen profession, she knew she wanted to do something that involved working with people.

"When I entered college at Radford University, I was open to many ideas for a career," she said. "I'd always enjoyed reading crime novels and watching television shows centered around law enforcement. So in my first year, I took an Introduction to Criminal Justice class."

After that year Ruck declared Criminal Justice as her major. She later had an internship with the Blacksburg Police Department, and that solidified her decision to become a police officer.

"Since I grew up in Fairfax County, the FCPD was my first choice," she said. "How-



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

MPO Sabrina Ruck (back row, far left) joins Brookfield parents and children at a past National Night Out celebration.

ever, I applied to many other departments in the Northern Virginia area. Fairfax County hired me in March 1999, and I began the Criminal Justice Academy that June."

Ruck started her career that December as a patrol officer in the Mason District, primarily patrolling the Seven Corners and Baileys Crossroads areas. She was there until February 2012, when she went to the Criminal Justice Academy as a Basic Recruit Instructor. Her next move was in May 2017, when she came to the Sully District Station as its Crime Prevention Officer.

"I was already very familiar with the area and still live in this district," she said. "I really enjoyed being involved in the community. I interacted with residential neighborhoods, businesses, civic associations, houses of worship and schools. We're very lucky to have a strong community."

SEE LOOKS BACK, PAGE 11

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Herndon Swim League Founders, from left, Bonnie Bunting, Mary Sides, Bill Liedtke, Rose Keelor and Becca Kuhns, daughters of Jean Kuhns.

## Herndon Swim League Celebrates 40th Anniversary and Scholarships

On Saturday July 22 the Herndon Swim League gathered for the 30th Annual All-League Meets. All swimmers in the league are eligible to swim in this two-tiered meet.

The league was founded in 1983 as a developmental league by six community swim teams. Currently the league consists of nine teams from Herndon, Fairfax and Centreville. Four of the six founding members were present or represented and recognized at the meet. They included Bonnie Bunting from Reflection, Mary Sides from Hunters Creek, Bill

Liedtke who is from Meadows and is now the Commissioner, and Becca Kuhns and Rose Keelor, daughters of Jean Kuhns from Four Seasons. They represented their mother who passed away a month ago.

The Herndon Swim League awards scholarships to swimmers who graduate from high school each year. This year's eleven recipients of scholarships were Annalise Williams, Jonathan Leon-Guerrero, Amelia Bollerer, Claire Babka, Zach Babka, Sam Kilkeary, Cecelia Meunier, Daniel Moon, Matthew Kim, Audrey Eng and Rachel Jansky.

## Weigh In On Reston Comp Plan

Hunter Mill District Supervisor Walter Alcorn will hold a town hall on Thursday, July 27, at 7 p.m. at the North County Governmental Center, 1801 Cameron Glen Dr., Reston, ahead of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors public hearing on the Reston Comprehensive Plan Amendment, (RCP) scheduled for Sept 12.

County staff and Planning Commissioner John Carter, who represents the Hunter Mill District that includes Reston, will discuss and answer questions about the plan amendment at the July 27 meeting. On July 19, 2023, the Fairfax County Planning Commission recommended that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Reston Comprehensive Plan Amendment as modified.

During the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday,

July 11, Alcorn said that due to new State statutory amendments (Code of Virginia, § 15.2-1427 regarding public notice and hearing requirements), the County needed to adjust the public hearing schedules on several items, including the proposed RCP. Changes to the Code force the county to reschedule its public hearings on the plan into September.

The good news for Reston residents, Alcorn said at the Board meeting, was that they would have more opportunities to provide additional comment, at Town Hall on July 27, via email and telephone on the mark-up of the plan in late August through early September 2023, and finally at the Board's public hearing on Sept. 12, 2023.

— MERCIA HOBSON

## Run for RCC Board of Governors

Reston Community Center (RCC) is seeking interested candidates to run for seats on its Board of Governors. The Board of Governors is a nine-member body responsible for oversight of RCC. All residents of Small District 5, ages 18 or older, are eligible to run for appointment to the RCC Board of Governors. Candidates must complete a Candidacy Statement to have their names placed on the Preference Poll ballot. Candidacy Statements will be available at RCC facilities or online at [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com) beginning at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 1.

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

The deadline for candidacy filing is 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 15.

This year's Preference Poll will fill three positions for three-year terms. Online and walk-in voting will be available from Sept. 8 through Sept. 29 until 5 p.m. Mail-in ballots must be received by RCC's counting agent no later than Sept. 28 at 5 p.m. A Candidates Forum will take place at RCC Hunters Woods on Sept. 5 at 6:30 p.m. The forum will be broadcasted via RCC's Facebook Live feed.

For more, see [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com) or call 703-476-4500

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# OPINION

## Examining and Correcting School Funding

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL

**T**he underfunding of Virginia's public schools recently made headlines, when a new study concluded that Virginia's K-12 education system receives 14 percent less funding than the average system in America even though Virginia has the 10th highest median family income. This independent analysis collides with Governor Youngkin's persistent call for more tax cuts.

This year, the state legislature should be adopting budget amendments to reflect adjusted revenues, but we have been unable to agree because of the Governor's insistence on more tax cuts. Cutting taxes means less revenue for state responsibilities like education and mental health.

As someone whose 20 years of education were subsidized by Virginia taxpayers from kindergarten through law school, I fully appreciate the importance of robust investments in public education.

### Schools Are Underfunded

Two weeks ago, Virginia's nonpartisan independent auditor, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission or JLARC, published a long-awaited analysis of the adequacy of funding for Virginia K-12 education. The study found that Virginia's system receives 14 percent less funding than the average U.S. public education system after adjusting for labor costs or about \$1,900 per student. Among neighboring states, we also invest less than West Virginia, Kentucky and Maryland and slightly more than Tennessee and North Carolina.

The report highlighted several disparities baked into our existing education funding approach that hurt our area. First, existing fund-

ing underweighs Northern Virginia's higher increased labor costs and caps state funding for school support employees like guidance counselors, nurses, social workers and teachers' assistants — an approach that pushes these costs onto local government.

State funding also does not adequately account for English as a Second Language (ESOL) students, special education or children in poverty, students we broadly label as "At-Risk Students." This is significant because public schools must teach whoever walks in the door and Fairfax County Public Schools report that elementary students speak 182 different languages or dialects at home.

Schools cannot control the number of at-risk students in their classrooms and Northern Virginia has a disproportionate share of ESOL students compared with the rest of the state and FCPS At Risk Student population would be the 5th largest school division in Virginia if it were its own school division. In addition, state funding for at-risk students has declined on a net basis while actual expenditures have risen, costs funded by local governments.

Fourth, while we do have a program to supplement localities with high labor costs called "cost to compete," this funding is insufficient. Arlington receives nine percent more funding while its labor costs are 40 percent more than average.

JLARC did find that the formula currently used to allocate funds called the "local composite index" (LCI) does work. The LCI measures a locality's ability to pay by comparing each locality's relative income, real estate taxes and student population. Wealthier jurisdictions receive less state funding and less-wealthy divisions receive more.

The study also highlights concerns unique to rural areas. It is important to realize that we must construct policies for jurisdictions as large as Fairfax County's 1.1 million residents and 180,000 students and a system like Highland County, Virginia, with 2,295 residents and 195 students.

The JLARC analysis basically leaves two questions. First, how do we craft a funding system that more equitably distributes more funds to elementary-secondary education in Virginia. The solution must ensure that ESOL, special education and low-income students are accurately assessed and accounted for in the funding formulas. We also must correctly account for localities' true labor costs and needs.

### The Senate Moved Forward

This year, the Senate Democratic Caucus took a first step by proposing to eliminate the cap on state reimbursement for support employees, investing significantly more funds in at-risk students and proposing higher teacher raises. Sadly, the House of Delegates Republicans and the Governor are prioritizing tax cuts. Hence, the budget stalemate.

The second issue is finding more resources to invest in education. Annual tax cuts like those proposed by the Governor will not help us make longer-term investments in schools. Virginia's tax system also needs serious modernization so that revenues keep up with demands for the high-quality services the public expects.

I am fortunate that public education gave me a foundation for success that I have enjoyed in life and I will continue to fight for policy choices that make those opportunities available to everyone. Please email your views to me at [scott@scottsurovell.org](mailto:scott@scottsurovell.org)

## Obligation of Citizenship: To Be Informed

BY DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN"  
PLUM

**I**n last week's column I referenced Richard Haass' new book, *The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens*, in which he writes that the greatest threat to our democracy comes not from foreign adversaries but from within as we as citizens support or dismiss our form of government. The new constitution gave us a form of government, but for it to endure requires citizens to recognize not only the rights enumerated in the amendments to the document but also the obligations of citizenship that come with our government.

The first of his ten "obligations" of citizenship he suggests is to be informed. Being informed is not a passive action but is one that requires frequent nurturing. Studying the documents of government at whatever level of schooling is but a beginning. Events over time have shaped and reshaped the interpretations of what those documents provide. As a former teacher of history and government I felt

it necessary to teach my students about the stories of how our form of government came about but also the skills of the social scientists and historians that they could use to understand our government and its meaning and impact throughout their lives.

While in the earliest days of our republic it was difficult to find information about the daily operation of our government because of the lack of media, the opposite is the case today. We are saturated with all forms of media from the traditional to the twenty-four-hour broadcasts to digitized media from endless sources. There is an abundance of "information" but a serious question as to what you can believe. Evaluating information as to its biases, truthfulness and value is an important skill we need to ensure that all citizens acquire when there are numerous individuals and organizations in the political arena who specialize in misleading and misinforming others as a way to promote their point of view or cause.

Supposed quotations from the Bible were used by slave owners to

justify their ownership of another human being and by opponents of slavery to end slavery. The Bible is often quoted to support a myriad of causes and actions. The United Christian Parish Church of Reston, of which I am a member, has a summer series of sermons examining commonly used expressions that are attributed to the Bible to support their perspective. The series is called "The Bible does not say that

... or does it?" It is rather surprising the number of supposed biblical quotes that are not in the Bible after all. A recent Washington Post article was entitled "Be careful when you quote a famous person from history — it could be fake."

Public officials have an obligation to provide accurate information to citizens. I have been partic-

SEE PLUM, PAGE 10

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**VIENNA**



# ENTERTAINMENT

## JULY AND AUGUST

**Pups in the Pavilion.** Wednesdays from 5-7:30 p.m. At Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. Reston Town Center Kicks Off "Pups in the Pavilion" this Summer; Pavilion transforms into a leash-free play area during the dog days of summer. Enjoy treats, toys, areas to cool off, pet-friendly giveaways, and more. Visit <https://www.restontowncenter.com/>

## RESTON COMMUNITY CENTER 2023 SUMMER

### ENTERTAINMENT LINEUP

Saturdays, June 17 – August 5

10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

At Reston Town Square Park, Reston

Bring the kids for magic, comedy, puppets, music and lots of laughs. Shows include Rocknoceros, Lohr Family Antics, The Uncle Devin Show and Turley the Magician. See the full schedule here: Family Fun Entertainment Series. Family Fun Entertainment is presented by RCC and Reston Town Center Association in cooperation with MSE Productions, Inc. Reston Town Center garages offer free parking on Saturdays.

Sunday Art in the Park with the Shenandoah Conservatory

Sundays, thru August 27

7 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Reston Town Square Park

Wind down your weekend with classical, jazz and cabaret-style music provided by faculty and students from Shenandoah University's acclaimed music conservatory. This series will run through August 27. Visit Sunday Art in the Park for the complete schedule. Reston Town Center garage parking is free on Sundays. Sunday Art in the Park is presented by RCC and Reston Town Center Association in cooperation with Shenandoah University.

## WEDNESDAY/JULY 26

**Capital One Center is hosting special events all month at our new baseball stadium in Tysons, Capital One Park,** and we wanted to make sure you were in the know. Capital One Park is located at 1820 Dolley Madison Drive Tysons, and steps away from the McLean Metro.

Military Appreciation Night Out -- July 26th with game times at 4:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Free admission for all active and former members of the military.

## JULY 31 – AUGUST 28

**FUNDAY MONDAY in the heart of Fairfax City!** 10:30-11:15 a.m. Enjoy free family programming that's perfect for the preschool set, but is open to children of all ages! On any given Monday there will be music, movement, storytelling, crafts and more. All performances and programs are held inside Old Town Hall located at 3999 University Drive, in the heart of Fairfax City. Visit: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts> for more information. Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts.

July 31: My Gym

August 7: Drew Blue Shoes Magic

August 14: Storytime with the Fairfax Regional Library

August 21: Miss Mollie's Bubble Party (held outside)

August 28: My Gym

## THE TRAVELING PLAYERS

At Tysons Corner Center Plaza



The Traveling Players will present "Romeo & Juliet" at Tysons Corner Center Plaza July 27 to Aug. 2, 2023.

Jul. 27 – Aug. 2 – at 7 p.m. – "Romeo & Juliet"

Shakespeare's tale of star crossed lovers

Jul. 29 – "Erros & Psyche"

An ancient tale in modern language

Aug. 3 – Festival of 3 Plays. "Miser" at 4 p.m. "Green Bird" at 5 p.m.

A family-friendly festival of comedies, fairy tales, and joy!

## JULY 29 – AUGUST 26

**KIDZ KORNER in Old Town Square in Fairfax City!** 10:30-11:15 a.m.

Join us outside for a morning of Free Family Fun on Saturdays in Old Town Square (near the Splash Pad!) located at 10415 North Street in historic Fairfax City. Visit: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts> for more information. Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Department of Parks and Recreation.

July 29: Oh Susannah! Music  
August 5: Mad Science! Things that Go Boom

August 12: My Gym

August 19: Superhero Training with Captain America!

August 26: Miss Mollie's Musical Fun

## AUG. 3-6

**4-H Fair and Carnival.** Get ready for the ultimate farm-fun experience at the 4-H Fair and Carnival at Frying Pan Farm Park. From Thursday, Aug. 3 until Sunday, Aug. 6, enjoy action-packed days of activities for the whole family. Witness livestock displays and 4-H exhibits; indulge in mouth-watering fair food; enjoy live performances and carnival rides; and get up-close and personal with adorable farm animals.

Carnival Hours

Thursday, Aug. 3: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5 to 8 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 4: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m. Big Truck Night: 5 to 7 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 5: 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Sunday, Aug. 6: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Carnival ride specials are available online. Save \$5 per person by purchasing before Aug. 3. Ride specials are \$20 per person for unlimited rides on Thursday, Aug. 3 and Friday, Aug. 4 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For a full schedule of activities and information on buying ride specials, visit the 4-H Fair and Carnival webpage.

## SATURDAY/AUG. 12

**"Civil War History Where It Happened."** 1 p.m. At Mercer Tavern Antiques, 39359 John Mosby Highway, Aldie. The Aldie Ruritan Club Presents "Civil War History Where

it Happened." Hear historians and authors Don Hakenson and Carl Sell describe Mosby's Flour Mill raid, Captain George Custer's fall into the Little River and the Battle of Aldie right where it all happened. Books on sale benefit Aldie Ruritan Club and Clinton Hatcher Camp Sons of Confederate Veterans. Contact Carl Sell at [sellcarl@aol.com](mailto:sellcarl@aol.com) or 703-971-4716 or Don Hakenson at [dhakenson@verizon.net](mailto:dhakenson@verizon.net) or 703-971-4984.

## SATURDAY/AUG. 19

**Poetry Beneath the Stars.** 7:30-9:30 p.m. At Turner Farm Park, 925 Springvale Road, Great Falls. Calling all stargazers. Join up at Turner Farm Park to contemplate the cosmos through poetic form. Attendees will be provided with examples of star-gazing poetry and then given writing prompts to generate poems of their own while staring up at the marvelous Milky Way. This event will include a telescope viewing in the Roll Top Observatory, weather permitting. This workshop is limited to 25 participants. Visit [ArtsFairfax.org](https://www.ArtsFairfax.org) to register.

## AUDITIONS FOR "ON GOLDEN POND"

**Presented by Vienna Theatre Company and Vienna Department of Parks and Recreation.** Dates: Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 14 and 15 from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Callbacks by Invitation on Thursday, Aug. 17 from 7:30-10 p.m. Performances Oct. 20 to Nov. 5, 2023 Visit: [www.viennatheatrecompany.org/audition/](https://www.viennatheatrecompany.org/audition/)

## BACK TO SCHOOL

### FALL BOOK SALE

At Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Dr., Centreville.

Aug. 4, Friday, 1-5 p.m.; Aug. 5, Saturday, 10-5 p.m.; and Aug. 6, Sunday, 1-4 p.m.

Bag sale on Sunday; fill a grocery bag with books for just \$10. Sponsored by Friends of Centreville Regional Library.

## 'DRIVE-IN' TO THE STARLIGHT CINEMA

Enjoy an all-new season of family-friendly entertainment at the Starlight Cinema at Trinity Centre, in Centreville, every Saturday evening in August. Come to watch the movies "drive-in" style from your car or bring chairs and blankets to watch from the lawn. As part of the Summer Entertainment Series, the Starlight Cinema



Funday Monday will be held July 31 to August 28, 2023 in the heart of Fairfax City.

brings the community together for wholesome family entertainment with live pre-show entertainment and feature film after dark. The schedule features:

Aug. 5: "Minions: The Rise of Gru" at 8 p.m. (pre-show by The Great Zucchini at 7 p.m.)

Aug. 12: "Lightyear" at 8 p.m. (pre-show by Rocknoceros at 7 p.m.)

Aug. 19: "The Bad Guys" at 8 p.m. (pre-show by Geoff Marsh at 7 p.m.)

Aug. 26: "DC League of Super-Pets" at 8 p.m. (pre-show by Marsha and the Positrons at 7 p.m.)

Grab your picnic and enjoy the free entertainment that your family will remember. Gates open at 6 p.m., so come early to get a good spot. The Starlight Cinema is hosted at Trinity Centre, 5860 Trinity Parkway, in Centreville. For details, visit the Summer Entertainment Series' Starlight Cinema webpage.

## AUG. 11-12

**"The Addams Family."** 7 p.m. At Church of the Good Shepherd, 9350 Braddock Road, Burke. Presented by the Metropolitan School of the Arts Music Theatre Company. The Addams Family theatre performance will feature 29 student-actors from the DC area, including Metropolitan School of the Arts and surrounding high schools. The performance is recommended for ages 10 and older, and will be supported by a 12-piece mentoring orchestra, consisting of professional musicians and the top youth orchestra players in the DC area. To get tickets to watch the comical antics of The Addams Family, go to [www.metropolitanarts.org](https://www.metropolitanarts.org). Cost is \$25 per adults and \$10 per student.

## SATURDAY/AUG. 12

**Hiroshima/Nagasaki Remembrance.** 4-6 pm. At Herndon Friends Meeting House, 2263 Cocquina Drive, Reston. Join in this remembrance of the victims and effects of the 1945 bombings. Outside 4-5 p.m. vigil; inside 4-6 p.m. learning and reflecting through art (painting and peace crane making). Light refreshments will be served. Parking is available at the meeting house via Locust Street and nearby public parking is located across the street from the Herndon Depot. Visit the website: <https://www.herndonfriendsmeeting.com>.

## SATURDAY/AUG. 19

**Lake Anne Cardboard Boat Regatta.** 12 p.m. At Lake Anne Plaza in Reston. Sail or splash -- it's all fun. Register or sponsor Reston Museum's

2023 Lake Anne Cardboard Boat Regatta at <https://www.restonmuseum.org/cardboard-preregister>. You must register to race; spectating is free and open to the public.

## AUGUST 19

### Summer Concert Series: Genres.

7-9 p.m. At Tysons Corner Center, The Plaza, McLean. Join the Summer Concert Series featuring Delta Spur with Country & Classic Rock on August 19. Enjoy takeout and cocktails from our restaurants while dancing and singing along to your favorite tunes!

## FREE SUMMER CONCERTS AT MCLEAN CENTRAL PARK

**The Alden in McLean presents its annual Summer Sunday Concerts in the Park at McLean Central Park.** This free outdoor concert series runs now through Sunday, July 30. Performances start at 3 p.m., and the June concerts are designed to be family friendly. McLean Central Park is located at 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd.

Schedule  
Sunday, July 30, 3 p.m. – Philip Bowen  
For more information, call 703-790-0123, TTY: 711 or visit The Alden website: [aldentheatre.org](https://www.aldentheatre.org).

## LAKE ANNE'S PLAZA CONCERT SERIES

**Lake Anne Live!** brings Thursday evening concerts to the plaza from now through July 27. The free concerts will feature music and dance from local musicians and dance instructors. The plaza is located at 1609 Washington Plaza North. All concerts are free.

Schedule:  
July 27 (6-9 p.m.): Salsa and Bachata Instruction and Dance with David Norton

## FREE CONCERT SERIES AT BURKE LAKE PARK

Every Wednesday night from June 28th through August 23rd at 7p.m., Supervisor Pat Herrity (Springfield District) along with the Fairfax County Park Authority will be hosting the fifth annual Free Concerts in the Park series at Burke Lake Park. The series has expanded to nine shows with pop, rock and R&B music. Peterson's Ice Cream, 2 Silos beer and food trucks will be on site at all concerts. Attendees are encouraged to bring blankets and/or a lawn chair.

## JULY

26 The Skip Castro Band

## AUGUST

2 The English Channel

9 The Road Ducks

16 The Colin Thompson Band

23 Riptide

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# HARPER

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Student harper Veronica Sachse, 12 of Vienna, and her teacher, Shyamali Roy Hauth of Reston

## Vienna Harper To Compete in Irish World Championships

12-year-old learned to play by ear.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**V**eronica Sachse, 12 of Vienna, is heading to the world championships of traditional Irish music in Mullingar, Ireland. It is the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2023, from Aug. 6 to 14.

Veronica started playing the harp at the tender age of seven, under the tutelage of Shyamali Roy Hauth of Reston. To secure her spot in the 2023 competition, Veronica faced the challenge of achieving either a first- or second-place position within her instrument and age category during the regional Fleadh Cheoil in the United States.

The age categories were under 12, 12–15, 15–18, and over 18, based on a student's age on Jan. 1. Veronica, at 12, would be one of the youngest contenders in her age group.

Veronica secured second-place in the 12–15 category at the Mid-Atlantic Fleadh and qualified to compete in the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Ireland.

"All the songs I learned, I learned by ear. I don't know how to read sheet music," Veronica said. "If you were to tell me to read a song and play it, I wouldn't be able to do that."

In Ireland, harp players are instructed by ear. It is the most common way, and the results are quick and effective. When playing the harp, the strings are drawn in with the fingers and pushed out with the thumbs.

Hauth and Veronica sit side-by-side during lessons. When Hauth plays music on her harp for Veronica to try on hers, Veronica knows which strings to play.

Veronica explained that when she plays the harp, time perspective is relative. "It depends on what I'm playing. If it's a tune that I am working on and I just can't get it down, or a tune that I don't like, it seems to slow down a lot. But if it's a tune that I know really well, it seems to be really fast."

The young harper plays Irish music as it is traditionally performed on a lever harp. The lever harp can be distinguished from a pedal harp by standing

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Veronica Sachse, 12 of Vienna, wears her second-place medal in the 12–15 category at the Mid-Atlantic Fleadh. It is her ticket to the Irish World Championships.

around four and a half to five feet tall at the top of each string. A lever can be raised or lowered, allowing for faster playing.

According to Hauth, the melody, usually played with the right hand, is critical in Irish music. "On the harp, we have the left hand, the accompaniment. You play the melody, and you play ornamentation around it to embellish it and make it more interesting. The accompaniment is completely your own creation."

Veronica said that her friends think it is "cool" that she plays the harp, but they don't bring it up in their conversations. Veronica plays the harp because she has liked Irish music since she was four, when she started Irish dancing. Eight years later, at age 12, she rates playing the harp on a scale of 1 to 10 as "probably 9.5, very high."

"I enjoy playing the harp because it makes me feel happy," Veronica said.

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## Legals

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF SUSTAINABLE INNOVATIONS, INC. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Sustainable Innovations, Inc., a Virginia corporation (the "Corporation"), filed Articles of Dissolution with the Virginia State Corporation Commission on July 14, 2023. All creditors of and claimants against the Corporation are required to present their respective claims and demands immediately to the Corporation so that it can proceed to collect its assets, convey and dispose of its properties, pay, satisfy, and discharge its liabilities and obligations, and do all other acts required to liquidate its business and affairs. With respect to all claims, please take notice of the following: 1. (a) the legal name, address, and contact information of the entity or individual asserting the claim; (b) the amount of the claim; (c) a short summary of the basis for the claim; and (d) any other information useful to verify the nature and amount of the claim including copies of any relevant documents. 2. Claims should be mailed to the Corporation at 1225 E. Arques Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94085-4701. 3. Any claim against the dissolved Corporation will be barred unless a proceeding to enforce the claim is commenced prior to the earlier of the expiration of any applicable statute of limitations or three (3) years after the date of publication of this notice, as appropriate. This 14th of July, 2023. SUSTAINABLE INNOVATIONS, INC. By: Rick Bacon. Title: Chair of the Board.

## Legals

## Plum

FROM PAGE 6

ularly concerned that the Youngkin administration has taken down a website that contained important health information on being transgender that could be invaluable for persons needing it and have adopted a policy statement on the same subject that will lead to confusion and bad conduct in our schools.

Individuals have an obligation to be informed as citizens, and our government and political leaders have an obligation to present truthful and helpful information to our citizens.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## More on Herndon Historic District

I read with interest the article entitled, "Historic Districts Divide Residents," (July 12, 2023). There was one part of the article that I want to clarify. The article said,

"Cesar del Aguila] and his Fortnightly neighbors have to go through the HDRB. The district's border includes their street. 'I think just about 100% of [my] neighbors want out of the HD; it makes no sense for us to be in there.' The homes were constructed in 2005 before the district was formed."

Herndon's Historic District boundaries were drawn well before the Fortnightly neighborhood (of townhomes and condos) were built. In 1977 the first survey of historic homes was conducted in Herndon. In 1987 Herndon was designated a Certified Local Government (CLG), a program that is jointly administered by the National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Offices. In 1989 Herndon's Historic Overlay District was adopted. In about 1991 Herndon's Historic District was accepted into the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. Most of the Fortnightly neighborhood was constructed between 2005-2007, with the final section built in 2012. Therefore, the Fortnightly homes were not constructed before the district was formed. They have an HOA.

Additionally, only a portion of the Fortnightly neighborhood is included in the Historic District, predominantly some of the homes that abut the W&OD trail. Mr. del Aguila's home is not one of those homes. The section of Fortnightly land in the historic district previously included historic buildings plus the W&OD railroad's wye, a triangular section of railroad track where locomotives would turn around, much like a three-point turn.

Barbara Glakas  
Herndon, Va.

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## Human Trafficking? NOT IF I'M AROUND

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HVA



# MPO Ruck Honored

FROM PAGE 4

Former Auxiliary Police Officer John Werderman, now with VIPs (Volunteers in Police Services), said Ruck's been "a great asset to the community, always reaching out to the citizens and lending an ear to their issues."

Acknowledging that Ruck is also a wife and mother of two, with a life outside the Police Department, Pickett said, "She does that with the same passion and enthusiasm she brings to her job as a police officer."

CAC Co-Chair John Greenhaugh recalled when Ruck spoke to his homeowners' association. "She was phenomenal in her subject matter and in the way she responded to the questions from the residents," he said. "Her leaving will be a loss for the community; the CAC wishes her well, going forward."

Agreeing, Levy said, "Sabrina is a true professional and has made such an impact here at the Sully District Station and across the whole county. The leadership she brings to the station will be missed. I wish her the best of luck in retirement and have thoroughly enjoyed working with her over the past year that I've been here."

Capt. Ryan Morgan, commander of the West Springfield District Station, worked at Sully with Ruck for a year when he was a first lieutenant and Capt. Dean Lay was the commander. "Sabrina holds a special place in my heart," said Morgan. "We were classmates at Centreville High and graduated together in 1994."

Once they became police officers, though, she worked on the east end of Fairfax County in the Mason District, and he worked in the west at both the Fair Oaks and Sully district stations. "So it was like a reunion when we came back to Sully in 2017," said Mor-



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

**Little Rocky Run's neighborhood watch coordinator Marjorie Ham presents a crystal award to Sabrina Ruck.**

gan. "We had a great team here, and I'll miss her dearly."

"We always helped each other out, through the years," he continued. "She's been a great friend, and her husband Brian [also an FCPD officer] is a good guy, too. I submitted him for the Meritorious Service Award that he received around 2018 and really deserved. I wish them both the best. In the police world, you never say goodbye, you just say, 'See you later.'"

During the luncheon, Bill Keech, president of the Westfield Business Owners Assn., gave Ruck a crystal award from his organization in recognition of her many years of service to the Centreville-Chantilly community. "She's worked closely with all our business and property owners here and told them what to do to prevent crimes," he explained. "She's also been a great liaison between the police and the community."

"She lets us know what's going on and enables us to share with the police the property owners' concerns. We wish her the best and will miss her, but we'll also look forward to continuing our long relationship with the FCPD and the Sully District Station."

Later on, at the June 21 CAC meeting, Ruck was again honored, receiving a framed certificate from the CAC, plus a crystal award from Little Rocky Run's Neighborhood Watch. Thanking them, she called her departure "bittersweet," adding, "I've had a good career, but I'm excited about my next chapter."

# Ruck Looks Back

FROM PAGE 4

The toughest part of her job, said Ruck, was that "It's hard to shut everything off. I care deeply for the community and especially victims of crime. Police officers are human; and at the end of the day, we want the best outcome for everyone."

As for some of her career's most memorable moments, she said there are so many, it's difficult to choose. "The overall experience of being a police officer is a highlight of my life," explained Ruck. "There are many ups and downs to the job. However, I get great satisfaction by helping people – from the smallest of things to the much larger things."

"I hope that, when I interact with people, they feel heard and have a positive opinion of law enforcement," she continued. "Most of the time when someone calls the police, it's because something bad happened. But even when that's the case, I want to make them feel a little better from when they first made that call."

Now, though, Ruck is turning a page in [www.connectionnewspapers.com](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com)

her life. Although she'll officially retire Sept. 9, her last day of work was June 15 because of the leave she accrued throughout her 25-year career with FCPD.

"My plan right now is to just be Mom," she said. "I have two kids, and I want to be more present for them and volunteer more in their schools. However, I'm always open to other opportunities, should something present itself."

Nonetheless, said Ruck, "I'll miss my co-workers; I've worked with the most amazing people. I'll also miss the community and want to say thank you to everyone. The Sully community is absolutely the best. It was an honor serving as its Crime Prevention Officer."

And while no longer wearing a uniform, she just can't stop caring about all the residents she's served for so long. So it's no wonder she wants to leave them with a parting reminder to keep them safe: "Always remember to remove all your valuables every night from your car and make sure it's locked before you go to bed."

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The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

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# An Inadvertent Friend-Type Request



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

This column has nothing to do with Facebook, though the title is a bit of a tease, to encourage you to read further. And what you're reading about is not exactly a surprise that it happened, it's more a flashing, neon-type sign that shopping online has matured from a transactional one between a buyer and a seller to something so much more. Not so much more as to make it sinister, but enough to make it more personal. Personal in that your online/website searches/inquiries are in essence, the beginning of a friendship. A friendship whereby the company (the seller) is becoming more like a friend in its willingness (algorithm) to offer opinions, dare I say encouragement to you (the buyer) to spend money on merchandise you've recently clicked on as sort of a starting point. But it's interpreted by the computer/website host (AI, I suppose) to be one which – with some electronic prodding, views this interaction as a potential final sale with only a credit card required to consummate this new/budding relationship.

The problem/reality is, I wasn't necessarily looking to buy and/or consummate this retail partnership/purchase just yet. This initial process when I'm searching, clicking, perusing, calculating, perhaps even actually contemplating, is my time, honestly. It's not the company/seller's time. Just because I'm looking, doesn't mean I'm ready to be leaping. To my way of thinking, this initial search is simply a consideration, not a calculation per se. Granted, I'm likely doing some math while I'm reading and then writing. But I don't need the website host hounding/gently nudging (depending on your perspective) me any more than I want to be accosted/offered assistance (again, depending on your perspective) when entering a retail establishment where merchandise can actually be touched and examined while up close so the purchase becomes personal, not merely professional.

What precipitated this most recent rant are the almost daily reminders I receive in my inbox from sites I visited previously. Their intent being to try and consummate our computer relationship by getting me to enter my credit card information/cozying up to me in an increasingly familiar manner, as if we were friends, and that by researching and clicking on their website I have somehow brought us closer together than merely a buyer and a seller, but rather more like friends in the pursuit of wholesale/retail justice.

I guess if I were to be naive and gullible, I would interpret these electronic reminders as I would indeed respect and appreciate a friend's suggestion/recommendation about whether I should be making a particular purchase. But that's not how I'm reacting to these many missives. I'm reacting to them as attempts at hostile take-overs – of my money. Moreover, I feel their reach is intrusive and presumptive. Certainly, when I read their heading in the subject box I can press delete and completely ignore their communication. At that point however, the psychological damage has already been done. By simply reading their headline and understanding its lineage, I have already been hooked, so to speak. I know why the email is there. It's not to ask how I'm adjusting to my late brother's semi unexpected death or asking if I think the Red Sox will be buyers or sellers at the trade deadline. Oh no. They're asking for money/commitment. They want to know how and when, not why and where I'll be otherwise spending my money – or not at all. They're not understanding. They're manipulating. And once they're through with me, they'll move on to the next site-clicker. I'll merely be a blip in their artificial computer code. Code that reacts to my computer research in their products/services as an inevitable buy and sell opportunity. It views my soliciting their help/information as a buying signal and the more help they offer/email, the more inevitable the sale becomes as it believes more is more rather than less is more.

But I object to this presumption of facts not yet agreed to. And I further object to presuming a familiarity which absolutely does not exist. I don't know this caller from Adam. Like my disdain for cold-callers – for whatever solicitation – whether for business, charity or community when the caller addresses me by my first name. That's a no-no, never a yes-yes. It's an automatic click. As for these computer emails that remind me of a previous interest/inquiry on their site/for their product or service, we are not in any kind of relationship. If anything, we might be in the middle/the beginning of a transaction. If this 'relationship' is about anything, it's about business, not pleasure.

Transact this!

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





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