

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

JANUARY 11, 2024



PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

NOVA Parks Michael Nardolilli (left) and Matt Felperin (right) join Supervisor Dan Storck in talking about NOVA Parks system and history.

First Day Hikes

A tradition of beginning the year on the right foot.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE GAZETTE

Many Virginians, like others across the nation, take on the tradition of participating in a first day hike. State parks offer free admission for the first day, and often guided hikes. In Fairfax County, Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck, chair of the

Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee, started his own First Day Hike tradition on New Year's Day several years ago. Inviting all to join in, this year about 70 human hikers, and two canines took on the challenge.

Morning hikers met at Pohick Bay Regional Park, part of the NOVA Parks system. Participants had the option of either a 2.5 mile or 4 mile loop trail experience.

Those accepting the longer challenge had, as their reward, a brief rest stop at a Pohick Bay overlook to take in the beauty of the sky reflected on the water.

For those who could not join in to walk on the first day of 2024, the trails of our many area parks await to assist all to take a first step toward healthy outdoor exercise and an opportunity to commune with nature.



First Day hikers Connor Hubbard and Christian Falcon of Lorton, celebrate the day, taking new puppy Uno, 4 months, on his first walk, opting for a self guided hike at Laurel Hill Park2.

Park specialist and the day's tour guide, Asia Stroud, points out the planned path for the First Day Hike.

New Year's Resolutions Locals share goals for 2024.

Some are attainable, some bold and aspirational. And they are always much easier to make than to keep. But New Year's resolutions are a way to bring new life to our pas-

sions and a reminder of the endless possibilities ahead. From working out to being kind, Alexandrians share their goals for 2024.

- JEANNE THEISMANN



STANLEY BRINKLEY – "My New Year's resolution is to focus on being a better person."

BRIAN GAVIN – "My New Year's 'solution' is to learn to make from scratch Caesar salad dressing."



DAVID BURCH – "My goal is to connect better with more people. I think we feel a little bit siloed and need to make new, better and stronger connections personally and professionally in person so that we are building community, getting along and exchanging ideas. Kumbaya."



MEGAN BEYER – "I spent the last year working on a project at the State Department to enhance democracy through the arts. It was so compelling I am going to make 2024 an extension of appreciating the fact that we live in a free society."

MITCH OPALSKI – "My goal in the new year is to go to bed earlier and get a good night's sleep."



MICHAEL PORTERFIELD – "My New Year's resolution is to meet every person on the street as if they were already a friend of mine."

TONY CURRY FISHER – "My resolution is to start working out again and to tone my body. That is my goal for the new year."



JATRICE MARTEL – "My New Year's resolution is to embrace more people and listen to them. I want to be a source of comfort and advice to younger people who are beginning their careers."

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

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NEWS

Skateboard Rider Fends for Himself on Busy Roads

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Danger to himself or others lights up social media channels.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

The Huntington Metro Station is sandwiched on all sides by busy roads but there's a skateboard rider that uses the road too without paying much attention to the traffic, and this has caused a certain level of chatter from motorists in this area.

On social media, some have referred to the rider as a danger to drivers and the skateboard rider himself

"Thrill junkie," one man called him on Nextdoor; this poster warned others on Richmond Highway right near the Huntington Road intersection. The rider speeds down steep hills in the travel lanes. "I've seen him cut off a car," the man said.

Others chimed in saying it was the rider's issue if he wanted to risk his life while others were concerned about drivers getting injured in an accident with the rider. Still others praised his skill cutting in and out of traffic.

One person was concerned about all the chatter this skateboard rider generated and felt the commenters were in the "big brother" category.

"Man, I'm glad I was allowed to be a kid outside before Nextdoor," he said.

Riding a skateboard in the road amongst the Richmond Highway traffic is not exactly against the law though. "The rules for skateboard riding were mentioned on the Fairfax County website. Commonwealth of



The skateboard rider in question flies along on the Mount Vernon roads with no fear.



Here on top of Beacon Hill, he is in the parking lot.

Virginia law allows the use of electric powered bicycles (e-bikes), skateboards, scooters, e-skateboards, hoverboards, e-scooters, electric personal assistive mobility devices [such as Segway's and wheelchairs], and electric personal delivery devices, wherever regular bicycles are allowed," and bikes are allowed on public roads. It may not be recommended along Richmond Highway, especially when there are bike trails nearby, but they are allowed. "Bicyclists and motorists basically have the same rights, responsi-

bilities and duties, and the laws governing traffic regulation apply equally to both," the county website read.

When the chatter started about the skateboarder, the weather hovered in the 40s or 50s and he wore a mask so it was interpreted by some as someone trying to hide his identity but it's not clear if that's what was happening.

One commuter, who did not want his name used, did try to reach out to the skateboarder. "What's your name?" he asked out the car

window. "I don't have a name," said the rider, "call me whatever you want," he said.

Along Richmond Highway in the Mount Vernon area, there have been several fatal accidents involving pedestrians. Some of them involved bicyclists too. On Oct. 6, 2023, there was a hit and run fatality on Richmond Highway in the Woodlawn area which is just south of the Huntington Road-Richmond Highway intersection. In May 2023, there was another fatal accident on Richmond Highway involving a motorcycle.



The ACE units are active around Fairfax County.



PHOTO BY FCPD

Car Crimes Are on ACE Units Radar Useful in Mount Vernon for carjacking and auto thefts.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

The Fairfax County Police Department is taking another step to get tough on car theft with the Auto Crimes Enforcement Unit known as "ACE."

The unit specializes in investigating and thwarting auto theft organizations, street level auto thefts, and other vehicle-related crimes, police said.

In Mount Vernon, the ACE team has made 47 arrests since the unit's formation in April 2022. "Their main job is stolen vehicles," said FCPD spokesperson Sgt. Epperson.

Incidents involving stolen cars often correlate with serious crimes, as is revealed in their statistics. Countywide, the ACE unit has recovered 245 stolen cars, 33 firearms, 35 stolen license plates, issued 544 felony charges and 153 misdemeanor charges.

The ACE unit is staffed by two supervisors and six detectives, who use many high tech tools when dealing with stolen cars. This includes state-of-the-

SEE ACE POLICE UNIT, PAGE 8

MVS Chamber Starts the Year with New Leadership

Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce welcomes new leadership for 2024 to promote economic growth and be the voice for local businesses.

Eric Christensen, Springfield Town Center general manager, is the new Chamber chairman with Roberta Tinch, President and CEO of Inova Mount Vernon Hospital, elected as vice chair.

Other officers include Phyllis Sintay, McEneaney Associates as secretary and Indre Bauza, Supporting Strategies of Northern Virginia as treasurer.

"Our Chamber can look back on 2023 and take pride in our accomplishments," said Christensen. "We serve a diverse range of businesses from small (but growing)



Eric Christensen, Springfield Town Center



Roberta Tinch, Inova Mount Vernon Hospital



Phyllis Sintay, McEneaney Associates



Indre Bauza, Supporting Strategies of Northern Virginia

SEE MVS CHAMBER, PAGE 8

CHILDREN'S GAZETTE



Charlotte Burkholder, 5th grade



Autumn Perry, 1st grade



Emily Tryder, 5th grade



Madeline Dahl, 2nd grade

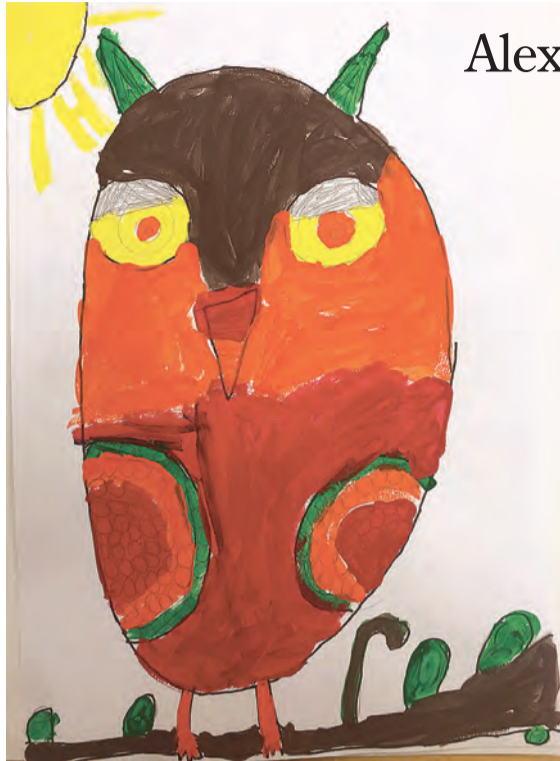


Ruhi Gala, 1st Grade

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[HTTPS://ACDSNET.ORG/](https://acdsnet.org/)



Mae Sanchious, 1st Grade



Audrey Babcock, Kindergarten



Emilie Carson, 4th grade



Xavier Ashfield, 1st Grade



Taylor Reynolds, 4th grade



Spencer Wegner, 3rd Grade

CHILDREN'S GAZETTE

Fort Hunt Elementary 6th Grade Art



Spirit Animal Drawing, Catalina Valverde



Spirit Animal Drawing, Bethany Sutton



Spirit Animal Drawing, Erik Pederson



Spirit Animal Drawing, Gabriel Wiechert



Spirit Animal Drawing, Maggie Jonas

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For 2024 Meals, Think Virginia

Traditional Virginia foods can brighten your table and your tales.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

In making your new year's resolutions, to bolster your fealty to the Old Dominion, culinary and otherwise, try to "Buy Virginia." Virginia's state legislators, convening in Richmond on Jan. 10, will likely thank you.

Hams

Virginia's Smithfield ham is "world famous," touts Smithfield Foods. These hams are cured in Smithfield in the state's tidewater, peanut-growing belt. The country hams are aged, smoked and dry cured with salt for six to 12 months. The milder-tasting "city hams" are not cured as long. Ham and red-eye gravy and ham biscuits are favorites at many Virginia tables.

A Barrel of Hams Went to France: George Washington shipped a barrel full of Virginia hams to the Marquis de Lafayette in France in 1786. Washington wrote, "Mrs. Washington had packed and sent for Madame de la Fayette's acceptance, a barrel of Virginia Hams. I do not know that they are better, or so good as you make in France, but as they are of our own manufacture (and you know the Virginia Ladies value themselves on the goodness of their bacon), and we recollect that it is a dish of which you are fond, she prevailed on me to ask your's and Madame de la Fayette's acceptance of them."

Turkeys

Judd and Cari Culver renovated an 1870s farmhouse and became turkey farmers in Crozet, Virginia, raising Kelly bronze turkeys. These birds are named for British farmer, Derek Kelly, who started raising and



Homemade Country Cured Ham Sandwiches

Virginia ham rolls sold by Valentine's Bakery at the Mount Vernon Farmers Market, December 13, 2023

marketing them in 1984 in Essex, England. "Bronze" comes from their glossy brown color. Antibiotic-free, the turkeys roam Albemarle County's fields and woods. "Supermarket turkeys" are typically slaughtered at age 12 to 14 weeks, despite the turkey's age or maturity, says Judd. The Kelly bronzes are harvested at 21 to 24 weeks old which gives them a layer of fat over their muscles, more marbling. Because they walk around a lot, "there's more hemoglobin, more flavor," he maintains.

Brunswick Stew

There are long-standing debates about whether Brunswick stew originated in Vir-



Smithfield ham for sale at the Belle View Safeway



Apple butter in the making at the Graves Mountain Lodge Apple Butter Festival and jars for sale

ginia or Georgia and about the ingredients that make it genuine. Originally, the central ingredient was wild game like rabbits and squirrels. Today, some gourmands would consider Brunswick stew with chicken or pork "adulterated." A true stew is simmered

More on Virginia Foods

Smithfield Hams, <https://smithfield.sfdbrands.com/en-us/products/>
Kelly Bronze Turkeys, <https://kellybronzes.com/Apples>, [https://www.virginiaapples.net/True Made Foods](https://www.virginiaapples.net/True-Made-Foods), <https://www.truemadefoods.com/>
Hickory syrup, [https://fallingbarkfarm.com/Maple syrup](https://fallingbarkfarm.com/Maple-syrup), <https://members.highland-county.org/member-directory/Search/maple-196831?cid=189889>
Salsa, <https://crumssauce.com/>
Potato chips, <https://www.rt11.com/>

VIRGINIA PRODUCTS SOLD HERE:
Shops at Mount Vernon, <https://shops.mountvernon.org/>

Alexandria Visitor Center, <https://visitaalexandria.com/listings/alexandria-visitor-center-5/>

Made in ALX, <https://www.madeinalx.com/>

Shop Made in VA, <https://www.shopmadeinva.com/>

Old Town Shop, <https://www.theoldtownshop.com/>

Village Hardware, <https://www.hardwarestore.com/village-hardware>



Virginia peanuts on sale at the Old Town Shop, Alexandria

in a cast-iron cauldron over a fire with vegetables, like potatoes and lima beans.

Virginia Senate clerk Susan Schaar has a five-foot-long, wooden paddle in her state capitol office, uniquely designed to stir Brunswick stew. There's no question in her mind: the critical ingredient of a true Brunswick stew is squirrels – not rabbits, chickens or heaven forbid, beef. She likes to tell the new General Assembly pages that the squirrels scampering around Capitol Square end up in a Brunswick stew. End of debate.

Apples

From Winchester to Nelson County, Virginia is apple country. At least 16 varieties are grown in the state, from pink ladies to Granny Smiths, reports the Virginia Apple Growers Association.

True Virginians never waste an apple. These prized fruits become sauce, "butter," dumplings, fritters, cobbles, cakes, juice and cider. In a long-established, fall tradition, people stand around an iron or copper kettle over a wood fire and stir apples until they become a mahogany-colored, edible slurry, called apple butter.

Another Virginia specialty is the fried apple "pie," a mixture of cooked apples, sugar and cinnamon between two pieces of dough pressed together and skillet fried.

Peanuts

"The Virginia peanut stands out from the other peanut varieties in both size and taste, they are the largest peanut ... and they have a characteristic crunch when eaten," says the state's tourism website. The Virginia Diner in Wakefield serves peanut pie, a caramelized, peanutty filling in a flaky crust. Mount Vernon Inn's restaurant offers peanut soup.

Oysters

Oysters helped the Jamestown colonists survive in 1607 and these bivalves have many devotees today who love to slurp the fleshy blobs of meat pricked from two bumpy, gray shells. Virginia oysters are so popular that former Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe launched the Virginia Oyster Trail



Duke's mayonnaise, a favorite of many Southerners

and declared the state the "Oyster Capital of the East Coast" in 2015.

Mayonnaise

Duke's mayonnaise, made by Sauer Brands, founded in Richmond in 1887, has held together many potato salads for generations. Unlike other brands, Duke's has only egg yolks, not the whole egg, and zero sugar. "Duke's has that indescribably Southern-something that elevates food from merely good to downright transcendent," boasts the website. Its rich, creamy consistency has generated an almost cult-like following.

Ketchup

When Fairfax County resident Abe Karmark got fed up with watching his children dump and gobble up ketchup, he studied the ingredients and learned that most American ketchup brands are loaded with sugar. One 20-ounce bottle of a leading ketchup brand has over half a pound of sugar, more than most vanilla ice cream brands with six grams of sugar per ounce, he contends.

So he launched True Made Foods and made a ketchup with no added sugar and



Tommy Aquaro and his wicked salsa



Maple-sugar-coated almonds from Highland County



Route 11 Potato Chips

only two grams of natural sugars. His ketchup has over one-half pound of vegetables in every bottle, providing the natural sugars of carrots, butternut squash and spinach. He went on to also make no- and low-sugar barbecue sauces and srirachas. The company motto: "We turn junk food into superfoods."

Salsas

Tommy Aquaro, "the salsa man," combines tomatoes, onions, garlic, peppers and more into 16 enticing salsas with names like Hell's Bells, Devil's Breath, Kick in the Pants and Sucker Punch Peach. His products have no salt, sugar or chemicals and he specializes in smoked salsas. "I smoke everything," he says. "Smoking is a kiss," he believes. He encourages adding his salsas to meatloaf, chicken, steak, fish, baked potatoes, stews, casseroles and eggs.

Syrups

Joyce and Travis Miller make around 30,000 bottles or 3,000 gallons of hickory syrup in seven flavors a year in their Berryville kitchen. They clean, toast and cook the bark in water to create a liquor-like substance, age it a few days, add raw sugar and reheat it. They age some batches in Catocin

Creek Distilling Company whiskey barrels for 100 days so the syrup picks up the whiskey flavor. Adventure beyond pancakes and French toast, they urge. Check out their website's recipes. <https://fallingbarkfarm.com/>

In "Little Switzerland," Virginia's Highland County, the Maple Syrup Trail links seven sugar camps that make pure maple syrup. Here, for generations, maplers have drained sap from trees and boiled it down into pure syrup. At the annual March Maple Festival, veteran maplers share tidbits like one tablespoon of maple syrup has 40 calories and maple syrup comes in shades, from light to dark amber. Locals make maple donuts, candy, popcorn, ice cream, mustard, sugar, butter, bread, pecans, lollipops, cream, fudge and tea.

Potato Chips

Route 11 entrepreneurs in Mt. Jackson say they are "traditionalists" because for over 25 years they have kettle cooked potatoes in small batches to make an exceptional potato chip. "A nice golden color and a body with plenty of curl are a must," says the website. "With every crunch, potato flavor bursts forth."

How about a potato chip omelet for breakfast? Check out chef José Andrés' creation on their website.



Shopper's bag touts Virginia products at Misty Meadow Farm Creamery at the Mount Vernon Farmers Market, December 13, 2023



Shopping for apples at the Mount Vernon Farmers Market, December 13, 2023

Winter Solstice Celebrated at Huntley Meadows

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

The winter solstice right before the Christmas holiday brought out many people to the Huntley Meadows park on Dec. 21 as they celebrated the first official day of winter. It marks the day with the fewest daylight hours of the year and is celebrated in different ways all over the world. At Huntley Meadows, there were about 15 participants joining the county naturalist to experience the event. The naturalist talked about the science behind the solstice and the nightlife at Huntley Meadows. They spotted some deer grazing nearby and a beaver swimming in the wetlands area.

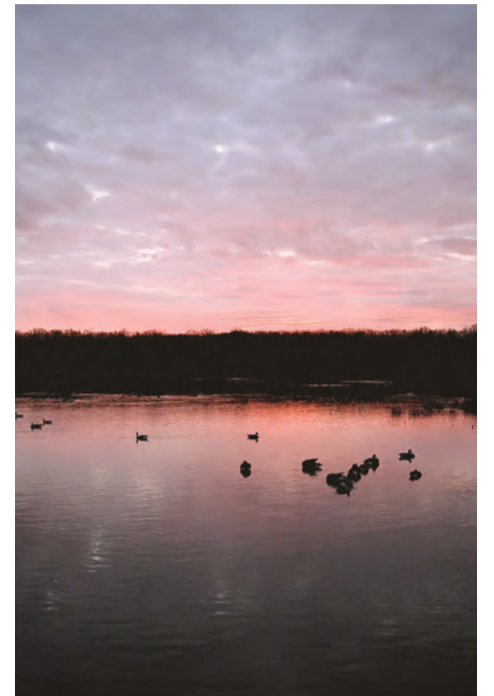
The actual astrological event of the 2023 winter solstice was at 10:27 p.m. that night when the earth's orbit is at the right point. After that, each day will gain a certain amount of daylight. Around the world, various cultures celebrate it in different ways. In Scandinavia, it's the Feast of Juul with a yule log; In Poland it's the "Gody," observance where



It was a chance to discuss the trees and wildlife in the park as well.

people show forgiveness and share food; in a pole dance called "Palo Volader." The summer solstice, the day with the most daylight, occurs on June 21.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



The sunset over the wetlands captured the ducks at Huntley Meadows.

\$17.1M+ in Awards for Clean School Buses Across Virginia

As part of its ongoing commitment to protecting children and improving air quality, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the selection of Fairfax County Public Schools, along with Newport News Public Schools, as two applicants in Virginia to receive more than \$17.1 million through EPA's first Clean School Bus Program's Grants Competition.

The awards, which are made possible through President Joe Biden's Investing in America agenda, will help purchase clean school buses.

By accelerating the transition to low- and zero-emission vehicles, these awards will improve air quality for children and their families and advance environmental justice, all while boosting the economy and creating good-paying jobs.

Fairfax County Public Schools has been selected to receive \$16,590,000 to purchase 42 electric school buses.

Newport News Public Schools has been selected to receive \$525,000 to purchase 15 propane school buses.

"Time and time again, we are seeing how the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law I helped pass is making a difference in communities across Virginia," said U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA). "I'm glad that Fairfax County and Newport News Public Schools are receiving funding for clean buses, which will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect our environment."

"This funding will usher in a cleaner, healthier future for our students and communities as a whole," said U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA).

"Today's announcement is a gamechanger for Fairfax County, home to one of the largest school districts in the country," said U.S. Rep. Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11). "The environmental benefits of these new buses are vitally important to our fight

against climate change."

Dr. Michelle Reid, Superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools, said, "This ... underscores our commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship but also reflects our ongoing efforts to provide healthier, cleaner transportation for all Fairfax County Public Schools students."

"These awards will greatly assist us in our commitment to achieve a fully zero-emission fleet," said Karl Frisch, Chair of the Fairfax County School Board.

The Clean School Bus Program is having far-reaching effects across school districts and their surrounding communities. Air pollution from older diesel engines is linked to asthma and other conditions that harm students' health and can cause them to miss school. Phasing out these older diesel engines, which disproportionately affect communities of color and Tribal communities, ensures cleaner air for students, bus drivers, school staff working near bus loading areas, and the communities through which the buses drive each day.

After an extensive review process, the EPA Clean School Bus Program has selected the Notice of Funding Opportunity's top tier Virginia applicants to receive this historic investment in their community.

Grantees will work with their EPA Regional Project Officers to finalize project plans and purchase their awarded new buses and eligible infrastructure. As grants are finalized, total amounts awarded and number of buses may be adjusted. EPA is also partnering with the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation to provide grantees with robust technical assistance to ensure effective implementation.

EPA is currently accepting applications for the 2023 Clean School Bus Rebate Program until Jan. 31, 2024.

ACE Police Unit

FROM PAGE 3

art license plate readers, and partnerships with local car dealerships, police said. In Mount Vernon, there are a number of car dealerships along Richmond Highway who can directly contact the ACE detectives.

The FCPD uses this preemptive and technology-driven strategy to stay on top of the vehicle-related crimes while emphasizing invaluable community connections, police said.

Auto thefts are up nationwide, said Ragina C. Ali, manager, Public & Government Affairs at AAA. She cites the National Insurance Crime Bureau report that nearly 500,000 vehicles were reported stolen nationwide in the first half of 2023,

marking an increase of more than two percent compared to the first half of 2022.

AAA offers the following prevention tips:

- ❖ Park in a garage if possible or in a well-lit area.
- ❖ Lock the doors and close the windows.
- ❖ Remove spare keys from inside the vehicle.
- ❖ Don't leave valuables and other items in plain view.
- ❖ Utilize audible and/or visible devices, such as alarms, steering column or steering wheel locks, brake or wheel locks.
- ❖ Consider a vehicle immobilizer, such as a "kill switch" or starter or fuel pump disablers
- ❖ Install a tracking system.

MVS Chamber Starts the Year with New Leadership

FROM PAGE 3

family run businesses to large corporations across a broad range of industries," Christensen said.

"The Chamber has successfully advocated for our members and the business community at both the County and State level. We really have a lot to celebrate," he continued.

Christensen discussed the successful annual community events including the Chamber Golf Classic, CAN the Bird 5K Turkey Trot, and the Police & Firefighters Trib-

ute. The Chamber also provided 13 scholarships to graduating high school seniors.

"The business breakfasts, happy hours and other networking events have helped to grow the strength of all our networks," he said.

Recently elected to the Board of Directors were Josefina Beck, Burke & Herbert Bank; Paul Dean, The Dean Law Firm; Marissa Eyon, FASTSIGNS Springfield; Jamie Huban, The National Museum of the US Army; Matt Moore, Edward Jones Old Town; Brian Moran, CCA Flooring and Interiors.

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THEATER

Tuck Everlasting

ACCT presents musical version of beloved children's novel.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

If you could live forever, would you? When 11-year-old Winnie Foster discovers the magical secret of the Tuck family, she embarks on an adventure that will change her life forever in the new musical production of Tuck Everlasting, playing Jan. 12-21 at Aldersgate Church Community Theater.

Based on the children's novel by Natalie Babbitt, Tuck Everlasting features music by Chris Miller, lyrics by Nathan Tysen and a book by Claudia Shear and Tim Federle. The ACCT production is under the direction of Julia St. Pierre.

"I have always loved the music from Tuck Everlasting and the quintessential question of 'if you could, would you choose to live forever?'" St. Pierre said. "Through the story of Winnie and the Tucks, I hope the audience will see the power of family, of connection, and what it means to be truly alive."

The lead characters in the ACCT production were double cast, with a talented troupe of young actors alternating roles over the course

of the production.

"Tuck Everlasting is very musically demanding," said Erin Allen, one of the actors playing Winnie Foster. "The harmonies are a bit complicated and the songs are nearly back to back. And yet, despite its complexities, the music is one of my favorite aspects of the show, which has such a meaningful message: 'You don't need to live forever, you just need to live.'"

Added Lucy McBride, who also plays Winnie Foster, "I hope that the audience will take away that it's important to live your life. You only get one, and you have to

make sure it's good, and that you enjoy it."

In Tuck Everlasting, young Winnie yearns for a life of adventure beyond

her white picket fence. She gets more than she could have imagined when she stumbles upon the magic behind the Tuck family's immortality -- an eternal-life-giving spring. As her adventure unfolds, Winnie faces an extraordinary choice: return to her life or continue with the Tucks on their infinite journey.

"Tuck Everlasting asks some thought-provoking questions for young people and adults alike,"



PHOTO BY HOWARD SOROOS

Ellee St Pierre as Jesse Tuck and Lucy McBride as Winnie Foster in the Aldersgate Church Community Theater production of "Tuck Everlasting" playing Jan. 12-21. www.acctonline.org

"You don't need to live forever, you just need to live."

— A signature line in the ACCT musical 'Tuck Everlasting'

said producer Maureen Allen. "What makes a life worth living, what do I have in my life that I truly value? The answer, as it almost always is, is people -- the relationships we cultivate and the friendships we cherish."

Added Ellee St. Pierre, who plays Jesse Tuck, "I think the most important thing audiences can take away from our show is to value life -- the highs, the lows, everything. Living is growing and changing and experiencing new things all around you. Life loses its value if it has no end."

Tuck Everlasting is playing Jan. 12-21 at Aldersgate Church Community Theater, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria. For tickets or more information, visit www.acctonline.org.

Mount Vernon Bikeshare Virtual Public Meeting

FCDOT will host a virtual meeting on expanding the Capital Bikeshare network in the Mount Vernon District on Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024, at 7 p.m.

To join the meeting:

Login via Microsoft Teams; Download Microsoft Teams

Login via the Web

Meeting ID: 270 791 701 453; Passcode: VnfgSX

Dial In: 571-429-5982; Phone Conference ID: 336 408 237#

Comments will be accepted through Friday, Feb. 2.

Fairfax County currently has more than 70 Capital Bikeshare stations in Merrifield, Reston and Tysons, and is working to add approximately 40 more stations to the system.

For more information about pricing, membership and how to borrow and return a bicycle, visit Capital Bikeshare <https://capitalbikeshare.com/>

To reach the County Bikeshare team, email DOTbicycleprograms@fairfaxcounty.gov

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Obituary



Peter Sutherland Race, 82, died on December 2, 2023 in Alexandria, Virginia surrounded by his beloved wife and daughters.

Peter lived a life full of love, laughter and family. He was born on July 17, 1941 in Kalamazoo, Michigan, to William Race and Betty Sutherland Race and was the third of four brothers. He attended high school at The Hotchkiss School in Lakeville, CT, where he played football, hockey, and ran track, graduating in 1960. Peter then moved west to study

political science at Stanford University, expanding his horizons with new friends and interesting travel. While at Stanford, he served on the Executive Committee of Rally Com, helping to organize card stunts at football games and protecting the Stanford Axe from rival Cal during the Big Game.

After graduating from Stanford in 1964, Peter received his commission as an officer in the U.S. Navy and spent most of the next two years on the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Ranger, based in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. Peter went on to attend law school at the University of Michigan, graduating in 1969. He described his greatest achievements in Ann Arbor as earning his J.D. degree and meeting the love of his life, Kristen LeAnderson.

Peter and Kristen married in 1970 and raised their two daughters in Alexandria, Virginia. Peter dedicated his life to serving others, working for 42 years at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, DC, ultimately becoming an Assistant General Counsel and leading the enforcement of HUD's consumer protection programs. He took great pleasure in contributing to his community, including coaching his girls' soccer and basketball teams and volunteering as a long-time Board member of the Hollin Meadows Swim & Tennis Club. Peter loved having daughters and was a devoted and caring father.

Upon retirement, Peter and Kristen spent much of their time at their home on Little Traverse Lake in Northern Michigan. "Up North" was a cherished gathering place where they shared special times with their children, grandchildren, extended family and many friends.

Peter's dry sense of humor, gentle smile, and kind nature endeared him to everyone he met. Peter was as devoted a fan as could be, whether it be loyally cheering on his beleaguered Detroit Lions, his less-beleaguered Michigan Wolverines, or supporting his dear grandchildren, of whom he was incredibly proud, at their many games, performances, and activities.

Peter is survived by his wife, Kristen, his daughters, Katie Race Brin (husband, Lory) and Elizabeth Terborgh (husband, Andrew), and grandchildren, Aaron Brin, Talia Brin, David Terborgh and Lucas Terborgh. Peter was preceded in death by his brother, William Race, and is survived by brothers Geoffrey Race and Louis Race. A memorial service celebrating Peter's life will take place at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial (101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria, VA 22301) on Saturday, January 27th at 2 pm.

The family is eternally grateful for the caregivers who provided loving and compassionate care to Peter and Kristen during his final years. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Little Traverse Lake Association (LTLPOA, P.O. Box 145, Cedar, MI 49621; <https://littletraverselake.org/get-involved-1>) or Parkinson Foundation of the National Capital Area (<https://parkinsonfoundation.org/>).

Obituary

Mount Vernon Gazette

www.MountVernonGazette.com

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

**1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314**

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ENTERTAINMENT

**Wednesdays Through Saturdays
Tours Aboard Tall Ship Providence
and Sen. John Warner Maritime
Heritage Center.** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
At Alexandria's Waterfront Park, 1A
Prince Street, Alexandria. Guests
of all ages are recruited into the
Continental Navy aboard Tall Ship
Providence with legendary Captain
John Paul Jones. Recruits are as-
signed jobs on the ship, learn where
they will work and live, how to load
a cannon, etc... Tours conclude in
the Naval History Theatre with a
film about the ship. The Heritage
center is a floating museum on the
Alexandria waterfront. Visit [https://
tallshipprovidence.org/](https://tallshipprovidence.org/)

JAN. 5-27, 2024
"Visions of Resilience: Art for Climate
Justice" exhibit. At Del Ray Arti-
sians, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue,
Alexandria, in partnership with the
Changing Planet Justice Founda-
tion, raises awareness about climate
change and its impact on margin-
alized communities. By conveying
issues through the universal
language of image, we
encourage action towards a
just, climate-friendly future.
Reception: Friday, January
5, 7-9 p.m. Open Thurs-
days 12-6 p.m., Fridays
12-9 p.m., Saturdays and
Sundays 12-6 p.m. (closed
January 28). [DelRayArti-
sians.org/exhibits](https://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

JAN. 19-28
**Alexandria Restaurant
Week.** For 10 days and two
weekends, more than 70
restaurants in Alexandria
will offer a \$30, \$40 or \$50
in-person dinner for one
during Alexandria Restau-
rant Week, January 19 to
28, 2024. Special menus
are available in-person at
participating restaurants
throughout Alexandria's
neighborhoods, including
Old Town, Del Ray, Carlyle,
Eisenhower and the West
End. The revised three-
tiered pricing structure
reflects feedback from
Alexandria Restaurant Week
participants following the
2023 summer promotion.

SATURDAY/FEB. 3, 2024
**Sherlock Holmes and the
Case of the Missing Maestro.** 3 p.m. At
George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101
Callahan Drive, Alexandria. When the or-
chestra is ready to begin their concert and
suddenly discover the Maestro is nowhere
to be found they begin to panic. Thankfully
the world's greatest detective is avail-
able and agrees to take the case. All the
musicians are suspects and thus Sherlock
Holmes must investigate each of the instru-
ment families to deduce who is behind the
mystery. With Enrico Lopez-Yanez, Guest
Conductor.

SATURDAY/FEB. 10
37th Annual Mount Vernon Town Meeting.
At Mount Vernon High School, 8515 Old
Mount Vernon Road. Times: 7:45 a.m. to
9:25 a.m. - Exhibit Hall Open; 9:30 a.m. to
noon - Program: Speakers, Audience Q&A
and Virtual Tour; Noon to 1:30 p.m. - Taste
of Mount Vernon.

FEB. 10-11
**Alexandria Symphony Announces ASO at 80
Project**
Saturday, February 10, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. at
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and
Arts Center;



Alexandria Restaurant Week is Jan. 19 to 28, 2024 at restaurants in Alexandria.



Visions of Resilience: Art for Climate Justice can be seen at Del Ray Artisans Jan. 5-27, 2024.

Sunday, February 11, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. at
George Washington Masonic Memorial.
Four original pieces, commissioned in honor
of the 80th anniversary of the Alexan-
dria Symphony Orchestra (ASO), will be
presented as part of the ASO at 80 Project.
Led by Music Director James Ross, the
commissions will premiere throughout the
2023-2024 season as introductions to four
of the five performances.
On February 10 and 11, 2024, the program en-
titled "Do Not Go Gentle" opens with Milad
Yousuffi's Aurora, drawn from his experience
as an Afghan refugee and inspired by a
poem dedicated to his mother. His works
express both his pride in his country of
birth and his longing to return. Visit www.alexsym.org.

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noted. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.
com. Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-
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JANUARY
Fri. 12: Preacher Lawson \$39.50 (Rescheduled
from 10/6/23)

Sat. 13: Last Train Home \$35.00
Sun. 14: Patrice Rushen \$55.00
Wed. 17: ALL YOU NEED
IS LOVE: An All-Star Band
Celebrates THE BEATLES
60th Anniversary in America,
featuring Kasim Sulton, Steve
Kimock, Prairie Prince, Gil
Assayas, Bobby Lee Rodgers,
Mark Rashotte, Andy Forgie,
with narration by Michael Des
Barres \$64.00
Fri. 19: Newmyer Flyer Pres-
ents LAUREL CANYON: Golden
Songs of Los Angeles 1966-72
\$35.00
Sat. 20: Lyfe Jennings \$75.00
Wed. 24: Herman's Hermits
starring Peter Noone \$55.00
Fri. 26: Who's Bad - The
Ultimate Michael Jackson
Experience \$39.50
Sat. 27: Dar Williams with The
Nields \$45.00 SOLD OUT!
Sun. 28: Forever Tina - A
Tribute to the Queen of Rock N' Roll \$39.50
FEBRUARY

Fri. 2: Will Downing \$79.50
Sat. 3: Will Downing \$79.50 SOLD OUT!
Tue. 6: Rosanne Cash: ReInventing The Wheel
1993-2023 with John Leventhal and Band
\$79.50
Wed. 7: Rosanne Cash: ReInventing The Wheel
1993-2023 with John Leventhal and Band
\$79.50
Thu. 8: Aaron Watson w/ Jenna Paulette
\$29.50
Fri. 9: Dave Hollister \$55.00 SOLD OUT!
Wed. 14: Kevin Ross \$65.00
Thu. 15: The Amy Winehouse Celebration:
back to BACK TO BLACK \$29.50
Fri. 16: NRBQ \$45.00
Sat. 17: The Dramatics featuring L.J. Reynolds
\$59.50
Sun. 18: Neil Diamond Tribute starring DAVID
CARLIN KING and The Gold Diamond Band
\$45.00
Thu. 22: Corey Smith Band w/ Jeb Gipson -
All Standing in the Flex Stage! Doors 6pm
\$35.00
Fri. 23: TWEET \$45.00
Sat. 24: Tarsha Fitzgerald Presents DEVOTION:
An Earth Wind & Fire Experience \$39.50
Sun. 25: Daryl Davis Presents: Thanks For The
Memories 2023! \$39.50
Wed. 28: Sara Evans \$69.50 2nd Night Added!
Thu. 29: Sara Evans \$69.50 SOLD OUT!

A First



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

It happened just the other day. While visiting close friends in Berlin, Md. (Ocean City) to celebrate the New Year, friends who are well aware of my brother's death and the nature of our relationship (his and mine that is) and who likewise knew Richard very well - and even had their own stories to share, I began to tell a Richard story, as I have a million times in my life. However, on this New Year's Eve, for the first time since Richard died on Dec. 3rd, 2022, I was able to tell the story without choking up or getting teary-eyed. It has taken me more than a year to reach that point.

I can remember very well this past summer, mid-July to be exact while on vacation with my step-father-in-law, Lee and his wife Judy, being unable to complete a Richard story because I got watery eyes and a thickish throat. I tried to speak, even formed the words in my mouth, shaped my lips to pronounce them and couldn't, well; not exactly. But you know what I mean. There was no sound. Then I gathered myself and my thoughts and rebounded enough on the second effort - after a few deep breaths and was able to complete the story. Though the story was supposed to be funny, it became something else. It became emotional and nearly as difficult as it had been telling Richard stories closer to his death. Here it was, almost eight months later, and I still couldn't get through a story about my brother without getting emotional. I choked up so much and so unexpectedly that it left a mark, you might say, on my brain, for future reference.

And this future reference became the presence on New Year's Eve. Dina and I were with our closest friends, friends who had independent relationships with my brother, and who thought the world of him. In fact, I think the Hagans are our only friends who had such a relationship with Richard (he being five years older than us) and his wife, Vanessa, so it was only natural that we would have spent considerable time talking about Richard; it was a safe space for me. And as I began talking about Richard - in the context of the ebb and flow of the conversation, I hesitated almost, anticipating that I'd have to stop, for a time-out of sorts, to gather my thoughts and so forth, and then I just continued, without stopping and completed the story. I took note of it. Here, more than a year later, I'm now able to finish what I start when talking/remiscing about Richard.

It was odd, palpable almost, then when I got to the point of the story that I was sharing about my brother, a point typically when I'd had to stop mid-sentence to take a breath and rub the tears out of my eyes, I didn't have to. I had finally reached the point where the mention of my brother's death didn't weaken my resolve/ability to share a recollection. I simply told the tale, spoke normally-ish about him and smiled at the accomplishment, if you could even call it that, of being able to talk about my brother without crying, et cetera.

New Year's Eve, 2023, now becomes - for me, like one of those dates, "9/11," Nov. 22, 1963, Oct. 27, 2004 when the Red Sox broke the curse and won the World Series (against the St Louis Cardinals) for the first time in 86 years, or "Game 6," Oct. 21st 1975, the World Series against the "Big Red Machine", (Cincinnati Reds) where you know exactly where you were and what you were doing on the date. They are all dates that will stick with me for the remainder of my life. None of them however compare to the loss of my brother, Richard to cancer on Dec. 3, 2022. At least now, I can talk about it. Finish whatever story I start. And even laugh about it without being sad, but grateful in a way. Grateful that I had a brother who meant so much to me and who will be a part of my future as well since I can now embrace his memory - and his loss. He was one of the good guys. Solid as a rock and dependable. If you needed him to be somewhere (like my cancer appointments), he was there. And knowing that he will never "be-there" again in person is unsettling. But at least when I remember him, I can smile. It only took me a year to get here. It was a year I never thought I'd have to endure. In 2009, when I was diagnosed with cancer, I never thought, despite our five-year age difference (Richard was the older brother), he would predecease me. And then he did, at age 73. It has thrown off my whole unwritten plan. And unfortunately, without Richard, there's no plan "B," unwritten or otherwise. Certainly not one that will last anyway.

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



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