

THE CONNECTION

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Reston ♦ Vienna ♦ Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station ♦ Lorton ♦ Clifton

From left, friends Ruby Chernowetz, Tam Anthony, Toki Cabera and Dante Bimbra gather in front of the performance stage at Arts Herndon's inaugural Herndon Pride Festival on Saturday, June 8.



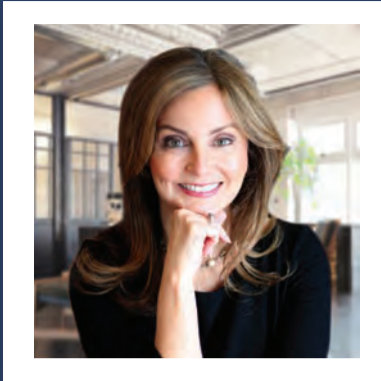
Don't Walk
Too Close to the Nest
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Mountain View
Graduates Inspire
PAGE 5

Joy at Inaugural
Herndon
Pride Festival
PAGE 19

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



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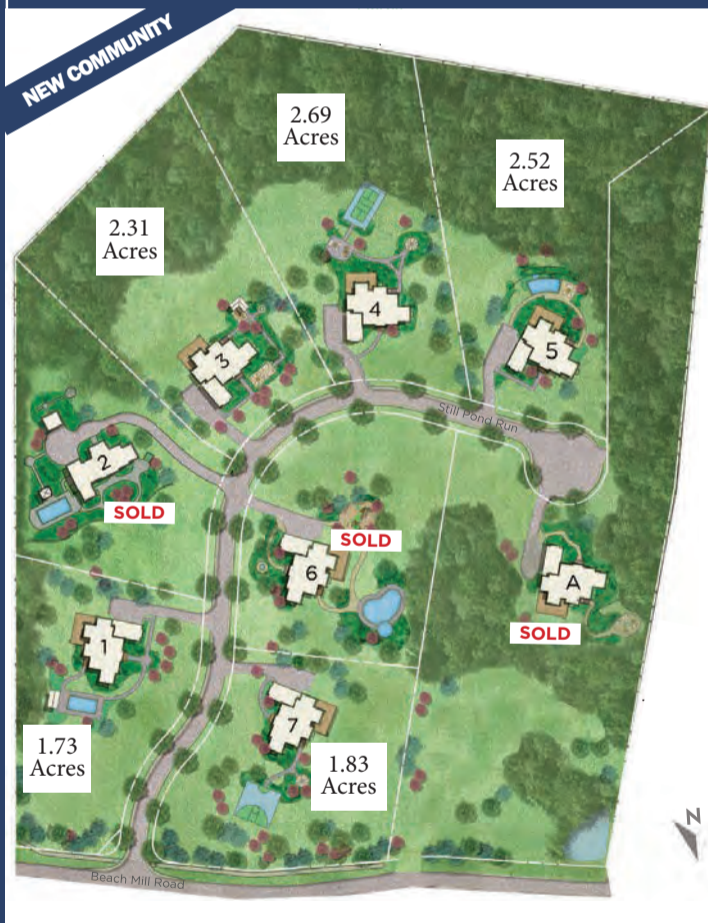


Joe Trippi, Justin Scango, Twee Ramos and Susan Canis

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Dianne Van Volkenburg donates a portion of each sale to the Great Falls Community and Embry Rucker Community Shelter



COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

Red-Shouldered Hawk Attacks Great Falls Family

Animal Protection Police officers respond; new organizational changes coming to Animal Sheltering on July 1.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County animal control officers recently investigated several assaults on adults by what appears to be a Red-shouldered Hawk protecting its territory in Great Falls. The Frost family maintains a vigilant stance. They watch the skies and look behind them as the forest raptor descends quickly, gliding from behind and the side and then attacking them. The couple has taken to grabbing an umbrella, a hat, and sunglasses when they go outdoors.

In separate incidents, the hawk attacked Jackson Frost multiple times and then his son, Alex Frost. Jack is in his seventies; Alex is thirty-eight.

“We thought it was a fluke the first time,” Jack’s wife, Winnie, said. The hawk’s name is derived from its rust-feathered shoulders; the rest of its feathers are brownish. Red-shouldered hawks are large birds. Their wingspan is three to nearly four feet, and their head-to-tail tip length is seventeen inches to two feet, although they weigh less than 2 pounds.

Winnie Frost said that the first occurrence happened when the hawk swooped on Jack as he was walking close to the family house, startling him and cutting his scalp with six superficial talon wounds. He did not require medical attention.

“Jack went outside again; it happened again,” Winnie Frost said. Because his hair is white, Jack decided to wear a white golf cap. The hawk came down, swooped up his



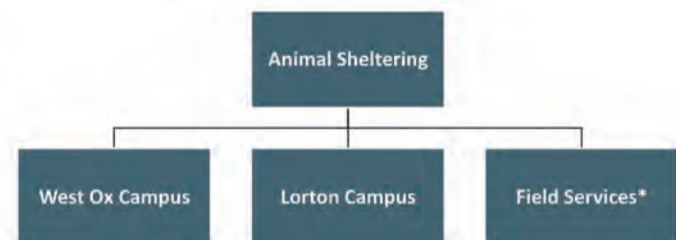
PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY WINNIE FROST

The red-shouldered hawk of Great Falls is a moderately large bird, with a reported record of attacking people.

hat, and carried it over the nearby woods. Later, the bird returned to their home, still holding Jack’s cap.

“It sat on top of our roof with his hat, taunting us,” Winnie recalled. Eventually,

Organizational Chart



* This division is new beginning in FY 2025 and will be responsible for animal control services which is being moved from the Police Department.

SCREENSHOT FAIRFAX COUNTY

The new Fairfax County organization chart of Animal Sheltering will consist of three divisions, adding the Field Services division on July 1, 2024, the start of Fiscal Year 2025.

the hawk took off over Turner Farm. The hawk keeps returning to their home, but the couple has never seen the hat again.

Alex sustained a hawk-inflicted injury as he walked down the family’s pathway. According to Winnie, her son Alex is a big guy — large in stature. She said the bird came out of nowhere and struck Alex above his eyebrow.

She opined that predatory birds come from behind and to the side, unlike what you may see in movies. Winnie says Alex has warned her, “Better be careful because it’s going to knock you over, Mom.”

Possibly the attacks could be an annual occurrence, as Red-shouldered Hawks often reuse nests from past years, according to Cornell Labs. The family named the hawk. “We are now calling her Cruella,” said Winnie, after the fictional character Cruella de Vil in Disney’s “One Hundred and One Dalmatians.”

When the couple called Fairfax County Animal Control, the responding officer informed the Frosts that the bird’s protection prevented any action. Although hawks typically avoid humans, the officer advised the pair to be cautious, as the bird most likely is protecting its fledglings.

Currently, Animal Protection Police Officers (APPOs) handle calls about stray dogs, probable neglect or cruelty cases, wildlife concerns, including attacks on humans and other animals, and more. APPOs are trained law enforcement officers who enforce county and state animal laws. That will soon change in a couple of weeks, however.

After the passage of the FY 2025 Advertised Budget Plan, the Fairfax County Department of Animal Sheltering will take over Animal Protection Police responsibilities starting on July 1, 2024. To start this effort, the adopted FY 2025 budget outlines transferring a position from the Fairfax County Police Department to the newly established Field Services division. The change is expected to take eighteen to twenty-four months, with full implementation beginning in FY 2026.

The Police Department will continue to assist with complex criminal investigations. At the same time, the Department of Animal Sheltering will be responsible for ensuring proper animal care, treatment, protection, and control. According to FXCO, the FY 2026 Advertised Budget Plan calls for transferring the Police Department’s remaining funding and positions.

GREAT FALLS

Sandy Friedenthal of Great Falls Receives Certificate of Appreciation



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Great Falls Citizens Association awarded Sandy Friedenthal a Certificate of Appreciation on May 21. GFCA president John Halacy and environment committee cochair Winnie Frost presented the framed certificate. Friedenthal has long been picking up trash along Springvale Road and making a difference for the environment. To nominate community-improvement candidates, contact a GFCA board member.

— MERCIA HOBSON

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MCLEAN

McLean Community Players “Heathers: The Musical”



SCREENSHOT [HTTPS://MCLEANPLAYERS.ORG/](https://mcleanplayers.org/)

McLean Community Players is currently rehearsing their summer high-energy musical “Heathers: The Musical,” based on the 1989 cult classic film of the same name. It is set to premiere on July 19 at The Alden Theater at the McLean Center. It is a pop-rock musical with high-energy songs and contemporary lyrics that touch on mature conversations about teen bullying in schools. Tickets are available at <https://mcleanplayers.org/>.

VIENNA

Saying Goodbye to a Bit of Childhood Joy, Whimsy and Nostalgia



SCREENSHOT @TOWNOFVIENNAVA

The community will be saying goodbye to a bit of childhood joy, whimsy, and nostalgia. Late Tuesday afternoon, June 11, Town of Vienna community members gathered to say goodbye to the beloved Meadow Lane Park merry-go-round at 400 Courthouse Rd. SW, Vienna. A staple of the community, the aging and deteriorating merry-go-round offered residents one last spin. A new and improved merry-go-round may be on the horizon, according to @TownofViennaVA.

— MERCIA HOBSON

THE CONNECTION ♦ JUNE 12-18, 2024 ♦ 3

ROUNDUPS



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Juneteenth at Bull Run Regional Park

The Third Annual Bull Run Juneteenth Commemoration will be held at Bull Run Regional Park, 7700 Bull Run Drive in Centreville. It's set for Saturday, June 15, at 3 p.m., and is organized by the Fairfax County NAACP and NOVA Parks.

Celebrate Juneteenth at Sully Historic Site

A special Juneteenth commemoration is slated for Wednesday, June 19, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way in Chantilly. This event will honor the significant contributions of people – originally under enslavement and continu-

ing after emancipation – to the operation of Sully as a home and farmstead. The celebration will include storytelling, exhibits and other activities.

Car Seat Inspections on June 20

Parents may get their children's car seats inspected on Thursday, June 20, from 5-8:30 p.m., outside the Sully District Police Station. It's at 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. Inspections are done on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants should install the child safety seat so the inspection can be performed. The seat will be properly re-installed if necessary, and parents will be taught how to install the seat. Everyone is eligible. Another car-seat inspection is scheduled for July 18, at the same place and time.

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF AN APPLICATION BY COLUMBIA GAS OF VIRGINIA, INC., TO AMEND AND EXTEND ITS NATURAL GAS CONSERVATION AND RATEMAKING EFFICIENCY PLAN CASE NO. PUR-2024-00025

On May 22, 2024, Columbia Gas of Virginia, Inc. ("CVA" or the "Company") filed an application ("Application"), pursuant to Chapter 25 of Title 56 (Code §§ 56-600 et seq.) of the Code of Virginia ("Code"), for approval to amend and extend its Conservation and Ratemaking Efficiency Plan ("CARE Plan"). According to the Company, its current CARE Plan includes a portfolio of programs that promote conservation and energy efficiency among CVA's residential customers and a decoupling mechanism that adjusts actual non-gas distribution revenues per customer to the allowed distribution revenues previously approved by the Commission. In its Application, the Company proposes to extend its CARE Plan, along with certain modifications and amendments, for an additional three-year period, from January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2027 ("Amended Care Plan").

The proposed Amended CARE Plan includes five conservation and energy efficiency programs and 43 measures. According to the Application, the Amended CARE Plan as proposed, maintains the general structure of the current CARE Plan while adding a new Residential New Construction Program. According to the Application, the Amended Care Plan consists of the following conservation and energy efficiency programs:

- (1) Web-Based Home Audit Program;
- (2) Home Savings Program;
- (3) Residential New Construction Program;
- (4) Residential Income and Age Qualifying Program; and
- (5) Home Energy Report Program.

The Company expects to invest \$7 million over the three years of the Amended CARE Plan. According to the Company, proposed Phase 6 is designed to recover the incremental costs associated with its conservation and energy efficiency programs, as incurred, by means of a surcharge mechanism described in Section 12.4 of the Company's General Terms and Conditions; specifically, the CARE Program Adjustment ("CPA"). The Amended Plan's CPA will cost the average residential customer, using 62.2 dekatherms annually, approximately \$8.46 in 2025, which represents an increase of \$4.04 from the 2024 CPA cost for an average residential customer of \$4.42.

In its Application, CVA requests authority to implement the CPA effective with the first billing unit for the Company's January 2025 billing cycle (i.e., December 31, 2024). The Company's proposed Amended CARE Plan also includes a performance-based incentive mechanism and a decoupling mechanism.

The details of these and other proposals are set forth in the Company's Application. Interested persons are encouraged to review the Company's Application and supporting exhibits for the details of these proposals.

TAKE NOTICE that the Commission may apportion revenues among customer classes and/or design rates in a manner differing from that shown in the Application and supporting documents and thus may adopt rates that differ from those appearing in the Company's Application and supporting documents.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Comment that, among other things, directed the Company to provide notice to the public and provided interested persons an opportunity to comment on the Company's Application.

To promote administrative efficiency and the timely service of filings upon participants, the Commission will, among other things, direct the electronic filing of testimony and pleadings, unless they contain confidential information, and require electronic service on parties to this proceeding. Please refer to the Commission's Order for Notice and Comment for further instructions concerning Confidential or Extraordinarily Sensitive Information.

An electronic copy of the Application may be obtained, at no charge, by submitting a written request to counsel for the Company: T. Borden Ellis, Esq., 1809 Coyote Drive, Chester, Virginia, 23836, or tbellis@nisource.com. Interested persons may also download unofficial copies of the Application and other documents from the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/pages/Case-Information.

On or before July 18, 2024, any interested person may file comments on the Application by following the instructions on the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/casecomments/Submit-Public-Comments. Those unable, as a practical matter, to submit comments electronically may file such comments by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All such comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2024-00025.

On or before July 18, 2024, any person or entity wishing to participate as a respondent in this proceeding may do so by filing a notice of participation with the Clerk of the Commission at: scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file a notice of participation electronically may file such notice by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties or their counsel, if available. Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, *Participation as a respondent*, of the Rules of Practice and Procedure ("Rules of Practice"), any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any organization, corporation, or government body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2024-00025. For additional information about participation as a respondent, any person or entity should obtain a copy of the Commission's Order for Notice and Comment.

On or before July 18, 2024, any interested person may request that the Commission convene a hearing in this matter by filing a request for hearing electronically via scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file electronically may file a request for hearing by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Requests for a hearing shall include: (i) a precise statement of the filing party's interest in the proceeding; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; (iii) a statement of the legal basis for such action; and (iv) a precise statement why a hearing should be conducted in this matter. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2024-00025.

A copy of any notices of participation and requests for hearing shall be sent to counsel for the Company at the address listed above.

The Company's Application, the Commission's Rules of Practice and the Commission's Order for Notice and Comment may be viewed at: scc.virginia.gov/pages/Case-Information.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

VIRTUAL MENTAL WELLNESS CONSULTATIONS

This summer, the FCPS Office of Intervention and Prevention Services will offer virtual Mental Wellness Consultations from Monday, June 24, through Friday, August 2. Forty-five-minute phone or videoconference consultations are available with a school psychologist or school social worker.

Parents of students in any grade level can request a consultation to receive guidance on how to support their child's social, emotional, and academic success. Information about community resources will also be provided.

Students in middle or high school can request a consultation to receive guidance and support for concerns related to anxiety, mood, behavior, peer or family interactions, or school transitions and changes. Strategies and tools can also be provided to address academic challenges such as organization and time management.

Request a consultation or call and leave a message at 703-503-2520.

No-Cost Virtual Therapy for High School Students. Virtual therapy sessions are available to FCPS high school students at no cost to talk about and work through concerns such as:

Mood/behavior changes, motivation, grief/loss.
Anxiety, worry, fears.
Social skills, bullying, peer and family relationships.

Academic stress.
In order for students to participate, caregivers must give permission for FCPS to share basic demographic information with Hazel Health in ParentVUE, and they must provide consent for their student to access therapy services.

Students can then be referred by a guardian or designated school staff member. You may refer your child by calling 571-749-2940 or contacting an FCPS school counselor, social worker, psychologist, or director of Student Services. Visit the FCPS Teletherapy webpage for more information.

GRADUATION

Class of 2024 Graduates from Mountain View High

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Words of wisdom are shared, students receive awards.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Mountain View High graduations are unlike those of other schools. That's because its students receive a fresh start in life there and a chance for a brighter future.

Many of them have come from other countries, not speaking a word of English, or have left untenable situations at other schools. But once at Mountain View, they thrive and grow. So their graduation ceremony last Monday, June 3, at Centreville High, was a particular cause for celebration.

"This day is the culmination of years of school," said Principal Catherine Stone to the graduating seniors. "Choose a moment you want to remember from this day's ceremony. Maybe it's walking in to 'Pomp and Circumstance,' listening to your classmates give their speeches, walking across the stage to get your diploma, or walking out of the auditorium as a high-school graduate.

"Maybe you want to remember the pride your family and friends express as they cele-



Grad Carlos Morales is flanked by (from left) sister Andrea Chahua, girlfriend Valeria, mom Zulma Morales, stepdad Rigo and younger brothers (from left) Randy and Franklin.



Grad Amani Snyder with (from left) aunt Rania Pullen and mom Jenna Malave.

brate with you today, or the pride you have in yourself. But no matter what, I hope you remember this feeling. You've worked hard to get here, and your journey wasn't always the easiest. In fact, you may not have always believed graduation was in your future."

Stressing that grit is the one characteristic that predicts success more than anything else, Stone defined it as "passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina and sticking with your future, day in and day out, for years – and working

hard to make that future a reality. Each of you has grit. You stuck with it, and you'll have to stick with it for your future goals, too."

She told the grads that goals are important, and "even small ones help us get to where we want to be. Set a goal and follow it through to completion. And remember that no one gets there without help from someone else. Sometimes, though, when things aren't going how you'd hoped, the best thing is to take a break. Then when you're ready, get right back to it."

Stone said family isn't just blood relatives, and the family the students found at Mountain View will always be there for them. "Treat everyone with love and respect," she told them. "You can achieve great things through hard work, confidence and resilience. Celebrate your success but thank the people who helped you along the way. Each of you has had an impact on the Mountain View community. Congratulations, Class of 2024 – your family is proud of you."

SEE GRADUATION, PAGE 6



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GRADUATION

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



From left, Brianna Rodriguez receives the Citizenship Award from teacher May Ko.



Kelvin Fajardo Cordon receives the Personal Achievement Award from teacher Jennifer Lee.



Faculty Award winner Jhoana Grageda receives her diploma from Principal Catherine Stone.

Class of 2024 Graduates from Mountain View High

FROM PAGE 5

Then came speeches from the two grad speakers (see sidebar), followed by the recognition of all the graduates who received scholarships. “Since 1999, the Mountain View Foundation has awarded over \$900,000 in scholarships to over 570 students, making it possible for our graduates to pursue their post-graduate dreams,” said Assistant Principal Kim Witeck. “This year, our students were awarded \$52,750 in scholarship money. We are very grateful to our donors.”

Next, special awards were presented to three, deserving students chosen by the teachers:

❖ The Citizenship Award is given to a student who’s helped build a positive school community. ESOL teacher gave it to Brianna Rodriguez.

❖ The Personal Achievement Award goes to a student who succeeded academically and personally, despite having adult responsibilities, such as a job or a child. Math teacher Jennifer Lee gave it to Kelvin Fajardo Cordon.

❖ The Faculty Award is given to the student achieving the greatest academic and personal success, despite significant obstacles. Before presenting it, ESOL teacher Leslie Chekin said those receiving this honor “best exemplify the Mountain View motto of Family, Love and Respect. The June 2024 recipient of this award is not only an outstanding scholar but is one of our most gifted students. Congratulations, Jhoana Grageda.”

Coming here from Bolivia, said Chekin, Grageda “had to learn a completely new language from scratch and adapt to a new culture. Yet the hardest part of Jhoana’s education wasn’t mastering English or her

course work – which she did – it was that she’s here alone, without a support network. And she’s been working full time to support herself and assist her family back home.

“She had to be a life force in two different parts of the world at once – which required enormous discipline, resilience and moral character. She has all those qualities in abundance. The best testaments to Jhoana’s accomplishments at Mountain View are in the words of her teachers.”

Chekin quoted math teacher Tina Akula, who wrote, “Jhoana is truly unique. From the start, there was no math problem she couldn’t solve. Moreover, she saw the beauty in numbers.” Likewise, art teacher Theresa Dijoseph described Grageda as a perfectionist in everything, especially art, visualizing her ideas and easily translating them into multiple media.

“The quality that many of us most love

about Jhoana is her humility for her teachers, peers and staff,” said Chekin. “She has used her enormous gifts to contribute to our school community and raise the bar in every class she has taken, while always giving credit to others and being grateful for the opportunities she’s been given.”

“Having overcome many challenges, Jhoana passionately supports the rights of others – particularly, young women,” continued Chekin. “In an essay on adversity, she wrote, ‘I am learning the lesson that it sometimes is better to make your voice heard than stay silent, waiting for a change. When we face adversity, it is important to remember that – no matter how many times we lose strength – there will always be a new day to try again. Giving up is not an option.’ Jhoana, don’t ever give up. Keep being Jhoana and making this country and world a more beautiful place. We love you.”



Brandon Asencio Valenzuela gets his diploma from Catherine Stone.



Tshiamo Motsumi receives her diploma from Catherine Stone.



Melvin Hernandez Dominguez getting his diploma from Catherine Stone.



Emma Kim receives her diploma from Catherine Stone.

GRADUATION

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Giovanni Pineda-Maradiaga gets his diploma from Catherine Stone.



Sofia Canizalez Duran receives her diploma from Catherine Stone.

Overcoming Obstacles while Striving for Education

Two Mountain View students share their stories.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Students at Mountain View High have to overcome significant obstacles in their lives en route to graduation. So the speeches given by the grad speakers are always the highlights of each ceremony. And the ones given last week by Giovanni Pineda-Maradiaga and Sofia Canizalez Duran were no exception.

Giovanni Pineda-Maradiaga

He was born in the U.S., but his family is from El Salvador, and he said Mountain View changed his perspective. "At my base school, I believed I didn't need an education to be successful," he said. "But I came here to a smaller school, in my sophomore year, to make a fresh start. I remembered I was going to school, not just for me, but because of my mom. She sacrificed to come to the United States for a better life for her family." "Here at Mountain View, feeling a close, positive and supportive relationship with my teachers helped me improve with higher levels of achievement. I also figured out I do need an education to be successful in the future. I'm a first-generation Latino American and the first in my family to graduate. First and foremost, I'd like to thank my hero and best friend, my mother. It's because of all her sacrifices that I'm standing before you today. She's played both roles of mother and father and still continues to this day."

Pineda-Maradiaga said he didn't always get to see her because she went from job to job to provide for him and his siblings. "She dressed me like a Baby Gap model while she bought her own clothes in the clearance section," he said. "As a little boy, the majority of the time I had to do my homework alone because my mom didn't speak English.

I watched her work two minimum-wage jobs and raise three kids by herself."

As he grew older, he helped as much as he could, translating during doctors' visits and paying bills in high school. He also had to learn how to apply to college on his own. But, said Pineda-Maradiaga, "I didn't have the option to fail." And eventually, his mom was able to help him write speeches and study for tests. "My mom serves to remind me that God does exist, looking after her and admiring how strong and courageous she is, after all the obstacles she's overcome," he said. "I'm very proud, but also scared, to be continuing my studies while also working to make ends meet."

"My dream now is that my mother lives long enough for me to pay back everything she gave me through her sacrifices," continued Pineda-Maradiaga. Addressing her directly, he said, "Thank you for always putting me first, helping me reach my dreams and loving me unconditionally. I love you, Mama." He then recited that part of his speech to her in Spanish.

He also thanked his brother and sister for filling his life with laughter and fun, and his grandparents for always being there for him. "They couldn't be here today, since they live in El Salvador, but their presence is always in my heart," he said. Pineda-Maradiaga thanked his aunts, uncles and cousins for "giving me the foundation of family to stand upon," and he acknowledged a particular uncle for being a father figure to him.

He said his entire family's hard work inspired him to become the person he is today. And he also thanked Mountain View's teachers, administrators and staff for helping raise him and supporting his aspirations so he could move forward in life. Said Pineda-Maradiaga, "It took a village to raise me, and I'll always be grateful for those who took part in it."

SEE EDUCATION, PAGE 16

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

BOOT-SCOOT

OVER TO BRIGHTVIEW FOR OUR 2ND ANNUAL PIG ROAST

Friday, June 28 | 4:30 - 6:00 pm

Brightview Great Falls | 10200 Colvin Run Road
Themed attire is encouraged.

Grab your cowboy boots and hat and join us for a country western-style pig roast and barbecue.

Before we feast, line up and boogie down with a live band and fire up some cornhole, bocce ball, and horseshoes on our lawn.

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Free Summer Fun in the Mount Vernon District



Free Summer Entertainment Series, Fridays at Grist Mill Park and Saturdays at the Workhouse Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. Stop by Fort Hunt Park every Sunday at 7 p.m. in Pavilion A.

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK

Whether you are traveling, have family visiting or enjoying a stay-cation, summer is the best time for FREE outdoor fun in Mount Vernon. The Park Authority's Summer Entertainment Series, Mount Vernon Nights is a beloved MVD tradition. Every Friday at Grist Mill Park and Saturdays at the Workhouse Arts Center at 7:30 p.m., bring a blanket, chairs or a picnic dinner and listen to local artists and bands. Stop by Fort Hunt Park every Sunday at 7 p.m. in Pavilion A to listen to a collection of well-known local orchestras and bands performing your favorite music.

Our office, in partnership with School Board member Mateo Dunne, Neighborhood and Community Services and the Lorton Com-



When you visit any of the Potomac Bank's locations, download your FREE Potomac Banks Savings Pass to receive discounted admission.

munity Action Center, invite you to our Back-to-School Community Day on Saturday, August 3 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Lorton Community Center. In preparation for this event, we are accepting donations until July 21 of school supplies. Drop off contributions in the designated bin outside our office at the Mount Vernon Governmental Center.



National Museum of the United States Army.

Stay tuned and join us for our social media Summer Series: Tourism Tuesday! Every Tuesday, we'll spotlight a Potomac Banks partner, showcasing upcoming events and tourism sites you can enjoy throughout the year. When you visit any of the Potomac Bank's locations, download your FREE Potomac Banks Savings Pass to receive discounted admission and more.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Nextdoor to stay up to date and learn about all our Potomac Banks partners and let's explore Fairfax South together!

Summer offers many opportunities to enjoy the vast nature, parks and trails we have here in the MVD. Stop by any Park Authority or NOVA Park to walk the numerous trails such as the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail or the 5k loop trail at Occoquan Regional Park. If you

are looking to get the wind blowing through your hair, check out the Meadowood Mountain Biking Trails in Mason Neck or for something more leisurely, the Mount Vernon Trail is a great path for everyone. Looking for indoor fun? Immerse yourself in history at our free museums such as the National Museum of the United States Army and the Gum Springs Museum and Cultural Center. Enjoy an outdoor picnic along the water at Dyke Marsh, Riverside or Pohick Bay Regional Park. Playgrounds are a great opportunity for family time and can be found in various parks in the MVD, like, MLK, Jr. Park, North Hill Park, Laurel Hill Central Green and many more. There are countless opportunities to have a summer filled with fun activities. And the best part ... it's all free!

Being Poor and Sick Should Not be a Crime

DR. SYLISA LAMBERT-WOODARD

I have been watching other communities nationwide struggling with how to address homelessness. For some areas, their answer is to criminalize it, which now may be decided by the Supreme Court as to its constitutionality. It's unfortunate that their best idea for ending homelessness was to make it a crime.

As the leader of Pathway Homes, a local nonprofit that serves those facing challenges related to poverty and mental illness — including in Fairfax County, we work hard to keep people out of homelessness. We know that getting people into housing first is the best first step to connect them with critical mental health and social services so they can reconnect with their lives. That's why it's disturbing to see a growing number of communities

nationwide outlawing homelessness.

Housing brings stability, safety, health, and hope. Through our Housing First model, we served 2,074 men and women in 2023 with 526 permanent supportive housing units. Our case management services focus on helping individuals attain and strengthen the skills needed to manage their mental and physical health, maintain their home, enhance personal relationships, develop healthy life habits, and promote the achievement of personal goals.

Nearly all the people we serve stay out of jails, out of psychiatric facilities, and off the streets. Our services are cost-effective for the community, delivering significant savings compared to the costs of



Sylisa Lambert-Woodard

incarceration or hospitalization. Even more importantly, it helps people regain their lives.

As one of our residents who has struggled with schizophrenia and lived on the streets in Centreville for many years explained: "When

I wake up in the morning, I am excited about my life and have a sense of hope and optimism. Having housing makes me feel like somebody. It makes me feel that I now have what most people have. Housing gave me a life."

Here in Fairfax, we know there are more people to reach. They may be in tents, or staying on couches of friends and relatives, or roaming the streets with their belongings. We know that the partnerships between outstanding

nonprofits, the local government, caring citizens, and the faith communities are working to make a real difference. In fact, the number of people who are homeless in Fairfax shrunk by 2% from last year.

Take pride in our community's effective efforts to solve the issue. Criminalizing homelessness will only cause jails to fill up at a cost to taxpayers, life changing services not being delivered, and fragile lives never to be reclaimed. A better solution is to invest in the nonprofits addressing poverty and the housing crisis and that deliver effective mental health services. That's what caring communities like ours do.

Dr. Sylisa Lambert-Woodard is CEO of Pathway Homes, a mental health nonprofit working to prevent and end homelessness

COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

HERNDON

Two Local Students Compete in Scripps Spelling Bee 2024

One made history as the first Uyghur American to participate in the event.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Council of PTAs sponsored two county spellers to the 2024 Scripps National Spelling Bee, Chantilly Pinnacle Academy student Nargiza Muzhapaer and Fairfax County Public School student Ankita Balaji of Rachel Carson Middle School.

Nargiza reached the semifinals at the 96th Scripps National Spelling Bee held two weeks ago at Gaylord National Resort. She was the first Uyghur American to participate.

Nargiza said she was extremely nervous about the national spelling bee, "From the first round to my last, the waiting and anticipation beforehand was unbearable." Nargiza said the spellers' camaraderie, "who all shared the same rollercoaster of emotions," calmed her and boosted her microphone confidence. "I knew that it wasn't just me going through this; we were all in it together."

Nargiza prepared for the spelling bee by studying word patterns and origins, using spelling software,



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Nargiza Muzhapaer, a student at Pinnacle Academy in Chantilly, poses with her mom, Zohra Musabay, and dad, Muzaffar Mirzat, at the Scripps Spelling Bee.

and having her mother quiz her. She's preparing for next year, but wants "to have fun with the process."

Nargiza's mother, Zohra Musabay, was "absolutely overjoyed" when her daughter reached the national spelling bee semi-finals. "This milestone is not only a testament to her hard work and dedication ... it fills our hearts with immense pride to see her represent our community on such a significant platform." Musabay praised supporters and hoped her daughter's success would inspire other young Uyghur Americans.

SEE COMMUNITY NEWS, PAGE 18

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GRADUATION

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Flanking grad Justin Lindo are (from left) brothers David and Michael, dad Rick, mom Ellen and aunt Cindy Shen.



Posing with grad Terrance Lawless Jr. are (from left) cousin Mikel Baker; grandparents James and Convonna Russell; mom Yashica Eskridge; sister Rylee Eskridge, 6; brother Xavier Tsibu, 14; aunt Lashawntanika Preston, sister Titanisha Lawless and cousin My'Recc Preston.

Hats Off to Fairfax High School's Class of 2024

'Try something new and savor every moment.'

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax High's football stadium erupted in cheers last Tuesday, June 4, as Camille Zona's name was called. Of course, those attending the school's

graduation were happy she was receiving her diploma – but they were also overjoyed that it meant the ceremony was almost done and soon every senior on the field would be a graduate.

First, though, came all the pomp and circumstance merited by such a special occasion. Principal Georgina Aye welcomed the crowd and shared some advice with the throng of seniors sitting before her in their bright blue caps and gowns.

"Your journey here wasn't traditional," she said. "Because of a pandemic, you spent your freshman year separated from your

classmates and attending school on a Zoom screen. But you still connected with each other. And from the first minute you entered the school, you roared, like the Fairfax Lions you are."

Although the world has changed in many ways since then – especially in the realm of technology – Aye told the students to stay true to themselves and their humanity. "The world is full of possibilities, but AI can't replace the human spirit or the bonds of friendship," she said.

"You are the new leaders who'll push the boundaries of what's possible," continued

Aye. "The world needs your fire, passion and creativity. Always stay connected and roar. Once a Lion, always a Lion."

Senior Amira Bouhsane then introduced the faculty speaker, English teacher David Friedman. "He's made a significant impact on our lives," she said. "He's taught us resilience, integrity and the importance of life-long learning."

"During the pandemic, you showed up for class on your computers," he said. "But we navigated the uncertainty together. This time, you'll emerge into uncertainty again, as postgraduates. You'll not be able to control the people in your life. But you can be present, participating and producing."

"You're the most important thing in your life – don't lose yourself," said Friedman. "Make time for yourself and your interests and put yourself first. Take risks, push yourself out of your comfort zone. And when you need it, ask for help; it's the intelligent thing to do."

He also advised the grads to not go it alone but, instead, find a partner to help them. Furthermore, he added, "Life is messy; ex-

SEE HATS OFF, PAGE 12



Graduates toss their caps into the air after the ceremony.



Grad Annabelle Lewis with parents Jason Leamnon and Natalie Shores.



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GRADUATION

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



A proud David Cheng after receiving the Most Outstanding Senior Award.



Owen Korzak walking to the podium to receive the Faculty Award.



Principal Georgina Aye.



Yashavi Upasani gives the Honor Graduate address.



Class President Vaishnavi Mahimaluru at the podium.

Hats Off to Fairfax High School's Class of 2024

FROM PAGE 10

pect things to go awry. But embrace it and forgive yourself. Focus on the little things you can control. And focus on growth, not results. Your only competition is yourself. I look forward to seeing you grow. You can be proud of where you are – but you can't stay there."

Next came the honor graduate address by Yashavi Upasani. "The most complicated and strange four years of your life is over," she said. "Now all that's left is the future. Over the three years we were physically in school, we learned to fight for our classmates and ourselves and to prioritize ourselves and our friends. And we were able to clearly and deeply appreciate the little moments.

"We went through many changes, and they all bonded us together. We encouraged the idea of community, and we committed

ourselves to this school and each other. And I'm so incredibly proud of you all. You're high-achievers and goal-reachers; and soon, you'll also be grads."

"Go out and be part of the crowd," continued Upasani. "Take every opportunity that comes your way. Try something new and savor every moment. You survived high school – you can survive anything. Congratulations, Class of 2024 – we did it!"

Afterward, Fairfax City Mayor Catherine Read and School Board Chairman Carolyn Pitches presented the school's Service, Faculty and Fairfax awards.

❖ Vaishnavi Mahimaluru received the Service Award for her dedication to the school. "She is the embodiment of determination, a well-respected member of the varsity softball team and, as class president, she's volunteered many hours of service to her

school and community. The annual cultural celebration – one of the school's marquee events – wouldn't have happened without her tireless efforts." She will attend GMU.

❖ Presenting the Faculty Award to Owen Korzak, Read said he "embodies the heart" of Fairfax High. "He's passionate, driven and equally respected by students and faculty," she continued. "His concern for the environment led him to collect over 20,000 items of glass to recycle and start the first glass-recycling club at FHS. He was a triathlete – participating in cross country, swim-and-dive, and outdoor track and field. And he's been a mentor to many underclassmen." He'll be attending the University of Maryland.

❖ The Fairfax Award was given to Amira Bouhsane. "She embodies all the qualities of a student leader," said Read. "She's mature, collaborative and creative and has the

unique ability to manage her peers with a calm and steady hand. She's served admirably as the student representative to the City of Fairfax Schools Superintendent's advisory committee and as an SGA officer.

"As a member of the student leadership for four years, she's devoted countless hours. But her legacy at Fairfax is the creation of Pyramid Night, bringing elementary and middle-school students to FHS for a night of fun and community building." She, too, will attend GMU.

❖ David Cheng received the Most Outstanding Senior award from Director of Student Services Ashley Anderson. It's given to the person who best represents the Senior Class as a whole. In describing him, Anderson said, "He's adaptable, disciplined and responsible, doesn't back down from a challenge and works well with others to accomplish a goal.

"He's an excellent role model for his peers and holds himself to the highest academic standards. He made significant contributions to the Science Olympiad team and founded the Cyber Patriot Club at FHS, expanding it to 40 competitors. And he claimed District and Regional Champion titles in the 55-meter dash." He'll be attending the University of Pennsylvania.

Then, prior to the presentation of the diplomas, Mahimaluru addressed her classmates. "Many of us yearn for perfection, trying to be the best we can be at all times," she said. "And we're hard on ourselves when things don't go right. But life happens – we go into situations we can't control. But give yourself grace. Do unto yourself as you do unto others. Understand, accept and forgive yourself.

"We're all imperfect beings, but we all work hard and strive for what is right. Today, let's take some time and pat ourselves on the back. Be proud. As we go our separate ways, I

et's carry the lessons we've learned throughout high school. In the words of [singer] Natasha Beddingfield, 'Today is where your book begins; the rest is still unwritten.' You'll always have friends from Fairfax High, so this isn't goodbye, it's see you later."



A section of students listening to the graduation proceedings.

Springfield Student Named LEGO's 2024 Mini Master Model Builder

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

Creativity spews from the LEGO Discovery Center at Springfield Town Center since its opening in August 2023. Seven-year-old Lawrence or "LJ" of Lynbrook Elementary School was in on this creativity when he built a toucan bird out of LEGOs, earning him the title of "Mini Master Model Builder at LEGO Discovery Center Washington, D.C."

"The friendly competition was very close, and the builder beat out more than 50 other amazing builders," said LEGO spokesperson Admire Brown.

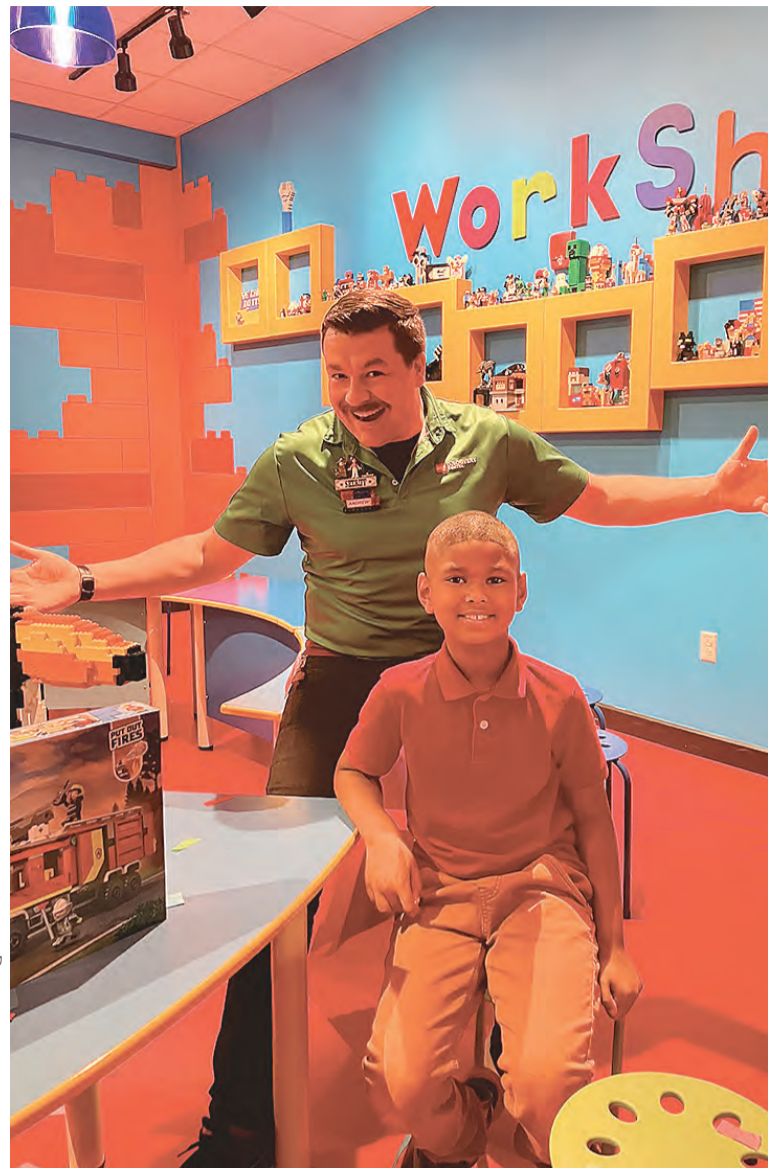
The overall theme of this competition was animals, and LJ went up against a LEGO penguin that was runner up, and a sea turtle among the 50 other entries. LJ's penguin was a "very impressive build," Brown said. The competition was online.

LJ described his toucan on the award video. "The tail goes up and down, the wings flap and goes all the way around," he said. "I made the bill too."

Next is the national competition and LJ will go up against 29 national entries. LJ will be vying for the title of North America's Mini Master Model Builder. Their theme is to build something that reminds you of home, so LJ is looking around Springfield for inspiration.



LJ with his winning build.



LJ and Master Model Builder Andrew.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

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ENTERTAINMENT

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illuminating the Natural World.

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

JUNE 8 TO AUG. 4

Workhouse Minhwa Exhibition. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Immerse yourself in the beauty of Minhwa, an exploration of the essence of Korea's beauty, vibrant colors, flora and fauna, and timeless narratives. The exhibit is located in the McGuire Woods Gallery, W-16 2nd Floor. Visit the website:

<https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/blowing-the-winds>

COLLEGE ACCESS FAIRFAX HOLDS FREE CLINICS

College Access Fairfax will hold free clinics throughout the summer at various locations in the county to help parents and students complete or correct the FAFSA or VASA financial aid forms. Clinics are currently scheduled on:

Saturday, June 15, 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Fairfax High School.

Tuesday, June 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Apple Federal Credit Union in Fairfax Corner.

Wednesday, June 26, 6-8 p.m. at Sully District Government Center.

Wednesday, July 10, 6-8 p.m. at Mason District Government Center.

Both the student and a parent/guardian must attend the clinic. Applicants should bring a laptop to all clinics except Fairfax High School. Spanish translation will be available. For more information, to register for a clinic, or to request a one-on-one appointment, visit College Access Fairfax's website. These services are free of charge.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AT COLVIN RUN MILL.

Mill tours every weekend from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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

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

PARK AUTHORITY, MASTER GARDENERS OFFER FREE VEGETABLE GARDEN CLINICS

As spring blooms, the Fairfax County Park Authority and the Fairfax County Master Gardeners extend a warm invitation to all gardening enthusiasts for a series of free Vegetable Garden Plant Clinics. These educational programs, offered in collaboration with the Fairfax County Master Gardeners and the Virginia Coop-



The Workhouse Minhwa Exhibition can be seen now through Aug. 4, 2024 at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton.

erative Extension (VCE), aim to cultivate a deeper understanding of gardening practices and foster a sense of community among green thumbs of all levels.

Join expert gardeners at a variety of locations as they provide valuable insights, answer questions, distribute soil sample kits, and offer complimentary analyses of plant and pest issues. These clinics are scheduled to run from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on the following Saturdays: July 13, Aug. 10 and Sept. 14. Clinics will be held concurrently on each of these dates at eight locations across Fairfax County:

- Pine Ridge Park, 3401 Woodburn Road, Annandale
- Baron Cameron Park, 11300 Baron Cameron Ave., Reston
- Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean
- Grist Mill Park, 4320 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria
- Grove Point Park, 6432 Bowie Drive, Springfield
- George Mason Park, 9700 Braddock Road, Fairfax
- Hogge Park, 3139 Glen Carlyn Road, Falls Church
- Nottoway Park, 9537 Courthouse Road, Vienna

FAIRFAX COUNTY FARMERS MARKETS READY FOR 2024 SEASON
2024 Farmers Market season is here and the Park Authority, along with dozens of local food pro-

ducers, have tons of fresh and healthy foods waiting for you at all 10 markets located throughout the county.

This year, you can expect to find locally grown produce, delicious baked goods and prepared foods at the farmers markets. Additionally, enjoy a variety of family-friendly activities from musical performances, games, and don't forget to bring your food scraps to support our community composting efforts.

WEDNESDAYS

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

THURSDAYS

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

FRIDAYS

McLean Through Nov. 15, 8 a.m.-noon
Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean



Experience Swing Night on Thursday, June 13, 2024, with Gottaswing's Sue and DJ Gary at Lake Anne Live in Reston.

Kingstowne Through Oct. 25, 3-7 p.m.
In the Giant parking lot, 5870 Kingstowne Towne Center, Alexandria

SATURDAYS

Burke Through Dec. 21, 8 a.m.-noon
VRE parking Lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke
Reston Through Dec. 7, 8 a.m.-noon
Lake Anne Village Center, 1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston

SUNDAYS

Lorton Through Nov. 10, 8 a.m.-noon
VRE parking lot, 8990 Lorton Station Blvd., Lorton

Visit the Farmers Market website for complete information about this year's markets – including details on SNAP benefits for eligible households available at designated locations. Contact the Community Horticulture Office at 702-642-0128.

NOW THRU JUNE 23

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

FARM HARVEST FRIDAYS

Every Friday at 2 p.m. – May 31 through October. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Enjoy live music, a guided harvest from Annie, the Giving Garden urban farmer, produce tastings, and more. Throughout the season, the farm will produce over 50 varieties of fruits, vegetables and herbs, including strawberries, zucchini, beets, spinach, carrots, peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, and more.

SUMMER CONCERT SERIES: DOUBLE FEATURES

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

DANCE NIGHTS ANNOUNCED FOR LAKE ANNE LIVE!

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

SCHEDULE:

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

FREE CONCERTS AT BURKE LAKE PARK

Mark your calendars for 7 p.m. every Wednesday night from June 26th through August 21st at Burke Lake Park for an incredible line-up of bands, food trucks, 2 Silos beer, and Peterson's Ice Cream. The atmosphere is

ENTERTAINMENT



“Postcards from Ihatov” can be seen now through June 23, 2024 at 1st Stage in Tysons Corner.

informal, so bring a picnic blanket, lawn chairs, and relax with friends and family.

SCHEDULE:

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

TYSONS CORNER CENTER

EVENTS

<cal2>* Farm Harvest Fridays
 Every Friday at 2 p.m. – May 31 through October
 Enjoy live music, a guided harvest from Annie, the Giving Garden urban farmer, produce tastings, and more. Throughout the season, the farm will produce over 50 varieties of fruits, vegetables and herbs, including strawberries, zucchini, beets, spinach, carrots, peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, and more.
 Summer Concert Series: Double Features
 June 15 and July 20 at The Plaza
 First set: 4-6:30 p.m. 2nd set: 7-9 p.m.
 Summer Concert Series will offer two live performance sets on each date, with the first band at 4-6:30PM and the second from 7-9 p.m. The series will feature local bands such as Party Fowl, Cazhmiere, Billy Twilde, and more. Come out and enjoy takeout and cocktails from the restaurants while jamming to your favorite groove!

SUMMER SUNDAY CONCERTS IN THE PARK BY THE ALDEN
 Due to the renovation of McLean Central Park, The Alden at the McLean Community Center's Summer Sunday Concerts in the

Park will be held at Lewinsville Park this year. The free concerts will be presented on the porch of the historic house in the park at 4 p.m. on Sundays, June 16 through July 28. The park is located at 1659 Chain Bridge Rd.

SCHEDULE

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

NOW THRU JUNE 23

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

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 12

Community Health Fair. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At The Virginian, 9229 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. The Virginian Senior Living community in partnership with VHC Health, Inova and Capital City Nurses will be holding a Community Health Fair featuring more than 50 local health providers offering free health screenings, health and wellness resources, fitness demonstrations, and nutrition education. Screenings for diabetes, blood pressure and vision, plus strength testing and mental health resources



The Aurora Dance Fest takes place on Friday, June 14, 2024 at Capital One Hall in Tysons Corner.

es are just some of the important services that will be available. Hospitals, health service providers and organizations including Inova Care Clinic, Alzheimer's Association, Virginian Rehabilitation & Wellness, Parkinson's Foundation, and Insight Memory Care Center will be available to meet with attendees.

THURSDAY/JUNE 13

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

FRIDAY/JUNE 14

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

SATURDAY/JUNE 15

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

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

SATURDAY/JUNE 15

Fairfax City Juneteenth Celebration.
 A free event to celebrate Juneteenth National Independence Day, the day in 1865 when enslaved people near Galveston, Texas first learned they were free.
 OLD TOWN SQUARE LINEUP:

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

SATURDAY/JUNE 15

Washington Balalaika Society's Roma Rhapsody. 7:30 p.m. At Capital One Hall, 7750 Capital One Tower Drive, Tysons Corner. The Washington Balalaika Society WBS is celebrating the musical traditions often associated with communities known as Roma, Travellers, or Gypsies. This truly inspired program was created by Artistic Director, Svetlana Nikonova, and includes familiar classics such as Liszt's “Hungarian Rhapsody #2” and several selections from Bizet's “Carmen.” The program also includes less well-known but equally thrilling pieces like “Black Shawl” and “Dark Eyes” (“Ochi Chorniye”). To purchase tickets, go to www.balalaika.org.

JUNE 15-16

Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will have N Gauge model trains on display and running at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum on Saturday, June 15 and Father's Day, Sunday, June 16, 2024. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5, \$6 for special events. Seniors and military (active and retired), \$4. <http://www.fairfax-station.org>, <http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR>, 703-425-9225.

SUNDAY/JUNE 16

49th Annual Antique Car Show. 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. This year's event promises a spectacular day filled with live entertainment, a variety of food vendors, an eclectic craft market, a bustling flea market, and, of course, hundreds of stunning antique cars. In addition to the automotive extravaganza, attendees will have the unique opportunity to explore the first level of the historic Sully house, adding a touch of history to your day of fun. Advance tickets are now available: \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$8 for children aged 5 to 15 years old.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 19

Juneteenth Celebration.
 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, Chantilly. This free event will honor the significant contributions of people, originally under enslavement and continuing after emancipation, to the operation of Sully as a home and farmstead. The event will pay tribute to their lives and those of their descendants. Join in a commemoration of emancipation at this special event. Take a tour to better understand the daily life of people enslaved at Sully. Visit the dairy, smokehouse, kitchen and laundry, first floor of the main house, and a reproduction home for enslaved people. Interact with history interpreters, listen to storytellers, participate in activities and see the special exhibits.

THURSDAY/JUNE 20

Jive After Five. 6-9 p.m. At The Roof Top at The Perch Putt, Capital One Center, Tysons Corner. Get ready to swing, refresh sip with delicious drinks and socialize at Perch Putt! Join them for a high quality networking event with the Jive After Five Networking Series by Northern Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. It's 18 holes of rooftop miniature golf with whimsical food trucks with seasonal food, playful libations – with cocktails and tiki classics – at Rhum Roost and D J Juanjo.

SUNDAY/JUNE 23

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

SUNDAY/JUNE 23

Burke Historical Society Meeting.
 3-4:30 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Local Author P. O'Connell Pearson will speak on her book, We are your Children Too: Black Students, White Supremacists, and the Battle for America's Schools in Prince Edward County, Virginia

SATURDAY/JUNE 29

McLean Independence Day Fireworks Celebration. 6:30-10 p.m. At Langley High School, 6520 Georgetown Pike. Come celebrate Independence Day with McLean Community Center. The whole family will enjoy music, food trucks, giveaways and at dusk, a huge fireworks display. There is a limited amount of free onsite parking and additional free satellite parking with shuttle bus service (accessibility equipped). Visit mcleancenter.org.

Local High Schools Win Cappies Awards

The 2024 Cappies winners for the National Capital Area were announced Monday night, June 10, at the Cappies Gala at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

- ❖ West Springfield High won eight awards, including Best Musical, for its school edition of “Sweeney Todd.”
- ❖ Herndon High received four Cappies for its musical, “Fiddler on the Roof.”
- ❖ Lake Braddock Secondary School took home the award for Best Play for its production of “Romeo and Juliet.”

❖ Chantilly High’s Sam Wolff won Dancer in a Male Role for the musical, “Anything Goes.”

❖ Fairfax High received two Cappies for “Anastasia, the Musical.” Nate Wheeler Smith won Supporting Actor in a Male Role in a Musical, and Gaby Adumua, Caitlin Grycewicz and Lilly Kyle won for Costumes.

For the full list of winners and more details, go to <https://www.cappies.com/nca/awards/2024#winners>.

Category	Winner	Show Name	School Name
Andy Mays Rising Critic	Alden Walcott		Langley High School
Maryland Theater Guide Returning Critic	Ellen Lawton		Herndon High School
Bill Strauss Graduating Critic	McKenzie Phelan		Quince Orchard High School
Marketing and Publicity	Ava Turley	Chicago: Teen Edition	Quince Orchard High School
Special Effects and or Technology	Peyton Morales, Christopher Seeger	Sweeney Todd School Edition	West Springfield High School
Hair and Make-up	Brianna Turner, Anabelle Volpe, Alina Yang, and The Sweeney Hair & Makeup Team	Sweeney Todd School Edition	West Springfield High School
Sound	TJ Schultz, and the Yorktown Sound Crew	Les Misérables School Edition	Yorktown High School
Props	Riley Kozal, and the Props Crew	Romeo and Juliet	Lake Braddock Secondary School
Lighting	Zachary Kearny, Rakeb Yihunie, and The Sweeney Lighting Team	Sweeney Todd School Edition	West Springfield High School
Costumes	Gaby Adumua, Caitlin Grycewicz, Lilly Kyle	Anastasia: The Musical	Fairfax High School
Sets	Madison Beisner, Sam Rutledge, and the Dramahawks Set Team	Les Misérables School Edition	Hayfield Secondary School
Orchestra	The Sweeney Pit	Sweeney Todd School Edition	West Springfield High School
Choreography	Noah Kennedy, Anna Leo, August Rivers	Big Fish School Edition	South Lakes High School
Creativity	Carlos Ortiz, composer	Frankenstein	Meridian High School
Stage Management	Charly Olsen	Fiddler on the Roof	Herndon High School
Stage Crew	Amelie Aubouin, Hailey Klein	Fiddler on the Roof	Herndon High School
Ensemble in a Play	Stage Managers, Ruby Kodis, Ariel Russel, Willow Singleton	Our Town	Duke Ellington School of the Arts
Ensemble in a Musical	Small Ensemble	Sweeney Todd School Edition	West Springfield High School
Featured Actor in a Female Role in a Play	Fortune Picker	Deadwood Dick, or A Game of Gold	James Madison High School
Featured Actor in a Male Role in a Play	Colt Craddock	The Doctor in Wonderland	Oakton High School
Featured Actor in a Female Role in a Musical	Jordyn Sooley	Les Misérables School Edition	Hayfield Secondary School
Featured Actor in a Male Role in a Musical	Carter Elliff	Les Misérables School Edition	Hayfield Secondary School
Dancer in a Female Role	Kathryn Edmonds	Cabaret	Walt Whitman High School
Dancer in a Male Role	Sam Wolff	Anything Goes	Chantilly High School
Vocalist in a Female Role	Itsuko Scoville	Big Fish School Edition	South Lakes High School
Vocalist in a Male Role	Ethan Hardy	Fiddler on the Roof	Herndon High School
Comic Actor in a Female Role in a Play	Kira Gilligan	Pride and Prejudice	Robinson Secondary School
Comic Actor in a Male Role in a Play	Eitan Amster	Lavender	Albert Einstein High School
Comic Actor in a Female Role in a Musical	Tiffanie Kim	Mean Girls High School Version	Clarksburg High School
Comic Actor in a Male Role in a Musical	Ryan Schimenti	Les Misérables School Edition	Yorktown High School
Supporting Actor in a Female Role in a Play	Princess Louden	Our Town	Duke Ellington School of the Arts
Supporting Actor in a Male Role in a Play	Sofia Hemmens	The Picture of Dorian Gray	Justice High School
Supporting Actor in a Female Role in a Musical	Bella Houston	Les Misérables School Edition	Yorktown High School
Supporting Actor in a Male Role in a Musical	Nate Wheeler Smith	Anastasia: The Musical	Fairfax High School
Lead Actor in a Female Role in a Play	Abby Berg	Frankenstein	Meridian High School
Lead Actor in a Male Role in a Play	Elijah Kassa	The Picture of Dorian Gray	Justice High School
Lead Actor in a Female Role in a Musical	Elina Viana	Into the Woods	Bishop Ireton High School
Lead Actor in a Male Role in a Musical	Christopher Seeger	Sweeney Todd School Edition	West Springfield High School
Song	The Ballad of Sweeney Todd (Act I)	Sweeney Todd School Edition	West Springfield High School
Critic Team			Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology
Play		Romeo and Juliet	Lake Braddock Secondary School
Musical		Sweeney Todd School Edition	West Springfield High School

Overcoming Obstacles while Striving for Education

FROM PAGE 7

Sofia Canizalez Duran

She began her speech by expressing her deepest gratitude to God, saying, “Without Him, none of this would have been possible. Today we say goodbye to high school to begin a new stage of learning in our futures. Our experience here will help us face whatever is to come. Thanks to Mountain View, I understand the true meaning of friendship, unity, solidarity and self-confidence.

“I am from El Salvador. I arrived in this country with my mother and younger sister in 2019. We had a long and difficult journey and were exposed to many dangers. But the most difficult thing for me was that I was threatened. I wanted to be in a safe

place with my family and my child. And I appreciated the help of great friends that became part of my family.”

Canizalez Duran said she’s faced many challenges in her life. “One of them is being a mother and a student at the same time,” she said. “I have so many responsibilities that, at times, I have cried and have even thought about giving up. However, I have people who give me strength and always motivate me to move forward – and to whom I dedicate my achievement today.”

She said her partner, Noé, has always supported her unconditionally. “He has been my constant in the best and worst moments of my life,” said Canizalez Duran. “He’s a loving man and a supportive father to our children.” Addressing him directly, she said, “Amor, thank you for each

of the sacrifices you’ve made to make your children and me happy every day. You know that I love you.”

“Also giving me strength are my two children, Josue and David,” she continued. “I want to be a good example for them, as my mother is for me, and show them that – with God’s help – everything is possible.” To her sister Fatima, she said, “You’ve taken care of my children and loved them as if they were your own. I love you and I will always be there for you.”

Canizalez Duran said her dad wasn’t at her graduation because he lives too far away, but she thanked him for giving her “an excellent education and a home where I could grow, evolve, make mistakes and learn. And I thank all my friends here for being part of my life and celebrating this achievement with me.”

She then spoke to her mother in Spanish, appreciating the many important values she learned from her.

She also thanked her “beloved” teachers, naming several of them specifically, as well as her school counselor, Evelyn Clumpkens. “I have no words to thank you for everything you’ve done for me and your commitment and dedication,” said Canizalez Duran. “You all gave me your words and knowledge so I could go forward. You’ve been an important part of my motivation and inspiration throughout my school career. You’ve celebrated each of my achievements as if they were your own.

“Over time, God puts people in our path who leave a mark in our hearts. The entire Mountain View staff has created a beautiful memory that I will always carry in my heart. Congratulations to all my fellow graduates – we did it.”

Three Pedestrians Killed By Train at Lake Accotink

One struck, two fell off bridge to their deaths.

By MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

Three people died recently at Lake Accotink when they tried crossing an elevated train bridge over Accotink Creek when a train came, resulting in the fatalities.

According to the Fairfax County Police Department, officers responded to a train crash on Wednesday, June 5 at 8:29 p.m., in the 7500 block of Accotink Park Road in Springfield. Preliminarily, Fairfax County Police detectives determined Diego Arriaza, 28, of Annandale, Yeraldin Pardo, 28, of Lincolnia and her 8-year-old child were on the north-bound elevated train tracks and encountered a travelling freight train. Detectives believe Arriaza was struck by the train, and Pardo and the child fell from the bridge. All three victims were declared deceased at the scene, FCPD said.

Detectives do not believe that speed or alcohol were factors in the crash for the train engineer. Detectives continue to investigate if alcohol was a factor in the crash for the

pedestrians.

For the residents of Springfield, Accotink Creek and Lake Accotink area are popular recreation areas. In the past, the cardboard boat regatta was a big hit, and more recently, the park authority and local officials juggled the need to save the lake from being filled in by sediment coming downstream. The overhead train is part of the background noise throughout the day, but pedestrian crossings on this overhead bridge are prohibited, unsafe and not common.

The train tracks and rail system are not under the purview of the Fairfax County Park Authority, said Ben Boxer, FCPA spokesperson. "We would echo the message that the railroad tracks are not safe for pedestrians. We implore all visitors of the park to enjoy the marked pedestrian trails within the park and to not leave the park to venture onto the railroad tracks," Boxer said.

According to Heather Garcia, the Sr. Communications Manager at Norfolk Southern, the bridge over Accotink Creek is on their radar. "This particular crossing over this creek has a history that spans many, many years, but I can tell you that we have not had any incidents here in at least the last decade," she said.

The National Safety Council cites the increase in train collisions with cars in recent years but not with pedestrians. In 2022, of the total 954 deaths involving trains, 29%



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

Trains travel at high speeds over the bridge at Lake Accotink.

occurred at rail-crossings across the country. Motor vehicle fatalities were the highest while pedestrian deaths were lowest. Of the 954 deaths in 2022, 651 were summed up as "Trespasser," which would include pedestrians on an overhead railroad bridge.

Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone - 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

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COMMUNITY NEWS

FROM PAGE 9



PHOTO BY KAREN BOLT/FCPS

Ankita Balaji of Rachel Carson Middle school won the 2024 Fairfax County Spelling Bee Champion, sending her to the Scripps Spelling Bee.

“I will look at where I am and look at how far I’ve come and just feel really happy,” she said.

Ankita was eliminated in Round 4, finishing in 60th place (tied).

Ankita Balaji of Rachel Carson, MS, is the 2024 Fairfax County Spelling Bee Champion, and she competed in the 96th Scripps National Spelling Bee, following in the footsteps of her older sister, Ashita. Carson Middle School Principal Gordon Stokes said, “We are incredibly proud of Ankita. Her accomplishment is proof that hard work can pay off with a wonderful experience. She did an excellent job of representing herself, her family, and the RCMS community.” Before Anika got to the national spelling bee, she explained she wanted to “take it all in.”

VIENNA & OAKTON

The 2024 Cappies Awards Winners Are ...

MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Two Fairfax County public schools in Vienna, Oakton High School and James Madison High School secured Cappie awards Monday night, June 10, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. This is the “Tony Awards” for high school students, a black-tie-optional event with awards and performances celebrating high school theater.

From Madison High School is Fortune Picker for the Featured Actor in a Female Role in a Play Award for her role in “Deadwood Dick, or A Game of Gold.”

Oakton High School’s Colt Craddock won Featured Actor in a Male Role in a Play for his role in “The Doctor in Wonderland.”

The Cappies is a year-long international learning program for

theater and journalism students. Students attend and discuss each other’s shows, write reviews for publication, and, at the end of the season, they are the critics who decide which of their fellow student performers and technicians should be honored with awards.

This year’s gala included a procession of all the nominees, special opening and closing numbers by the Cappies Gala Singers, dancers, and orchestra, an opening with spotlight performers, 42 awards for acting, tech, and critics, and excerpts from the top six plays and musicals.

Red Apple Channel 21 (Verizon FIOS and Cox in Fairfax County, VA) will broadcast the gala several times starting Monday, June 17. You can also view the Channel 21 live stream at: <https://www.fcps.edu/tv>.

See list of all the winners on page 16.

MOUNT VERNON

Team Storck Volunteers at Food Pantry



PHOTO FACEBOOK

On June 7, Fairfax County Supervisor Dan Storck (D) and his team stocked shelves and unboxed items, assisted clients, and had fun at United Community’s food bank for their spring volunteer day. Do you want to volunteer, too? Visit <https://www.unitedcommunity.org/volunteer/> for volunteer opportunities.

— MERCIA HOBSON

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Employment

Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. seeks a Product Engineer in Vienna, VA to write data science and machine learning samples using ArcGIS and open source ecosystem. Can work remotely. Reqs. BS+1 yrs. exp. To apply, submit resume to Vinesh Patel, 380 New York Street, Redlands, CA 92373. If you have questions, you may contact Vinesh Patel at: vinesh_patel@esri.com. REQ#: 2024-874.

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Inaugural Herndon Pride Festival



From left, friends Ruby Chernowetz, Tam Anthony, Toki Cabera and Dante Bimbra gather in front of the performance stage at Arts Herndon's inaugural Herndon Pride Festival on Saturday, June 8.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS



Local elected officials take to stage at Herndon Pride Festival, (from) left Keven LaBlanc, Herndon Town councilmember and candidate for mayor; Sheila Olem, mayor of Herndon; and representing the Fairfax County Dranesville District, Robin Lady, school board member and Supervisor Jimmy Bierman (D) with his son.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Herndon Pride Festival by Arts Herndon debuted on Saturday, June 8. Sponsors and supporters like the Town of Herndon; Rotary Satellite Club of Herndon-Reston, People in Action; Herndon Friends Meeting; NOVA PRIDE; Dranesville District Supervisor James N. Bierman Jr.; Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation;

and Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services all deemed the day a success.

Anita Velveta, locals, Vanya and The Egomaniacs, and Ukulele Death Squad performed, and Nu Pop Entertainment and Caro Serrano, Jazz, and Bossa NOVA capped the festivities, which featured an outdoor art installation by John Hartt. A drum circle, drag performers, arts and crafts, food, family fun, and a skate demo entertained guests. Find the event on Instagram @HERNDON_PRIDE



Del. Karen Keys-Gamarra.



From left, Jo Ormesher, CEO and president of Arts Herndon, holds the microphone so Fairfax County Supervisor Jimmy Bierman (D-Dranesville) can give his son a lift up to the microphone and wish everyone a happy Pride Day. To the right is Anh Phan, district director Office of U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly.



Brothers Bryce, 3, (right) and Owen, 6, enjoy the arts and crafts table by supporters, Herndon Friends Meeting. The banner behind the art table read, "Quakers for Radical Equality support the Herndon Pride Festival: If it's not radical equality, it's not enough."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY ARTS HERNDON

Artist John Hartt

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Artist John Hartt and his larger-than-life, community-backed installation, Something Wonderful of whimsical and other-worldly characters, featured outdoors on the lawn and in front of Arts Herndon.

Still Diverting (In Real Time)



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Though I had my PET scan today, Wed., June 5. I probably won't know the results until the weekend. That's when I'm likely to have received, electronically, the same radiologist's report that my oncologist will receive. And given that timing, and the time when my column is due in production makes it unlikely, I'll have anything of substance to report on my papillary thyroid cancer before I submit this column for publication. As such, this column will be like last week's: a little bit about cancer and a lot about nothing. Both of which I'm capable of providing.

What this initial paragraph means is that I'll be stuck not knowing, or if I do know (from the report), I won't exactly know its meaning, as it's written by a doctor for a doctor, not necessarily for the doctor's patient. As a result, if I receive the report sooner rather than later, I'll have more time to stress potentially over whatever substance I can semi understand. If on the other hand, I don't receive the report until later, I'll have more time to stress over what it might say – since the not-knowing is often worse than the knowing. For the moment however, to quote Sergeant Schultz from "Hogan's Heroes:" "I know nothing."

The radiologist's report that I will receive, though filled with medical jargon, does list some headings: "Findings" and "Impressions" that at the very least attempt to summarize the report. Having been through this scan/process many times before, the "impressions" and "findings" are helpful, but until I hear it from the oncologist's mouth, I try not to read too much into what little I do understand. After all, this is medicine, not arithmetic. The content generally doesn't provide a straight line to one's life expectancy. That comes from the oncologist. Thankfully, my appointment with my oncologist is first thing Mon. morning, five days after my scan, which is about as soon after a scan when an appointment would be scheduled. Therefore, I might be waiting early for the results, but not too late for the appointment. Us cancer patients tend to grasp at straws while we're looking for any port in a storm.

In the interim, while I still have unoccupied space in my brain, I will complete this column as I completed last week's column: cancer first, Kenny's minutiae second. Compared to last week's diversion about "backparking" – as opposed to headfirst parking, this week's topic is altogether different. Rather than written about the bane of my existence, as the parking issue is, this topic will be about my joie de vivre: resealable packaging on certain perishable items regularly purchased at a supermarket. This previous problem of opening a package (let's say Oreo cookies for example) and not having an easy way to close the packaging to keep the item fresh after opening has been resolved. Previously, I would have used a paper clip or something similar. After 65-plus years of ripping open bags of cookies – as an extremely likely recurring example, the solution is here: the resealable flap. I can still remember the moment when this lifelong problem ended. It happened in Cambridge, Maryland where Dina and I were "weekending."

We were visiting good friends Martha and H.L. at their home. Typically, we'll eat more at their home than we'll go out. This weekend was no different. When Sunday morning came around, Maratha had set out a breakfast buffet: eggs, bacon, bread, coffee, et cetera. Et cetera' included English muffins. As I grabbed my plate and walked over to the toaster to get an English muffin, I noticed they were not Thomas. They were a brand I did not know Bays: When I went to grab a muffin from the six-pack package, I had to open the package because it had been resealed. At the end of the bag was a resealable flap to efficiently and conveniently open and close and reseal the insides forever more – or certainly long enough for its contents to be devoured. "Wow!" I must have said aloud because at that moment, that exposure to the resealable flap, changed my life. Certainly, I'm exaggerating because cancer changed my life. However, for a cookie maven like me, discovering this packaging design affected my cookie consumption. No longer would I have to eat all the cookies because otherwise they'd get stale. And 'stale' because once open, the cookies edibility went down as the cookies lost their freshness – because the package wasn't resealable. (Although, I love a stale Oreo. They're soft and delicious.) Now, I could eat like a normal person, well, at least a 'normal person' like me who has more than a sweet tooth. I have sweet teeth.

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



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Under Contract!



Offered for...\$2,439,000

6025 Woodland Terrace, McLean
GORGEOUS 2016 Arts & Crafts home with 3BR/4.5BA on 3 spacious levels located on over a half acre in sought-after Chesterbrook Woods! Designed by renowned architect Dwight McNeil and built by Joy Custom Design + Build. This finely detailed home features over 5300 sq ft of living space. The back of the house transitions beautifully to the sun-filled gourmet kitchen, breakfast area, and stunning family room. Spacious main level BR with en suite. Upper level features 2 BR's, each with en suite. Lower level offers a spacious family room, rec room, wine cellar, and full bath. **Chesterbrook, Longfellow, McLean Schools!**

ELITE PRODUCER
BEST WASHINGTONIAN 2023

FOR SALE!

FRANKLIN PARK!



2049 Rockingham Street
McLean, 22101
\$4,695,000
NEW CONSTRUCTION!

Under Contract!

Sold in 5 days!



Offered for...\$1,525,000

6192 Hardy Drive, McLean
STUNNING 5BR/3 BA split level home in Potomac Hills neighborhood. Step inside to discover tastefully updated modern home features throughout the home! The main level offers a beautiful over-sized island, quartz countertops, and high-end appliances in the kitchen. Warm hardwood flooring and a wood burning fireplace welcomes with natural light flowing into the living, dining and kitchen areas. Completing this level is a primary suite with two additional spacious bedrooms. Lovely sunroom overlooking the lush backyard. The LL features a light-filled family room, 2 add'l BR's & full bath. **McLean HS Pyramid!**

SOLD!



6144 Farver Road
McLean, 22101
\$1,550,000

SOLD!



1466 Kirby Road
McLean, 22101
\$1,560,000

SOLD!



6813 Tennyson Drive
McLean, 22101
\$2,550,000

SOLD!



1409 Layman Street
McLean, 22101
\$1,600,000

SOLD!



1639 Macon Street
McLean, 22101
\$2,215,000

SOLD!



1313 Merrie Ridge Rd
McLean, 22101
\$1,637,500

Curious what your home is worth? Call to chat with JD and Ed today!