

THE CONNECTION

CENTRE VIEW ♦ Chantilly ♦ Great Falls ♦ Herndon ♦ McLean ♦ Oak Hill ♦ Oakton
Reston ♦ Vienna ♦ Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station ♦ Lorton ♦ Clifton

Conservationist friends came to Avril Garland's aid to adapt her native plant gardens to meet town ordinances. Lubna Dabbagh, Avril Garland, Philip Latasa, Aimee Moore Martin, Tom Blackburn, Sean Achziger, Lucy Collins and Sarah Mayhew.

Changing Rules To Match Science

PAGE 10

OPINION, PAGE 8 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 16 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 18

PHOTO PROVIDED BY A. GARLAND



School Board Changes Boundary Rules

PAGE 3

Data Center Rules Deferred

PAGE 14

JULY 24-30, 2024

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NEWS



Sandy Anderson,
Springfield District



Speaker Robert Rigby Jr.,
retired FCPS teacher



Dr. Ricardy Anderson,
Mason District



Mateo Dunne, Mount Vernon
District Fairfax County school
board representative



Melanie Meren,
Hunter Mill District

School Board Changes Boundary Policy

Changes to boundary policy emphasize capacity, removes concern for impact on students.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Poised to observe its annual summer recess from July 19 to Aug. 19, 2024, during its meeting on the evening of July 18, the Fairfax School Board voted 9 to 2 on the main motion that the School Board amend Policy 8130 on Local School Boundaries, Program Assignments, and School Closings, as amended and detailed in the agenda item attachment. Dr. Ricardy J. Anderson, Mason District, and Melanie K Meren, Hunter Mill District, voted no. Their motions for middle and high school phase adjustments failed.

The change supports a focus on school capacity and overcrowding.

During community participation, the audience booed speaker Robert Rigby Jr. as he delivered his statement to the board via video. He discussed the issue of overcrowding in schools and expressed his support for the planned policy change. Chairman Karl Frisch demanded decorum from the crowd and warned them to do so, or security would ask them to leave. At other times, the crowd shouted over board members and speakers.

In a related action, the School Board approved two follow-on motions after approval of the amended policy: 1. That the School Board direct the Superintendent to adjust the boundaries/capacity at Glasgow Middle School during the implementation of the county-wide boundaries adjustment anticipated

after the completion of the initial review of school boundaries to include a Regional community engagement in Region 2 and in the Justice HS pyramid. (Motion by Dr. Ricardy Anderson, Seconded by Sandy Anderson) 2. That the School Board direct the Superintendent to, in addition to the community engagement outlined in Policy 8130, Section VI, which includes engagement before the cyclical review begins and after changes are recommended, establish an ad-



Student speaker, Isabell Olverson, a rising 7th grader at Cooper MS

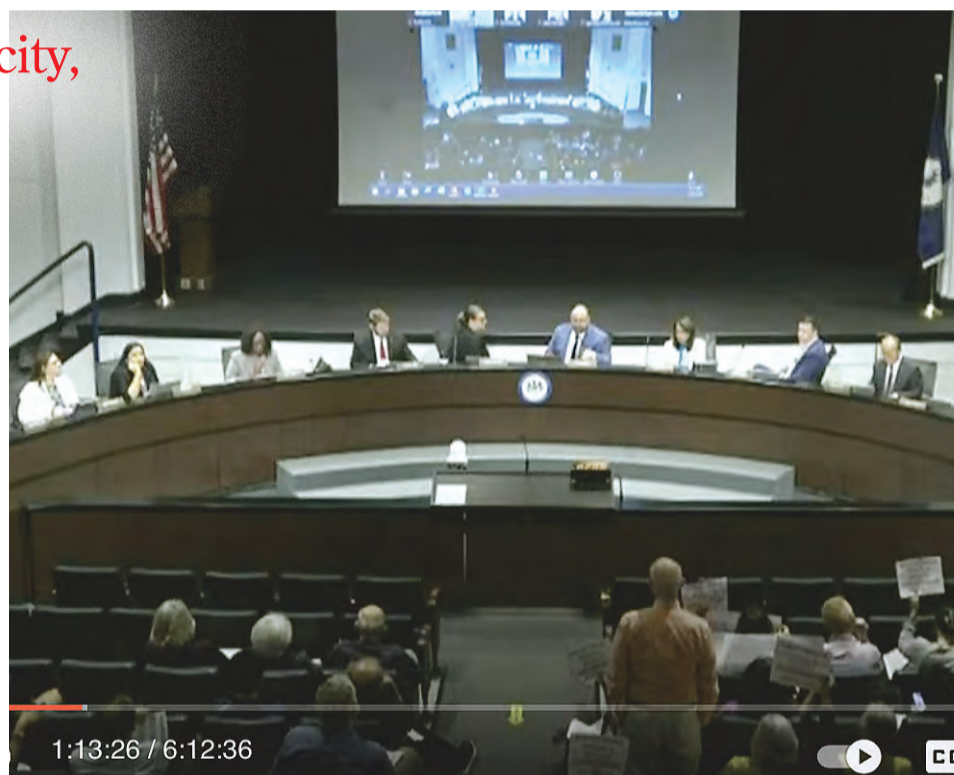
visory committee consisting of community members to provide feedback throughout the review process. (Motion by Kyle McDaniel | Seconded by Sandy Anderson).

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Isabell Olverson, a rising 7th grader at Cooper Middle School, expressed concerns about removing policy language that considers the impact on students and critical 'grandfathering' for 6th-12th-grade students. "Stability is crucial, especially during these formative years. Constantly changing schools can disrupt not just my academic journey but also my social life and extracurricular activities ... I hope we can find a solution that allows students like me to benefit from advanced academic programs without the constant disruption of changing schools," Isabella said.

Ryan St. Pierre urged the board to pause the revision of policy 8130 until meaningful community engagement occurs. "Shifting districts should be based on clear data-driven criteria and be the last resort after ex-

Many parents voice opposition to boundary policy changes.



Karl Frisch, chair of the Fairfax County School Board, warns the booing and jeering crowd to observe decorum or security will ask them to leave.

hausting other alternatives."

Edward Phillips of the Great Falls Citizens Association again "respectfully ask[ed] the board to pause its action and create more opportunity to engage with the entire county on this critical policy."

John Smith explained that establishing local public schools was historically an exercise in community building, helping to forge "a powerful sense of community through common investment in the children."

FairFACTSMatters created a petition, garnering over 1,700 signatures. It asked the school board to clarify why they included the "equitable access" criterion in the policy language for boundary line redrawing yet failed to specify the implementation, prioritization and measurement of equitable access to programs.

Speaker Robert Rigby Jr. commented, "I hope all speakers speak with charity and kindness toward all people, residents, and children of this county." Rigby said that, as a former FCPS teacher, he substituted in every district in the county and experienced overcrowding at each. He supported the revisions to Policy 8130 and the proposal

from School Board member Dr. Ricardy Anderson because they increased transparency by bringing boundary changes to light. "We'll have them when they come up for the March public discussion ... These boundary changes are made by our elected school board members, who are accountable in the eyes of their constituents in Fairfax County," Rigby said.

The board should consider boundary changes every five years as circumstances change; spectators booed and made loud comments. Here, Frisch said, "Please stop the video." Rigby was testifying via recorded video. "Observe decorum, or security will ask you to leave."

Quiet returned, and Frisch requested that the interrupted video resume. Rigby concluded by saying that the piecemeal approach over the past five years has led them to "a truly dire situation."

FairFACTSMatters Virginia posted four concerns regarding the proposed policy amendments. According to the group: (1) Community Instability: It requires coun-

Endangered Great Falls Teen Missing

Help bring Niko home.

MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Police Department issued a missing endangered man report for Amadou Diop, 19, of Great Falls, who goes by the name of “Niko.” He is endangered due to mental and/or physical health concerns. Diop was last seen on Thursday, July 14, at 10:15 p.m. at his home in the 10000 block of Akhtamar Drive in Great Falls. He is 6’1”, 150 pounds, with brown hair and brown eyes. What Diop was wearing is unknown.

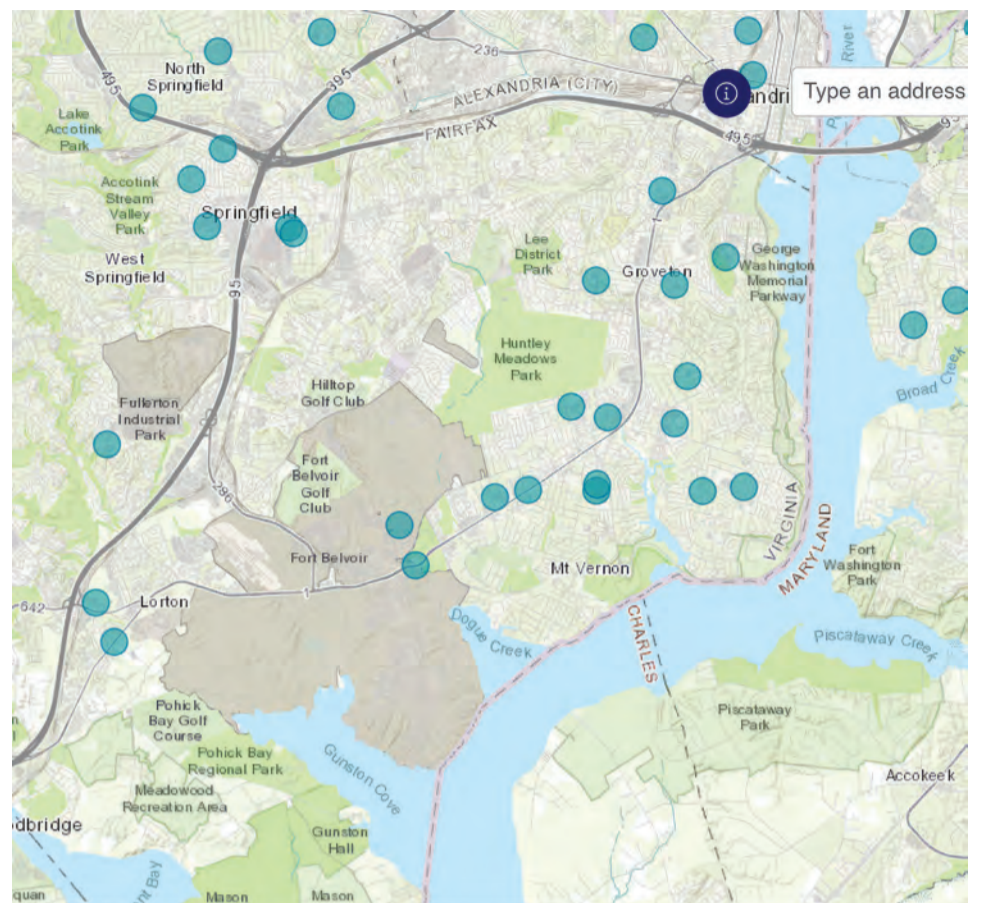
Please check areas around and near your home, including inside outbuildings, to see if anyone has been there. Share this alert to help spread the word



SCREENSHOT FCPD

Endangered teen Amadou “Niko” Diop has been missing since last Thursday, July 14.

and bring Diop home safely. If you have any information, call the police at 703-691-2131.



SCREENSHOT USDA

USDA Summer Meals for Kids site finder identifies locations for sponsoring organization FCPS.

Teen Arrested in Fatal Pedestrian Crash

Detectives from FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit arrested a teen driver after a fatal crash in Lorton.

Saturday night, July 20, around 10:35 p.m., officers responded to the intersection of Lorton Road and Timarand Drive in Lorton for a pedestrian who was struck by a vehicle. Jamar Caper, 35, of Alexandria, sustained life-threatening injuries and was taken to the hospital, where he was pronounced deceased. The driver of the vehicle remained on the scene.

Preliminarily, detectives determined the driver of a 2017 Jeep Cherokee was traveling eastbound on Lorton Road near Timarand Drive. At the intersection, Caper attempted to cross Lorton Road and was struck by the driver of the Jeep.

Officers from our DWI squad responded and arrested the 17-year-old driver for Driving Under the Influence of Drugs or Narcotics. The teen was taken to the Fairfax County Juvenile Detention Center and subsequently released to their parents.

Detectives suspect that narcotics may have played a role in the crash, and speed is still being investigated. The circumstances surrounding the crash remain under investigation.

Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact our 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)

USDA’s Free Summer Meal Services Ending

Where to turn? New USDA program SUN Bucks and local help available.

The USDA Summer Meals program for sponsoring organization FCPS begins shutting down as early as this week. The FCPS website details different end dates for local schools’ USDA Summer Meals programs. For instance, FCPS’ Summer Meal Program ends on July 26 at North Springfield Elementary, as it does for Bucknell Elementary in Alexandria, Forest Edge Elementary in Reston, Clearview Elementary in Herndon, and Fort Belvoir Elementary. On Aug. 1, the programs at Armstrong Elementary in Reston and Ben Mar Park Elementary close, among others. Others run through Aug. 16. Visit Summer Meal Service Program at https://www.fcps.edu/family-resources/student-safety-and-wellness/food-and-nutrition-programs/summer-meal-service?utm_campaign+=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery to learn when the program ends at your school.

However, as of July 24, less than four weeks remain until Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) opens on Aug. 19 for the 2024-25 school year, possibly making it challenging for some families to put food on the table for their children during the gap. Summer food assistance is available.

On July 10, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a new \$100 mil-

lion investment in states, Tribal Nations, and U.S. territories to assist them in implementing SUN Bucks. Each qualified school-aged child in participating states, including Virginia, receives a \$120 grocery benefit from SUN Bucks.

The benefit may be used to purchase food at grocery stores, farmers’ markets, and other approved businesses.

SUN Bucks, or Summer EBT, is part of USDA’s Summer Nutrition Programs for Kids. It lowers families’ costs and improves food and nutrition security during summer break when children lose access to school meals. Families are encouraged to participate in all available programs. Visit SUN Programs: USDA’s Summer Nutrition Programs for Kids at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/summer> to learn more.

Food support is available locally, too. “If you are in dire need as the summer food program is finishing, or you are worried about having enough food for you and your family, please reach out to Cornerstones Food Pantry; we are here to help,” said Minnie Orozco, Program Manager, Urgent Needs and Life Skills, when asked where else can local families can turn. Her phone number is 571-323-1400.

— MERCIA HOBSON

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Fatal Pedestrian Crash in Great Falls

Detectives from FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit continue to investigate a fatal pedestrian crash in Great Falls.

Early Friday, July 21, around 3:43 a.m., officers responded to the intersection of Leesburg Pike and Downey Drive in Great Falls for a pedestrian who was struck by a vehicle. The driver of the vehicle initially left the scene but returned shortly after.

Preliminarily, detectives determined that Giomarie Davila-Ocasio, 26, of Reston, entered the roadway in the westbound lanes of Leesburg Pike. The driver of a 2016 Ford Explorer was traveling west on Leesburg Pike

near the intersection and struck Davila-Ocasio. Davila-Ocasio was declared deceased at the scene.

Detectives believe that alcohol was a factor in the crash for the pedestrian. Alcohol does not appear to be a factor for the driver, and speed is still under investigation. The circumstances surrounding the crash are still being investigated.

Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact our 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



Gracing Spaces volunteers in the back of the one truck they own. Wall decorations brighten the interior of a new residence.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED
The "before" pictures show the potential and the "after" pictures make it look like home.

Furniture and Clothing Top the List of Donations for Newly Placed Residents

Gracing Spaces helps with the transition from shelter to homes.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

For a person without a residence, it's a process to finally get a place to call home and part of that process includes getting furniture. That's where "Gracing Spaces," comes into play with donated beds, chairs, couches, clothes and more.

"The demand is just enormous," said Dorothy Sorrell, the secretary of Gracing Spaces, a non-profit in Burke. From January 2024 to June, she said they've gotten 229 social worker requests to help 640 people that needed furniture and other living materials for their new residences totaling \$111,000.

Gracing Spaces is an all-volunteer non-profit that has been furnishing homes for people leaving homelessness for more

than 20 years. This Burke organization works with social workers of more than 20 Fairfax County agencies and other non-profits to provide furniture, household items, and children's clothing and toys. As people are finally able to be housed, they need these items as they struggle to overcome homelessness due to poverty, domestic violence, eviction, and loss of homes due to fire and redevelopment, they said. Gracing Spaces is currently working out of public storage units and a small warehouse in Burke and welcomes volunteers to assist in these efforts.

When they began years ago, they operated out of a church basement in Clifton but after a few years, they had to move and are now operating out of a self-storage space, handing out furniture, clothes and more on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. They do "make-

overs," too, and have a donated truck to deliver when possible.

A mother and four children were the last makeover they did, but Gracing Spaces mostly interact with the social workers face to face. The furniture, clothing, cookware and other items have to be in great condition, with no stains or tears.

There are some places in Fairfax County where there is more need for a service like this and Gracing Spaces works with county supervisor's offices or charity organizations like FACETS or Cornerstones to make the connections. The Centreville United Methodist Church is a partner as well. They rely on 60-70 volunteers as well, and since they rely entirely on donations, the only way to thank these volunteers is a celebratory dinner once a year.

People living without a home, people ex-

periencing homelessness, are struggling all over the country.

THE BIG HOUSING PICTURE

Fairfax County, in coordination with the surrounding D.C. Metro area, conducted its 2024 Point-In-Time Count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness on Jan. 24, 2024 and counted 1,278 people literally homeless on that date, according to the county website. This is a decrease of 2 percent (32 people) from the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, when there were 1,310 people identified as experiencing homelessness. This highly coordinated effort provides critical data on the numbers of Fairfax County residents living in shelters, in time-limited transitional housing programs as well as those unsheltered and living on the street in the Fairfax-Falls Church community.

For more information on how to help Gracing Spaces, go to www.gracingspaces.com

Tree Cover Protected In Town of Vienna

Town makes a move to keep the shade of older trees.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

As the summer sun burns down on the surrounding landscape, turning the grass brown and causing a few cases of heat stroke, the first thing those out and about do is head for the shade. In the Town of Vienna, officials are looking to make the shade readily available by conserving the number of trees with an amendment to the Town Code to shift the approach from tree

replacement to tree conservation during land development.

Trees take years to grow to the size where they would be part of the tree canopy so tree ordinance changes were adopted during the Council's regular meeting on Monday, April 29. The new laws include requirements and incentives for developers to conserve existing trees rather than replace them, the meeting text read. To follow this initiative, they also created a Tree Advocacy Committee that will report to both the Town's Conservation and Sustainability Commission and to the Town Council.

At first look out on the streets of Vienna, there are trees all around so what's the issue, one might ask. But according to a study



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Tree cover at Follin Lane near Wildwood Park.

SEE TREE COVERAGE, PAGE 12

OPINION

Be Safe! Hurricane Season Started

Purchase tax-free hurricane preparedness products like batteries, generators, 2-way radios, bottled water and tie-down kits Aug. 2-4.

BY DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK

Earlier this summer, we saw Hurricane Beryl barrel through the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico as a Category 5 storm, so this is a good time to remind you about preparing your home and family for hurricane season.

In recent years, we have seen severe hurricane season creep ever earlier, with storms starting stronger and more destructive than normal in the face of rising water temperatures in the Atlantic Ocean. Hurricane Beryl is the first Category 5 storm ever seen in the Atlantic Ocean in the month of June since hurricane records began in 1851. Until the formation of Hurricane Beryl, the earliest a Category 4 or 5 hurricane had formed in the northern Atlantic during a hurricane season was July 8.

While we are fortunate to live in Northern Virginia where we rarely experience direct landfall from extreme hurricanes, these storms can still bring intense winds and rainfall that cause significant flooding and property damage. Two hurricanes in recent memory, Irene in 2011 and Isabel in 2003, left a lasting mark on our Alexandria area. Isabel alone caused over \$5 billion in damages from North Carolina to Pennsylvania. Our region experienced wind speeds peaking



at 71 mph, resulting in severe tidal flooding and extensive tree damage. Power outages lasting a week or more were common, and Old Town's storm surge surpassed its historic record from the hurricane of 1933.

So, what can you do to

stay prepared?

You should learn the difference between a hurricane watch and a hurricane warning. A watch means that hurricane conditions are possible, while a warning means that hurricane conditions are expected. Sign up for local alerts and warnings on your mobile device and listen to the local news and weather reports. Learn your community's evacuation plan and identify evacuation routes.

Create your own evacuation plan with a place to stay and a "go bag" full of emergency items, such as bottled water, snacks, a first aid kit, a flashlight, hygiene items, your medications and a change of clothes. Plan for your entire household including children,

SEE KRIZEK, PAGE 12



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OPINION



The health fair will include dozens of vendors from local schools and County agencies



Enjoy family-friendly fun with yard games, face painting, a moon bounce and free food and music.

The Mount Vernon District Has Got Your Back (to School)

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK

The new school year brings excitement and new beginnings, but it can also be a challenging time for many families, making sure they have school registration complete, health assessments in order and school supplies purchased. Join me, School Board Member Mateo Dunne, Neighborhood and Community Services and the Lorton Community Action Center at our Back-to-School Community Day on Saturday, Aug. 3 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Lorton Community Center, 9520 Richmond Hwy., for a family-friendly day of fun and to get your back-to-school checklist complete.

The event will feature free food, music, yard games, a moon bounce and face painting. Enjoy touch-a-truck opportunities and check out the Park Authority's new Wonder Wagon. Arrive early to receive free giveaways of school supplies! These giveaways are for Fairfax County residents only and proof of home address will be checked. Parents without children present will only receive ONE backpack and parents with children present will receive one bag per child. School supplies will be given away on a first-come, first served basis.

Additionally, enjoy our health fair which



Supervisor Storck welcoming attendees to the 2023 Back-to-School Community Day.

will include exhibitors from local schools, the Health Department, INOVA, Community Services Board, Family Services, the Neighborhood and Community Services Care Van, Neighborhood Health, the Medical Care for Children

Partnership and more. These agencies will share information about the services they provide to students, youth and families. They will also be

SEE STORCK, PAGE 9

Biden Acts to Maximize Democracy's Chances

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL

It's rare when you get to witness history in your lifetime, but today we all were able to witness American leadership at its finest.

Two-hundred-and-twenty-eight years ago, George Washington lived at a time when no man had ever abdicated



power for his successor to be chosen by a democratic process. In 1776, our neighbor put his reputation, his family, his belongings, and his life on the line for an idea called America. Once the Revolution was over in 1781, he could have allowed the

SEE SUROVELL, PAGE 9

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OPINION

Storck

FROM PAGE 8

available to assist with obtaining public assistance services such as Medicaid, Medicare and SNAP. Get hearing, vision and dental screenings done by the INOVA Lions Club.

Can't attend this great event? Fairfax County Public Schools has back-to-school resources available online for the first day of school on Aug. 19. Click on the links below for resources:

2024-2025 School Year Calendar (<https://www.fcps.edu/system/files/forms/2024-01/2024-2025-standard-school-year-calendar.pdf>)

School Registration (<https://www.fcps.edu/registration>)

Information about Mount Vernon District School Board Member Mateo Dunne (<https://www.fcps.edu/staff/mateo-dunne>)

School Supply Lists (<https://www.fcps.edu/supply-lists>)

Surovell

FROM PAGE 8

colonies to make him King or Emperor and he demurred.

When he was elected President in 1788, Washington could have stayed as long as he liked, until he died. Instead, he demurred again and gave up power in 1797. He established the tradition in our country that elected leaders can give up power and pass the torch to the next generation. A tradition that has carried on for over 200 years until it was attempted to be breached on Jan. 6, 2021.

When the Capitol of Virginia was completed in 1804, there was one statue that belonged in the Rotunda - Houdon's sculpture of Washington completed in 1792. It was placed and never moved.

Today, President Joe Biden demurred to attempting to hold on to power and he did so to facilitate not just passing the torch to the next generation, but also to maximize the possibility that we continue the democracy that we call America.

Please take note of today, make it a learning experience for those in your family, and appreciate the leadership that President Biden showed today. Those of us who live in Fairfax County have a special connection to the father of our country and can take a moment to take in unfolding history.

It is an honor to serve as your state senator and the Majority Leader of the Senate of Virginia.

Surovell was Vice President Kamala Harris' 2020 Virginia Cochair.

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NATIVE PLANT ADVOCACY



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Avril Garland's use of improvised deer protection, and tall meadow growth contrasts with the manicured turf grass of neighboring yards.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY A. GARLAND

Conservationist friends came to Avril Garland's aid to help her property meet town vegetation ordinances, including: Lubna Dabbagh, Avril Garland, Philip Latasa, Aimee Moore Martin, Tom Blackburn, Sean Achziger, Lucy Collins and Sarah Mayhew.



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Many native plants grow better in dense plantings, in meadow-like areas.



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Dr. Maryam Dadkhah is gradually expanding areas of native plantings in place of turf grass which can be detected in the color variation of the mulched beds.

Ecosystem Heroes or Ordinance Violators?

Defending native plantings.

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Some may remember that driving at night once guaranteed a windshield full of splattered insects. Or sitting outside in the evening promised the romance of tiny flashing lights as fireflies sought out mates. In times past, summer skies were adorned with many beautiful, large orange and black Monarch butterflies flitting toward native flowers.

Some people are willing to do more than note the passing of these serendipitous moments that mark a time when we enjoyed a healthier ecosystem. You will find several of them volunteering to restore natural habitats around us. Lauded for the significant number of hours they spend working as volunteers in area parks, volunteers are recognized for their leadership and work in managing invasive plants in public places to encourage native plants. Yet too often these same community heroes run afoul of their neighbors, homeowners associations (HOAs), or jurisdiction zoning departments when practicing the same plant principles at home. In cultivating natural meadows in their own yards, they often are chided for the same principals they practice in community public lands to acclaim.

NATIVE PLANTS OVER TURF GRASS: ESTABLISHED SCIENCE

Well recognized in the national conservation community, Dr. Doug Tallamy, who heads University of Delaware's Entomology & Wildlife Ecology Department, a native plants guru, is author of several books on healthy ecology and how individuals can make a difference. He has written encouraging us all to move toward reducing lawn turf grass and planting native plants. His studies have shown that "every square foot dedicated to lawn is a square foot that is degrading local ecosystems." Many homeowners have heard his message and would like to follow his suggestions. However they find them-

IO ♦ THE CONNECTION ♦ JULY 24-30, 2024

selves up against outdated rules in place and enforced by municipal zoning departments or homeowner associations. Those entities have been slow to change rules and zoning codes and adapt to this new information and the dawning importance of our local ecological systems to the planet.

ECO-FRIENDLY GARDENING NOT UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED

Consider the experiences of a few in Northern Virginia who have sought to establish a better natural environment on their properties. Jennifer Pradas lives in an Oakton townhome community with an HOA. She regularly volunteers at her community's Blake Lane and Borge Street parks. She shares, "I don't grow grass, so I don't use lawnmowers, leaf blowers, or any other machine that spews out toxins and greenhouse gases. I don't use fertilizers other than my own compost, so my soil isn't leaching excess nutrients into the water system, which would exacerbate the pollution in the Chesapeake Bay. I rarely water my backyard, so I'm not adding to the water shortage. I don't use pesticides, so I'm not killing insects or other creatures that may be harmed. ... So what is so outrageous about my yard?"

Pradas's HOA bylaws include no restrictions on her choice of backyard landscaping if surrounded by a fence. Yet, contact from her HOA President, suggested the HOA might tighten their bylaws to deal with her "native weeds" saying, "You are not on a farm where you can choose to have a wildlife habitat." The "weeds" the HOA president referred to are Coral Honeysuckle, Bee Balm, Blue Mist Flower, Wild Cicely, Spiderwort, Penstemon, Iron Weed, American Poke Berry, Milkweed, and Wingstem — all native wildflowers. Pradas can look out her window with delight in seeing Monarchs, bees and hummingbirds enjoying her garden; recognizing that "insects are disappearing eight times faster than other animals."

Clearly native plants, like Pradas's, and their growing habits are not understood by

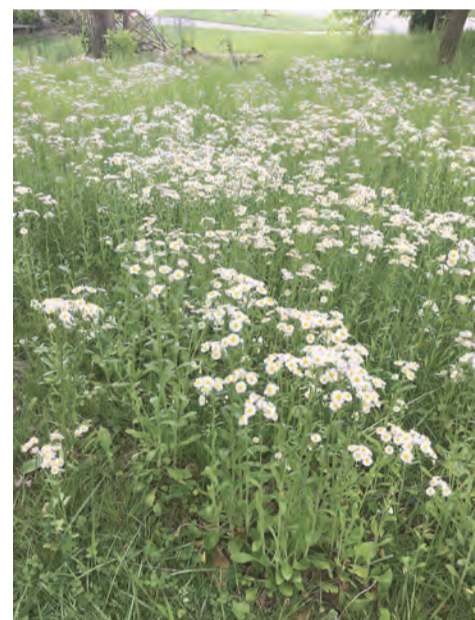


PHOTO PROVIDED BY A. GARLAND

Not even the beauty of Avril Garland's favorite wildflower, Fleabane, in bloom has saved her yard from town zoning scrutiny.

all, though growth of meadows is a recognized landscape method exempted from Fairfax County Zoning grass height codes, and encouraged by the Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District (NVSWCD).

Another frequent volunteer, working at Difficult Run Stream Valley Park, who we will call Emily S., arrived at her Oakton home one day to find a letter on her door from Fairfax County Zoning. She was given two weeks to mow or be mown at her expense. The Oakton resident had been the recent recipient of an NVSWCD VCap grant which helped her remove grass in her backyard to create a meadow. The grants provide "financial and technical assistance for installing projects to address erosion, poor vegetation, and/or excess stormwater runoff, to those who wish to use environmentally friendly practices. The purpose of the program is to help improve water quality in our region." Emily says she tried unsuccessfully with Zon-



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Avril Garland, follows natural landscaping practices, without mowing, fertilizing, or use of pesticides, and has had recurrent or not fully resolved compliance notification communications with Vienna's Zoning.

ing to determine what species had triggered the mow notice. She says, "There is anxiety in Fairfax County for those acting against the 'green grass' esthetic, or leaving stems standing [for wildlife], or any longer grass allowed to grow instead of cutting it every week." Although Fairfax County ordinance for residential property permits growth of grass and lawn up to 12 inches in height (FC Section 119-3-1), Emily's property appeared to draw attention due to a stony verge with intermittent weeds at the edge of her front lawn where no curb is provided.

Vienna resident, Avril Garland, is the IMA (Invasive Management Area) site leader and a long-term volunteer at Accotink Trail, who also volunteers at Southside Park. Her home property includes a variety of native plants. Garland says, "My favorite is fleabane, but I have to say that each bud in my yard is

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PHOTO PROVIDED BY J. PRADAS

Jennifer Pradas choice to forego use of turf grass in favor of native flowers such as blue mist flower has drawn criticism from her HOA.

eagerly watched. Each flower, for me, is a magical improbable burst of color, especially, Black-eyed Susan, Pink Cone flower, Wood Aster, Evening Primrose, and Goldenrod."

By extensive use and protection of native plants at her home, she has received warning notices from the town. Adding to Garland's wish that she be permitted personal choice to allow her plants to grow as she chooses in her own yard, are her concerns for protecting her plants against deer predation. Her use of make-shift fencing, cages, and tree branches, to discourage or re-direct deer, have added to what some consider an unkempt look. Garland justifies her measures as less costly and necessary since the town has not addressed deer mitigation. She complains that deer, in small groups, regularly walk through her front yard grazing, and spend time in her backyard, even though it is fenced.

Garland is up against a more restrictive vegetation ordinance in the Town of Vienna. The grass height standard is three inches, and the ordinance states, "Owners of property within the Town shall not allow grass,

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PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Dr. Maryam Dadkhah's native plantings have required protection from deer in Vienna.

weeds, and other foreign growth thereon to exceed six inches in height within 100 feet of any street or adjacent property line." (Article 2, Section 13-7). The notice she received indicates, "The property owner has not completed "the regular periodic mowing of grass, trimming of borders," or "removal of weeds, pruning of all plantings as necessary to maintain vigor and appearance ..." Further, the notice indicated the materials Gardner uses to form a fence against deer are considered rubbish by the town. Vienna zoning director, David Levy, says he knows Garland is plant knowledgeable and "is well meaning" and hopes that the town's warning "non-notification" will provide time for her to deal with the unmanaged growth and avoid a code violation citing. Garland enlisted the help of several friends in the naturalist community. A group spent a morning removing plants and trees, adding and enlarging pathways, and mulching in hope of bringing the yard into compliance.

Not far away, another Vienna resident and active native plant advocate, Dr. Maryam

Dadkhah, also practices native planting in her yard. She has not been cited by zoning but is anxious that her tall plants and their dense habits, best for their growth, may face censure. She is following Professor Tallamy's recommendation to make gradual changes to reduce the turf grass; also a concession to her husband who likes the look of grass. She has tall meadow plantings in portions of her side and back yards. She also has a major problem with deer predation. She recently added costly, tall fencing and reinforced her existing fence line, using plant cages and Prickly Pear plants to discourage deer in her front yard where fencing is not possible.

Vienna Police Chief Jim Morris acknowledges the challenge the town faces with its large deer population and their predation of landscaping. While he says deer traffic accidents are not occurring, likely due to the town's low speed limits, police often receive complaints about deer crossing roads and damaging landscaping. The town council, with police support, will address deer management in a work session planned for Sept. 30.



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Native gardeners use plants such as Bee Balm to benefit insects like this Hummingbird Clearwing Moth

CONSERVATION ADVOCATES SEEK ORDINANCE CHANGES

Dadkhah recently addressed the Vienna Town Council, quoting Dr. Tallamy's suggestion, "We need to find ways for nature to thrive in human-dominated landscapes ... In the past, conservationists worked exclusively where people weren't; now we need to save nature where people are." (Nature's Best Hope, Dr Tallamy). Dadkhah said further, "Unfortunately, Town of Vienna "lawn code" is not clear as to what is permissible and what is not. Even an anonymous complaint can trigger a citation for someone with native plants in their yard. Here is my question for us as a community: In 2024, do we want to ignore the biodiversity crisis and global warming, and focus on an aesthetic ruling set for us in 1800s aristocratic Europe? Or do we want to catch up with the rest of the world and change our zoning code to embrace new scientific trends?" Dadkhah invited council members to visit her yard and see what native plantings and meadows are like on a residential property.

Local entities could better define approved plantings and do more to adopt and condone conservation landscaping. Conservation landscaping includes changing turf grass areas or bare soils to incorporate environmentally sensitive design, low impact development, non-invasive native plants, and/or integrated pest management. The purpose is to create a diverse landscape that helps to protect clean air and water, and support wildlife.

THE CONNECTION ♦ JULY 24-30, 2024 ♦ 11

COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

Virginia's Tax-Free Sales Holiday August 2-4

Hurricane preparedness, school supply, certain energy saving products and more eligible.

Virginia's three-day sales tax holiday runs from Friday, Aug. 2, at 12:01 a.m. to Sunday, August 3, at 11:59 p.m. During the sales tax holiday, purchasers can buy three types of qualified products.

(1) School supplies, clothing, and footwear: Per item-clothing and footwear must cost \$100 or less, while supplies must cost \$20 or less.

(2) Hurricane and emergency preparedness products: Per item-portable generators:

\$1,000 or less; gas-powered chainsaws: \$350 or less; chainsaw accessories: \$60 or less; and other specified hurricane preparedness items: \$60 or less.

(3) Energy Star and WaterSense products: purchased for noncommercial home or per-

sonal use: \$2,500 or less.

The Sales Tax Holiday Guidelines provide retailers with detailed lists of qualifying items and additional information.

— MERCIA HOBSON



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

The trees were removed at these Vienna construction sites before the ordinance was enacted.

Tree Coverage

FROM PAGE 6

in 2022, Vienna's tree coverage declined by 13 percent between 2011 and 2021. Vienna's tree canopy coverage is currently at about 38.7 percent which is lower than the coverage in Falls Church but higher than the tree coverage in the City of Alexandria.

Mayor Linda Colbert and a majority of the residents are happy with the attention the shade coverage has gotten. It started with a requirement for new trees. But because it would take some time for them to grow enough to provide any amount of shade, the town came up with a new ordinance that would encourage builders to save older and certain types of trees. For town property, the Maud Robinson Trust allocated \$50,000 for new trees and the council approved \$250,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds to spend on a new tree planting initiative.

TREE CITY DESIGNATION

Vienna has always been a leader in tree coverage by the Arbor Day Foundation who labeled the town as "Tree City USA," at one point, so officials want that to continue with this new ordinance. To be in line with the tree plan, developers will continue to be re-

Benefits of Trees:

Trees in the community add all kinds of benefits the Arbor Day Foundation says, including:

❖ Trees help absorb the sounds of traffic in urban areas by 40%.

❖ Neighborhoods with trees are seven to nine degrees cooler than those without.

❖ Trees reduce energy costs up to 25% by shading buildings and protecting them from winter winds.

❖ Homes with trees have higher property values.

❖ Green space plays a major role in improving mental and physical health.

❖ Planting and maintaining trees absorbs carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, mitigating the effects of climate change.

quired to submit a site plan to the Town that details a tree inventory, tree preservation measures and tree replacement as necessary, as part of the construction permitting process, the Town said.

The Arbor Day Foundation started the "Tree City USA," program in 1976 for a "greener, healthier America," they said, and hoped this idea would spread. Their Tree City USA idea started with 42 communities in 16 states and grew to 3,600 communities in all 50 states, Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico.

\$150M for Virginia for Climate Pollution Reduction

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality will receive approximately \$150 million through two Climate Pollution Reduction Grants to implement community-driven solutions that tackle the climate crisis, reduce air pollution, advance environmental justice, and accelerate America's clean energy transition, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Virginia DEQ's selected application, submitted as a coalition with Virginia Energy, will receive more than \$99 million through a competitive grant program for projects that will capture and convert or reuse methane emissions from coal mines and landfills. The project will also establish a partnership with other state agencies to fund a competitive grant program for food rescue and composting programs at agencies, colleges and university campuses across Virginia.

Additionally, the Virginia DEQ will also serve as a coalition member in another selected application led by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The coalition is set to receive more than \$420 million, with approximately \$50 million allocated for Virginia DEQ to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through carbon sequestration projects on natural and working lands, including coastal wetlands, peatlands, and forests.

Inclusion of a proposed project that will reduce methane emissions at coal mines and landfills was of particular note to U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA).

"Reducing methane emissions is critical to ensuring clean air and protecting our communities from the effects of climate change," said U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA). "I'm glad this federal funding is headed to Virginia."

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (VA-11) said: "Today's announcement of \$150 million for the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality is just the latest in a long line of investments this Administration has made to help communities like ours respond to and prepare for the threat of climate change."

"I am pleased that Virginia will be taking advantage of EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grants program – one of the successful climate initiatives to come out of the Biden-Harris Administration and the Inflation Reduction Act, which I strongly supported in Congress," said U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (VA-8).

EPA made its selections through a rigorous grants competition that was designed to be fair and impartial. The Agency reviewed nearly 300 applications that were submitted by entities from across the country and requested a total of nearly \$33 billion in funding.

OPINION

Krizek

FROM PAGE 7

people with disabilities and access and functional needs, and pets. Your family may not be together when a hurricane occurs, or you may become separated, so it is important to know how to contact one another and how to reunite. Designate an out-of-town contact who can help your household reconnect. Be sure to practice your plan with your family.

If authorities advise or order you to evacuate, grab your "go bag" and leave immediately. If you are not in a mandatory evacuation zone, you may still decide to leave the area, you may need to move to higher ground, or you may choose to stay in your home. If you decide to stay home, remember that even if the high winds and floodwaters do not reach your home, you may still lose power or water, and you may not be able to leave your home for several days if the roads are impassable.

Never drive through flooded areas: even as little as 12 inches of water can carry a vehicle away. Never wade through water: floodwaters can contain dangerous debris like broken glass, metal, dead animals, sewage, gasoline, oil, and downed power lines.

Ensure your home is protected by cleaning drains and downspouts, and anchoring any outdoor furniture. Finally, collect and safeguard critical financial, medical, and legal documents. Always maintain a 3-day water and non-perishable food supply. This year, the General Assembly reinstated the annual 3-day sales tax holiday which will take place Aug. 2-4, 2024. You can purchase tax-free hurricane preparedness products like batteries, generators, 2-way radios, bottled water, and tie-down kits. For a full list of qualifying products, visit <https://www.tax.virginia.gov/virginia-sales-tax-holiday>.

Get more information by downloading the Be Smart Create Your Family Emergency Communication Plan or visit ready.gov/make-a-plan.

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OPINION

Connolly Statement on President Joe Biden

Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-VA), a senior member of the House of Representatives and the President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, released the following statement:

President Joe Biden will be remembered among the most consequential presidents in American history. His decision today to put country above all else has only cemented that fact.

Joe Biden delivered us from the darkness of his predecessor's time in office. His presidency has bettered the lives of countless Americans. He dragged us out from the depths of the pandemic, leading an economic recovery that outpaced the world. With war raging in Europe, he has forged renewed strength and vigor in the transatlantic alliance and has overseen the most consequential years for NATO since its founding 75 years ago. And, with the ugly threat of authoritarianism rearing its head again, he has held the democratic world together in strength and unity.

I had the distinct honor of working for

Joe Biden on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I wrote bills and speeches for him, traveled with him, and spent time with his family in Delaware. I know now what I knew then – Joe Biden, and the entire Biden family, are patriots in the truest sense of the word. They are good, honorable people whose dedication to their country is matched only by their dedication to each other as a family. They have served us nobly over the years, and I am personally grateful for their sacrifice and their service.

President Joe Biden, a man I revere, has today made a deeply difficult decision the only way he knows how – with the American people at heart. We owe him a debt of gratitude.

Kamala Harris's campaign for president cited Connolly's support:

I'm proud to support @kamalaharris as the next President of the United States. She's worked hand in hand with @joebiden to deliver historic results for the American people. She's the perfect candidate to contrast with convicted felon Donald Trump.

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Supervisors Defer Decision on Data Center Zoning

Public hearing confirms, 'The devil is in the details.'

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted 10-0 to defer their decision on a proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment regarding data centers until their July 30 regular meeting. This unexpected move occurred late Tuesday evening, July 16, after a staff presentation, Q&A between the board and staff, and four-and-a-half hours of public testimony. The record would still be open for written testimony.

"To me, it would be a disservice to those who testified to try to act on this at this point," said Board Chairman Jeff McKay. He explained that the supervisors needed time to absorb the testimonies, and ask additional questions of county staff that they may think of over the next couple of days. McKay said the board would come back for a decision when it meets again, Tuesday, July 30.

The proposed data center zoning ordinance amendment would revise the permissions and add or revise the use-specific standards for data centers to address compatibility issues with surrounding uses, noise, and aesthetics. The One Fairfax Policy Area of Focus 11, as stated in the board's Equity Impact statement, "encourages a quality built and natural environment that supports a high quality of life for all people."

Staff presentation

Fairfax County's Deputy Zoning Administrator, Carmen Bishop, presented the staff report, saying that the staff recommends Option 1. During her approximately eight-minute presentation, Bishop highlighted the proposed amendment recommendations as follows:

- ❖ A setback for the building of 200 feet and for any ground level equipment of 500 feet, unless that equipment is located on the other side of the building from the resi-

dential use;

- ❖ 50 foot wide transitional screening yard is required between industrial and residential uses,

- ❖ Submission requirements for a noise study with a rezoning or a special exception and before site plan approval and is applicable to by-right development;

- ❖ Building design standards that would apply to by-right development to include a main entrance feature, facade variation, and fenestration; and

- ❖ A more flexible provision would apply with a rezoning or a special exception where architectural renderings could be submitted for review.

Bishop presented a diagram that, as she described it, "puts it all together and shows what a by-right data center could look like in the 5 or 6 districts with a 75-foot tall building, which is the maximum height allowed; a 200-foot setback to residential; and 50 feet of transitional screening. You have the enclosure of equipment, an entrance feature, and the fenestration."

Supervisors Question Staff

During the board's questions for the staff, Mason Supervisor Andres F. Jimenez (D) requested a second look at slide four. He asked Bishop what equipment would be feasible to enclose. "It's been my understanding that no equipment would be able to be enclosed outside."

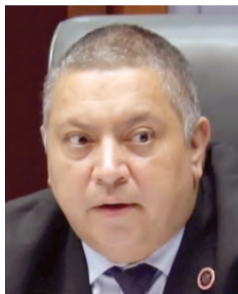
Bishop replied that plenty of equipment, such as generators, can be enclosed and are typically enclosed. She said other equipment can be enclosed; however, SEE PUBLIC HEARING, PAGE 15



Jeff McKay, chairman of the Board of Supervisors.



Carmen Bishop, zoning administrator.



Mason Supervisor Andres F. Jimenez (D).



Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity (R).

Building design

- By right standards:
 - Main entrance feature
 - Façade variation every 150 feet
 - Fenestration: minimum 30%
- RZ/SE:
 - Submit architectural sketches, sight line studies
 - High-quality design
 - Variation in massing if within 200' of residential



PHOTOS SCREENSHOTS

QTS, Ashburn

Screening of equipment

- Apply in all districts
- Purpose: visual and noise
- All HVAC equipment, generators, accessory electrical substations
- Enclose if mechanically feasible
- Screening wall if enclosure not feasible



Coresite, 12098 Sunrise Valley Dr.

Setbacks

- Building or equipment: 200' from residential use or lot line
 - Advertised range up to 500'
- ½ mile from Metro
 - Advertised range up to one mile
- Reduced setbacks with SE
- Zoning district setbacks and transitional screening also apply
 - Recent amendment: 50' transitional screening between industrial and residential



Pictometry, Coresite, 12379A Sunrise Valley Dr.

Maximum sizes

- C-3 and C-4:
 - 40,000 SF
 - Remove the allowance for a larger size with repurposing
- I-2, I-3, I-4:
 - 80,000 SF
 - Remove the allowance for a larger size with repurposing
- Maximum sizes can be exceeded with SE



4030 Lafayette Center Dr.

SCREENSHOT

Fairfax County's Deputy Zoning Administrator, Carmen Bishop, presented slides describing proposed data center regulations as detailed in the amendment under board consideration. The presentation included illustrations of building design, equipment screening, setbacks, and maximum sizes.

Public Hearing Confirms, ‘The Devil is in The Details.’

FROM PAGE 14

equipment that typically cannot be enclosed would be something like a cooling tower. Bishop said that a wall can screen such equipment, regardless of its location on the ground or rooftop.

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) asserted that the proposed amendment could encompass nearly anything. He worried about the use of the word “feasible” in the proposed amendment versus “practical.”

“If it takes a ton more power, a ton more space, [and] a ton more units to cool that space, does that make it feasible? ... Or does that knock it out of feasible if you’re spending a whole bunch more electric money and everything else to fully enclose it?” Herrity asked the question, seemingly to ensure precision and clarity in what would be a legally binding document.

Bishop clarified that they had coordinated the standard with the building official, who suggested it would depend on the manufacturer’s specifications and the degree of equipment enclosure. She said that they heard from industry, and they provided a list of different types of equipment that they typically enclose and don’t typically enclose. “I will say we agreed on that list,” Bishop said. She cited as an example that a cooling tower “is not typically enclosed. ... That would have the screening,” she said.

Braddock District Supervisor James Walkinshaw (D) requested a discussion on the difficulties associated with “building design” and the 30 percent fenestration, considering the need to establish objective standards in the zoning ordinance to avoid the subjective aim of transforming a data center’s appearance.

Bishop said when they were drafting the proposed standard, as they have it for by-right development, it had to be “specific,” but “maybe not too specific,” because it had to allow “developers to be creative as designs evolve over time.” The requirements include the main entrance feature and facade variation, so there is no single blank wall, Bishop explained. The variation could be accent material, texture, or color, as there is flexibility in meeting that standard. Fenestration could be included, as the standard specifically mentions windows and door features. “We’re providing direction to developers to indicate here’s what we would like to see, but not too specific, that they can’t be creative with their own designs,” Bishop said, concluding the Q&A with the board.

All full Board of Supervisors
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Renee Grebe, Northern Virginia Conservation advocate for Nature Forward: “Chairman McKay, during the Chantilly Premier public hearing, you boldly stated that through your motion, the goal was to ‘make sure that if we’re going to do any data centers in Fairfax County, the ones we do in this county are going to be done at the highest standards we can possibly foresee.’”



Whitney Redding, Friends of Holmes Run: “The fact that two data centers plus a substation can be built by right means the county has not given itself the leverage to require optimal stormwater management.”



Terry Clower, Northern Virginia chair and local government Professor of Public Policy at George Mason University, runs the Center for Regional Analysis and the Steven Fuller Institute: “Data centers are one of our few economic bright spots in this region.”



Douglas Bell, acoustical consultant: “There is no compelling evidence that data centers are more acoustically impactful than other permitted industrial uses.”



Bradley Gray, owner of Worldwide Mission, data center development: “Data centers do not consume vast amounts of water.”



Robert (Bob) Kitchen, M.D., representing the members for Climate Action: “Data centers do contribute to poor air quality both directly and indirectly.”

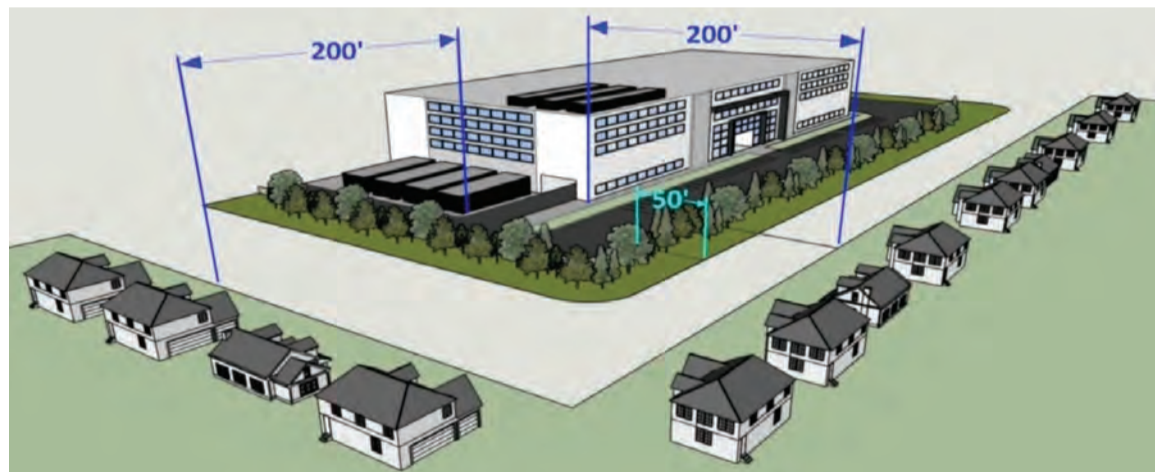
meetings are televised on Channel 16 and streamed live online with closed captions provided in English and Spanish.

Public Testimony Excerpts

Renee Grebe, Northern Virginia Conservation advocate for Nature Forward: “We submitted written comments in partnership with 13 other organizations which you should have. Data centers might be one of the most pivotal issues of our generation. New changes that you approve today will have decades long consequences on our county and its residents.”

“Chairman McKay, during the Chantilly Premier public hearing, you boldly stated that through your motion, the goal was to ‘make sure that if we’re going to do any data centers in Fairfax County, the ones we do in this county are going to be done at the highest standards we can possibly foresee.’”

Whitney Redding, Friends of Holmes Run: “Data center developers have as much right to build in Fairfax County as anyone else ... The devil is in the details. The Bryn Mawr Park, Plaza 500 [data center] project is a poster child for why there needs to be more basic common sense guardrails as to how and where these data centers are live situated ... The fact that two data centers plus a substation can be built by right means the county has not given itself the leverage to require optimal stormwater management or other site specific environmental protections.”



Distance measurements between data centers and residences as in the proposed amendment.

Terry Clower, professor of Public Policy at George Mason University, runs the Center for Regional Analysis and the Steven Fuller Institute: “Data centers currently have a positive impact on our locality in our region, both in terms of jobs spillover economic impacts, as well as, of course, important tax revenues ... Data centers are one of our few economic bright spots in this region ... Emerging technologies depend on having the right infrastructure and data centers are a key part of that infrastructure. It is where these industries will develop. Without all of these elements of our infrastructure, we will see growth pass by.”

Douglas Bell, senior principal consultant and president of Cavanaugh Tocci Associates, an acoustical consulting firm: “Over the 35 years as a principal consultant at this firm I have been in charge of over 1000 projects associated with environmental sound. I’m thoroughly familiar with noise produced by all industrial facilities ... I’m qualified to speak to you about noise and data center noise. It’s my professional opinion that there is

no need for Fairfax County to provide a special zoning amendment for data centers to control sound. There is no compelling evidence that data centers are more acoustically impactful than other permitted industrial uses.”

Bradley Gray, owner of Worldwide Mission, critical leader in data center development: “Fairfax County and Virginia already have some of the strictest data center regulations in the country... There are some additional misconceptions that I’d like to clear up first. Data centers do not consume vast amounts of water. Most use air cooled systems with water usage similar to office buildings... Concerns about stormwater pollution are also misplaced. Modern air cooled units don’t produce runoff and redeveloping old industrial sites often increases [a] pervious area, improving stormwater filtration. Lastly, diesel containment tanks used in data centers are highly secure with double walled steel designs, leak detection and spill response.”

Robert (Bob) Kitchen, M.D., representing the members for Cli-

mate Action: “There can be several health problems or challenges that come from data centers. There’s a growing body of research that says that chronic noise exposure is putting nearly a third of Americans at heightened risk of hypertension, stroke and heart attacks, as well as mental health problems... A larger area in terms of a threat to health has to do with poor air quality or air pollution and many common health problems are related to this, such as cardiovascular disease, chronic lung disease, kidney disease, low birth weight infants, pediatric asthma as well as many others. Data centers do contribute to poor air quality both directly and indirectly. The direct contribution is through the use of backup diesel generators, which will be needed at a time of power outage ... Recognizing that right now renewable energy is not really available for backup energy, I think that the county should consider the recommendations from the Jan. 6 2024 staff report, which stated that the Comprehensive Plan incurs use of tier 4 generators and state of the art technology to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THRU AUG. 4

LuminoCity Festival. At Westfield Montgomery Mall, 7101 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda. The festival will run daily, Monday to Thursday, from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. and Friday to Sunday from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m. Admission tickets are available for purchase online at luminocityfestival.com or onsite. Ticket pricing ranges from \$16 to \$20 per person. Admissions for children 3 and under are free.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ❖ **Dino Safari and Ice Age Adventure:** Two exhibition areas where visitors will explore 70+ life-sized animated dinosaurs and immersive ice age animals lighting sculptures
- ❖ **Interactive Recreation Zone:** Attractions such as a Dino Bounce Castle, Dino Speedway, T-Rex Thrill, Jungle Explorer Playground, Dino Carousel and Oviraptor Ride
- ❖ **Educational Experiences:** Participate in a Safari Dig and Dino Fossil Hunt to uncover hidden gems and excavate fossils from the prehistoric era
- ❖ **Lumi Giftshop:** Shop for dino-themed toys, gifts, and Lumi souvenirs
- ❖ **Food & Relaxation Zone:** Food trucks and restroom facilities, are convenient and easy to grab a bite and unwind after the prehistoric adventure

THRU AUGUST 2024

Family Friendly Theatre at Tysons Corner Center, The Plaza, Traveling Players Ensemble - Level 1. Join Traveling Players for family-friendly theatre in-studio and on the Plaza! Titles include: Hamlet, Improv Comedy Show, Learned Ladies, Orpheus & Eurydice and A Midsummer Night's Dream. In case of rain, performances will be moved inside Traveling Players Studio, located inside on the first floor.

Plaza Performance, July 31, 7 p.m. - Hamlet

In Traveling Players Studio: July 5 - 2 p.m. - Orpheus & Eurydice

July 26-1 p.m. - Improv Comedy Show

2 p.m. - Orpheus & Eurydice

THRU AUG. 4, MINHWA

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

NOW THRU AUG. 11

WMAI Inaugural Exhibition. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Serving Together, Creating Together is an Inaugural Exhibition of art by participants in the Workhouse Military in The Arts Initiative (WMAI). Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/serving-together>

FCPA'S SUMMER

ENTERTAINMENT SERIES

Fairfax County Park Authority's Summer Entertainment Series

16 ❖ THE CONNECTION ❖ JULY 24-30, 2024



Vienna Youth Players will present "Newsies" on July 20-28, 2024 at the Vienna Community Center.

presents more than 190 exciting performances at 17 locations all summer long. Choose from an array of free, live performances featuring classical to bluegrass music and everything in between. Enjoy performances from outstanding local and national touring groups including:

(JULY 25)

Frank Solivan & Dirty Kitchen – Frying Pan Farm Park: Experience this Grammy-nominated band perform a torrent of mind-blowing bluegrass.

(AUG. 16)

The United States Air Force Strings – Mason District Park Amphitheater: Join the official string ensemble of the U.S. Air Force for an evening of music ranging from classical symphonic selections to classic rock, bluegrass and patriotic compositions.

(AUG. 18)

Cheryl Wheeler with Kenny White – Mason District Amphitheater: Sing along to folk music with famed singer-songwriter Cheryl Wheeler and pianist and singer Kenny White.

(AUG. 23)

Deanna Bogart – Grist Mill Park: Hear Deanna Bogart's dazzling keyboards, soulful saxophone, smoky vocals and cut-above songwriting.

(AUG. 24)

Bruce in the USA – Arrowbrook Centre Park: Jam on to your favorite tunes by Bruce Springsteen and The E Street Band.

(AUG. 31)

Cloud Cult – Arrowbrook Centre Park: End your summer on a high note with Cloud Cult, a band known for their unique alternative-orchestral-folk-rock sound and hailed as one of the "Top 10 Green Bands" by Rolling Stone.

Performances are held outdoors and may be canceled in the event of inclement weather. Call 703-324-SHOW (7469) before leaving home for inclement weather updates.

FREE CONCERTS AT

BURKE LAKE PARK

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

relax with friends and family.

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

KIDZ KORNER EVENTS IN F

AIRFAUX CITY

FUNDAY MONDAY: Mondays, 10:30 – 11:15 am at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. For more information: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts>

JULY 29

❖ My Gym "Olympics" theme

AUG. 12

❖ Music Together Sing and Groove

AUG. 19

❖ Drew Blue Shoes Magic!

AUG. 26

❖ Storytime with Fairfax Library: "Ice Cream" theme

KIDZ KORNER: Saturdays, 10:30 –

11:15 am at Old Town Square, 10415 North Street, Fairfax. <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts>

JULY 30

❖ Mad Science of DC: "Up Up and Away"

AUG. 3

❖ My Gym "Olympics" Theme

AUG. 10

❖ Superhero Training with "The Hulk"

AUG. 17

❖ Children's Music with Marsha (of Marsha and the Positrons)

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



Justin Trawick will appear on Sunday, July 28, 2024 at 4 p.m. at Lewinsville Park in McLean.

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, JULY 28

4 p.m. Justin Trawick

JULY 12 TO AUG. 2

LEGO DREAMZzz Playground. At Springfield Town Center, Springfield. LEGO DREAMZzz activities Include:

Search MINIWORLD for the dream clouds to crack Mr. Oz's secret code

Dream up your own animal/vehicle mash-up and test it out on giant ramps

Meet & Greet Izzie & Z-Blob

Play Dream Team Bingo and collect your dream team and then take on the timed challenge to create a Memory Protector

Experience the LEGO DREAMZzz 4D movie

JULY 18-28

The Logan Festival of Solo Performance. At 1st Stage in Tysons Corner. This innovative festival will gather celebrated solo performers from across the country for two weeks of performances, workshops, discussions, and events.

The Logan Festival of Solo Performance will run July 18-28 with performances of each show as follows:

Fly Me to the Sun: Saturday, July 27 at 5pm, Sunday, July 28 at 8:00pm

Too Fat for China: Wednesday, July 24 at 7:30pm, Saturday, July 27 at 8pm, Sunday, July 28 at 2pm

GUAC: Thursday, July 25 at 7:30pm, Friday, July 26 at 7:30pm, Saturday, July 27 at 2pm, Sunday, July 28 at 5pm

Please email the box office at boxoffice@1ststage.org for reservations. General admission tickets are \$20 per show and \$10 per show for Students with valid ID. Individual tickets can be purchased online at www.1ststage.org or by calling the 1st Stage box office at 703-854-1856.

JULY 20-28

Vienna Youth Players Presents

"Newsies." 7 p.m. At Vienna Community Center. The newsboy strike of 1899 is at the heart of Vienna Youth Players summer production, "Newsies." This classic Disney

tale, based on true events, traces its roots back to the time when newsies – boys and girls who sold newspapers on the street – went up against two newspaper publishers, Joseph Pulitzer of the New York World, and William Randolph Hearst of the New York Journal, to fight for the chance to earn a livable wage. "Newsies" takes this real-life event to the stage with an explosion of energetic music and dance. Tickets are \$18 each and can be purchased in advance online, www.viennava.gov/webtrac, or at the Vienna Community Center at the door before showtime, if still available. Shows run on Fridays and Saturdays at 7 p.m. July 20-27. Matinee performances are scheduled for 1:30 p.m. July 21 and 28. Visit www.viennava.gov/theatre.

JULY 24-25

250th Anniversary of Fairfax Resolves. At Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Rd, Lorton. Hosted by the George Washington Presidential Library, George Mason's Gunston Hall, and the David Center for the American Revolution at the American Philosophical Society, both in-person and virtual attendance is available. Written by George Washington and George Mason at Mount Vernon, the Fairfax Resolves were a bold, detailed, and influential statement of fundamental constitutional rights and a revolutionary call for an association of colonies to protest British anti-American actions. Adopted on July 18, 1774, in Fairfax County, Virginia, the Fairfax Resolves set the stage for America's Declaration of Independence, clearly calling for equal rights under the British constitution: representation in Parliament, control over taxation, control over military forces within their borders, control over judicial powers, and control over commercial actions.

JULY 25 TO JULY 31

Fairfax City Shop Local Week.

Participating small businesses will welcome customers to experience, discover and enjoy their offerings with a variety of themed celebrations.

Community Cares Thursday will see retailers partnering with local charities to give back to the community.

Friday Social promises a lively

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ENTERTAINMENT



The English Channel band will perform at Burke Lake Park on Wednesday, July 31, 2024 at 7 p.m.

shopping atmosphere with sip and shop events.

Sidewalk Sales on Saturday and Sunday bring the excitement outdoors with sidewalk sales throughout the city.

Discovery Day Monday invites customers to meet the makers, enjoy trunk shows, and experience pop-ups in different stores.

Treat Yourself Tuesday focuses on pampering customers with products and services designed to boost happiness and well-being.

Wellness Wednesday will highlight "Good for You" offerings, encouraging healthy practices and products.

Participants include Mode on Main by Mara, Omni Wellness & Performance, eXurb Fitness, Heart N Soul Yoga Studio, Smiley Skin Beauty, Fairfax Surf Shop, Lucy Loves, Paradise Games and Gifts, Perfect Mistakes, Romp n' Roll, Down the Line Sports Center, Brooke's Bridal & Bland Brooke's Bridal & Beyond.

SATURDAY/JULY 27

Hawaiian Family Gathering. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Station, 7011 Backlick Road, Springfield. Enjoy Hawaiian music, dance, arts and crafts for kids of all ages! Free admission! Pre-purchase Hawaiian plate lunch. Sign up here: <https://www.ealaehcc.org/events>

JULY 27 TO OCT. 20

Annual Clay International. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. View 48 unique ceramic works that incorporate contemporary spirit and technical skill in the material. Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/clay-international-2024>

SATURDAY/JULY 27

Designing American Living. 4-5:30 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Hwy., Alexandria. Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House provide a unique opportunity to put two American styles of architecture – separated by over a century – in conversation with one another. Take a close look at both houses to examine what it was that the architects who built these homes were trying to convey about the people who

lived here, the period they lived in, and what they thought the future held.

SUNDAY/JULY 28

G-Scale Train Display. 12-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Washington, Virginia & Maryland Garden Railway Society (WVMDGRS) members will have a G-Scale train display running. The sheer size of these trains is a wonder to behold as their ability to run through the garden all year round. 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.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 31

Community Forum. 7-8:30 p.m. Virtual. The Fairfax Area Commission on Aging (COA) and the Fairfax Area Disability Services Board (FA-DSB) are seeking community input to identify systemic gaps in service and/or barriers Fairfax County residents with disabilities face. Register to attend and receive an email with access instructions. Space is limited. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/disabilities/fairfax-area-disability-services-board/community-forums>

AUG. 1-4

4-H Fair and Carnival. At Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road in Herndon. Check out livestock displays and 4-H exhibits, treat yourself to classic fair food, enjoy live entertainment, tractor demos, carnival rides and get up close and personal with adorable farm animals. For a special Friday night out, visit the Big Truck Night on Aug. 2.

Carnival Hours

THURSDAY, AUG. 1

from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5 to 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUG. 2

from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m. Big Truck Night from 5 to 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUG. 3,

the Carnival is from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

SUNDAY, AUG. 4

from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Do you want the best deals on tickets for carnival rides? Purchase Unlimited Ride Wristbands for Thursday and Friday only. If purchased in advance online, wristbands are \$20 per person. Onsite wristbands are available for purchase at \$25 per person between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. You can purchase regular ride tickets on site after 3 p.m. Wristbands are for one day only.

BACK TO SCHOOL BOOK SALE At Centreville Regional Library, 14200 Saint Germain Dr., Centreville.

Friday, Aug. 2, 1-5 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 3, 10-5 p.m.

Sunday, Aug. 4, 1-4 p.m.

Bag sale on Sunday. Fill a grocery bag with books for just \$10.

Sponsored by Friends of the Centreville Regional Library.

SATURDAY/AUG. 3

Korean Fan Painting.

10-11:30 a.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Learn Korean watercolor painting techniques as you fill in beautiful, traditional Korean Minhwa designs on a fan that will get you through these hot days in style! Cost: \$43, with an additional \$12 to be paid to the teacher directly. Website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/korean-fan-painting>

SATURDAY/AUG. 3

Summer Open House. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Featuring free self-guided tours of both Woodlawn and Frank Lloyd Wright's Pope-Leighey House, bring your family and friends to learn more about this unique local historic site and enjoy 127 acres of outdoor space.

FREE SUMMER CONCERTS AT NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MARINE CORPS

The Marine Corps Heritage Foundation has announced its annual Summer Concert Series schedule at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Virginia. The series will feature military bands performing music from traditional patriotic tunes to contemporary works and pop hits.

All shows begin at 7 p.m. Visit marineheritage.org/eventcalendar-368789.

THURSDAY, JULY 25:

The U.S. Navy Band Cruisers will play pieces from across musical genres, from jazz to rhythm & blues, classic rock to pop, and their own original material.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22:

"The President's Own" United States Marine Band will present a varied repertoire ranging from traditional concert band selections to the patriotic marches that made it famous.

THURSDAY, AUG. 29:

"The President's Own" United States Marine Band returns to close the Summer Concert Series for 2024.

FAIRFAX COUNTY FARMERS MARKETS 2024 SEASON

For 2024 Farmers Market season, dozens of local food producers have tons of fresh and healthy foods waiting for you at all 10 markets located throughout the county. Find locally grown produce, delicious baked goods and prepared foods at the farmers markets. Additionally, enjoy a variety of family-friendly activities from musical performances, games, and don't forget to bring your food scraps to support our community composting efforts.

WEDNESDAYS

McCutcheon/Mount Vernon; Through Dec. 18, 8 a.m. - noon; Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria

Oakmont, Through Nov. 6, 8 a.m. - noon, Oakmont Recreation Center, 3200 Jermantown Road, Oakton Wakefield, Through Oct. 30, 2-6 p.m., Wakefield Park, 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale

THURSDAYS

Annandale, Through Nov. 14, 8 a.m. - noon, Mason District Park, 6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale

Herndon, Through Nov. 7, 8 a.m. - noon, Old Town Herndon, 700 Block of Lynn St., Herndon (by the Red Caboose)

FRIDAYS

McLean, Through Nov. 15, 8 a.m. - noon, Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean Kingstowne, Through Oct. 25, 3-7 p.m., In the Giant parking lot, 5870 Kingstowne Towne Center, Alexandria

SATURDAYS

Burke, Through Dec. 21, 8 a.m. - noon, VRE parking lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke

Reston, Through Dec. 7, 8 a.m. - noon, Lake Anne Village Center, 1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston

SUNDAYS

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

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

AUG. 10 TO OCT. 13

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

workhousearts.org/calendar/lifes-a-stitch

SUNDAY, SEPT 15

Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey Siegel. 7 p.m. Music of Joy and Peace. At GMU's Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Dr., Fairfax. Visit <https://cfa.gmu.edu/>.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

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

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

Reston Multicultural Festival. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Reston Town Center, Reston.

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

SATURDAY/SEPT. 28

Arts by George! 5 p.m. At GMU's Fairfax Campus, Fairfax. The annual ARTS by George! benefit, presented by George Mason University's College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA), returns in 2024 with multiple award-winning actress and singer Lea Salonga as the headliner. The philanthropic event raises vital support for student scholarships in visual arts, dance, music, theater, game design, film, and arts management, as well as for the Mason Community Arts Academy, Green Machine Ensembles, and the Great Performances at Mason season at the Center for the Arts. Visit <https://cfa.gmu.edu/>

SUNDAY/OCT. 13

Paws in the Park. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Oronoco Bay Park in Old Town Alexandria.

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

NOV. 8-9

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

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Obituary

Theodore B. Salazar



Theodore (Ted) B. Salazar passed away May 20, 2024, in Reston, Virginia. He was born in Consumers, Utah April 18, 1930, to Maria Aurelia Martinez and Eudoro Salazar, the fourth of six children. Ted spent his early childhood in the canyons and coal mining camps of central Utah before the family moved to Price, Utah. In Price, he attended Notre Dame School and Carbon County High School; class of 1948, where he was a member of the basketball, football, and track teams and discovered his talent for art in creating stage sets for the school's theater. While still in school, he began working as an engine dispatcher for the Denver Rio Grande Western Railroad in Helper, Utah.

In 1951 Ted Salazar was drafted into the US Army and was stationed in Japan as part of the transportation unit. He attained the rank of corporal and received an honorable discharge in 1953. After his service, he came to Washington, D.C. to attend the Catholic University of America, earning his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees, 1963. He made the Washington area his home for 70 years, raising a family, teaching art, and being of service to many communities of the capital region.

Ted Salazar met his wife, Lois Ann Mortashed, in an art class at Catholic University and they were married in 1961 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Alexandria, Virginia. Their marriage of 63 years was a true partnership based on a foundation of love and respect for each other, devotion to family, and their shared passion for art and teaching. Ted was devoted to his two children, Teddy and Maria. He was always available for soccer games or band concerts and expanded his support by volunteering as a cub scout den parent, a soccer coach, president of the Parent Teacher Association for Lake Anne Elementary School, and president of the Herndon High School Band Boosters. Ted and Lois were also arts and crafts counselors at Camp Winnebago in Fayette, Maine during the mid-70s, giving the family wonderful summers in Vacationland and introducing campers to a wide range of craft skills and art.

From 1960 to 1967 Ted Salazar was chairman and teacher, Art Department at Washington DC public schools, and taught at Woodson Jr High and Ballou Sr High Schools. From 1967 to 1993 he was an assistant professor of art at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. and taught a broad range of art disciplines. He also served as Chairman of the Art Department from 1983 to 1989.

In retirement he continued his love of teaching and community service by teaching English at the Neighborhood Resource Center in Herndon, Virginia, using his fluency in Spanish to help many new arrivals learn English. He later transitioned to teaching US Citizenship classes and took great pride in helping over 40 people obtain their US citizenship.

Ted Salazar was an accomplished artist creating numerous drawings and paintings in multiple mediums including portraits, figures, landscapes and abstracts; sculptures made from welded steel, carved wood, and ceramics; ceramic pottery; and jewelry using precious metals. When the Salazar family moved to Reston in 1970, Ted and Lois quickly became active in the nascent art community – they were founding members of the Reston Craft Guild and early participants with the Greater Reston Art Center (GRACE) and participated in the early Reston festivals where they sold their artwork and Ted held pottery demonstrations. He was commissioned to design and create public art works including stoneware baptismal font and holy water fonts for St. Thomas a Becket Catholic Church in Reston, stoneware communion ware and baptismal font for The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Reston, and a commemorative sculpture made of welded steel and ceramic plaques for the Reston-Herndon Fairfax County Regional Library. He also exhibited his art at individual and group shows at Gallaudet, Northern Virginia Community College, GRACE, and Virginia Craft Council shows.

Ted Salazar is survived by his wife Lois (Reston, VA), children Teddy (Sarah Meyer) (Durham, NC) and Maria (Catharpin, VA), sister Virginia (Salt Lake City, UT), grandchildren Theo and Izzy, and many beloved nieces and nephews.

Memorial donations in Ted's may be made to the Herndon Neighborhood Resource Center at <https://www.cornerstonesva.org/ways-to-give/>

Legals

ABC LICENSE
Silver Diner Fredericksburg LLC trading as Silver Diner, 2951 Plank Rd. Fredericksburg, VA 22401. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a mixed beverage restaurant license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Robert Giaimo, owner/ The Veritas Law Firm. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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			1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27
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School Board Approves New Boundary Policy

FROM PAGE 3

ty-wide boundary evaluations at least every five years, introducing significant instability for families, neighborhoods, and businesses. (2) Short-Term Thinking: Boundary changes are a short-term tool not addressing underlying issues impacting Fairfax County Public Schools. The school board is reluctant to consider alternative approaches, such as overhauling the process for approving renovations and building new schools. (3) No Meaningful Community Input: The school board is rushing to adopt a policy that significantly broadens its authority, with no opportunity for meaningful community input. (4) Inconsistent Data: The school board cannot provide consistent data to support boundary policy change needs.

SCHOOL BOARD DISCUSSION AND ACTION

During board discussions before the vote, school board member Sandy Anderson said 44 schools are over capacity or will be by 2029, 22 schools have attendance islands,

and 44 schools are split feeders.

School board member Mateo Dunne supported the boundary policy changes. Shifts would be infrequent and primarily used to alleviate students' long commutes to school.

Loud cheers erupted when school board member Dr. Ricardy Anderson proposed phasing guidance to protect students when switching schools. Despite Anderson's and Meren's efforts to codify phasing protections for students, including preventing forced moves for high school sophomores and juniors, the school board voted down the amendments.

WHAT IS POLICY 8130, AMENDED IN 2024?

According to FCPS.edu/news, the approved Policy 8130 aims "to help ensure better student achievement through enhanced instructional quality, budget optimization, and strengthened student well-being." The policy is a "guide." It creates a "framework" with four unranked criteria the division superintendent uses when considering future adjustments.

The four unranked criteria are: (1) Equitable access division-wide to programs and facilities and how that affects school programs and populations. (2) Using student enrollment projections to ensure available capacity is balanced division-wide and that school facilities are used most efficiently and effectively while avoiding or getting rid of split feeders as much as possible. (3) Proximity is crucial in promoting contiguous attendance zones and maintaining neighborhood groupings, including condominiums and apartment complexes, to prevent or eliminate attendance islands. (These occur when a specific school boundary is not adjacent to the rest of the school's boundary.) (4) Transportation should be designed to ensure the safety of walking and biking, limit the duration of transportation, and ensure efficient routes connecting the attendance areas. [Source: <https://www.fcps.edu/news/fairfax-county-school-board-updates-policy-guide-future-boundary-considerations>]

The agenda item provides greater details concerning Policy 8130, as does Boarddocs.

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.

MCLEAN NEWCOMERS AND NEIGHBORS

The club was founded in 1969 to create new friendships, provide opportunities for socializing and acquaint residents with the community. It sponsors many group activities including: Anything with food, Armchair Traveler, Book Club, Bunco, Canasta, Crafty Ladies, Genealogy, Golf, Let Us Lunch, Mah Jongg, Mah Jongg NY Style, Movie Lovers, Museums/House and Garden Tours, Nature Walks, Restaurant Critics, Sing for Fun and Tech Forums. Application forms may be mailed to: Membership McLean Newcomers and Neighbors, P.O. Box 6166, McLean, VA 22106. Visit the website: www.mcleannewcomers.org.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit www.fairfax-county.gov/healthymindsfairfax or www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia Caregivers' Support Group takes place the first and third Tuesdays of each month, 10-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. This group is for caregivers of family members with dementia. Meetings are gently facilitated. For more information and to get the Zoom link, contact Jack Tarr at

jtarr5@verizon.net or 703-821-6838.

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, www.havenofnova.org or havenofnova@verizon.net.

Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group Meets from 1:30-3 p.m. the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email info@alnv.org, or visit www.alnv.org.

Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed. Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil at Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-4547.

Operation Paws for Homes, a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See www.ophrescue.org for information and all volunteer opportunities.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean continues to have an urgent need for new volunteers to help area senior citizens get to and from their medical and therapy appointments. To find out more about the Shepherd's Center and how you can volunteer to provide transportation and other services, call the Center at 703-506-2199 or e-mail the Center at info@scmafc.org. The Center's website is www.scmafc.org.

Master Gardener Training. The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit fairfaxgardening.org or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

Volunteers Needed. PRS is looking for empathetic and caring volunteers to make phone calls to older adults who may be feeling socially isolated. The commitment is one 3-hour shift per week for one year. Located

in Arlington. Ages 21 & up. Intensive training provided. Learn more and apply: prsync.org/caring-volunteering/. Questions? Email lpadgett@prsync.org.

The Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov. Also visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/lombudsman/. Fairfax County needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Respite Care volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The Lewinsville Senior Center in McLean needs a Certified Arthritis Exercise Instructor. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Volunteers for Change. A program for adults which offers more than 50 weekend and evening volunteer opportunities per month. www.volunteerfairfax.org.

"Excuse Me, Sir"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I'm guess I'm invoking Robert De Niro from the movie, "Taxi Driver," when I ask, rhetorically: are you talking to me? But it's not my television that I'm talking to, nor do I have a loaded gun in my hand. If I have anything in my hand, it's the television remote so no one, including anyone appearing on my television set is in danger. If I had an anger management problem - which I don't, I might get angry at all these people; young, old, and in between who insist on addressing me respectfully as 'sir.' 'Sir' is my father. 'Sir' is someone older than me. It can't possibly be me. I mean, I know cancer can take a few years off your appearance at the very least (and a few years off your life expectancy at the most), but I can't be 'sir' to anybody, can I? Certainly, I realize that I'm older now than I've ever been, but 'sir'? Really?

And though I readily admit to having been addressed in this manner previously, after all I am almost 70 and a 70-year-old person should be treated respectfully - as in respect your elders, and I do realize I am an 'elder;' nevertheless, the recent barrage would be an exaggeration, let's call it an uptick, of 'sirs' spoken in my direction has been a bit off-putting. Enough to think it grist for a "Kenny Column," as it's referred to at the Connection, and so here it is in all its self-indulgence - which I try, very hard by the way, to avoid.

As I've written previously about my column: it's not important that I'm writing it, it's important that it's being written about. And to summarize succinctly what exactly I'm writing about this week, I am writing about a figurative Rubicon that has been crossed: the line/time when I am the one being called 'sir,' rather than the one who is doing the calling. Don't get me wrong, I am not unhappy being called 'sir.' It's more that it's jarring in a way. Jarring in that, in my self-assessment, if there are people older than me, it doesn't feel proper to be called 'sir.' Those people and I can't be addressed similarly. If we are, then I must be, at least to a very large segment of the population that person, and/or older than I want to believe I am. In my head, I don't feel as if I'm almost 70 (in fairness what does age 70 feel like in a 70-year-old's head). I feel like I've always felt. Granted I am ever-more convinced of my age every time I must bend over and tie my sneakers. I swear I don't know what happened. Suddenly, I can't do a million things I took for granted doing with ease. The other day I picked up a baseball to throw it to a neighborhood kid who was playing catch. I barely got it to him in the air. My whole life, that's never been a problem. Now, it's not just a problem, it's a near impossibility.

As "Dirty Harry" made famous: "A man has to know his limitations." And a man of a certain age, begins to have limitations. Limitations which don't exactly enhance one's quality of living. And not that I haven't experienced some of these limitations before, it seems that being called 'sir' as frequently as I have been of late, is bringing some of these age-realities home to roost. Maybe I've been cooped up in the house too much lately? Maybe I need to get out and stop being chicken about going places? It's not as if someone is going to call me for a foul. If anything, they're likely to call me 'sir.' Now, after writing this column and fleshing out more of my feelings, being called 'sir' is not so bad. Being called "terminal" is worse. I ought to know.

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



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GORGEOUS 4BR/3BA brick home on 2 spacious finished levels situated on 1+ acre lot in sought-after Chesterbrook neighborhood. Expansive backyard featuring mature trees and beautiful plantings. Step inside and you'll be greeted by a sun-filled living room and dining room with a huge picture window overlooking the large back deck. Updated gourmet kitchen w/ ss appliance and new LVP. Large pantry/storage adjacent to the kitchen. The main level offers a primary BR w/ ensuite; 2 additional BR's and hall bath. The lower level offers a huge rec room; 4th BR; full bath. **Chesterbrook Longfellow, McLean Schools!**

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