

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

AUGUST 8, 2024

Grant To Increase Access to Cancer Screening

Neighborhood Health hosts roundtable discussion on community health centers providing primary care.

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Administrator Carole Johnson and Associate Administrator Jim Macrae visited Neighborhood Health to announce a new grant to increase access to cancer screening and highlight the critical role that community health centers play in ensuring access to primary health care.

Neighborhood Health is a non-profit, community health center that has provided primary medical, dental, and behavioral health care to Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax County for over 27 years. Neighborhood Health provides care to more than 41,300 low-income uninsured and underinsured individuals.

Johnson and Macrae took a tour of Neighborhood Health's Richmond Highway clinic in the Alexandria section of Fairfax County where they provide primary medical care for



Roundtable discussion at Neighborhood Health.

children and adults, dental care, behavioral health care, optometry, on-site labs, and medication access assistance at a new onsite pharmacy. The HRSA administrators also participated in a roundtable discussion with Neighborhood Health leadership, clinicians, staff, and patients to learn about current challenges and successes. The discussion included workforce development, cancer screening programs, and mental health.

Johnson announced new funding to improve access to life-saving cancer screenings in underserved communities; Neighborhood Health is a new grantee. She also highlighted National Health Center Week and new

data that shows that community health centers served almost 32.5 million patients in 2023, a record-breaking number. One in 10 people in the U.S are health center patients.

Johnson commented, "We appreciate the chance, during health center week, to celebrate how much primary care matters and to come to a model health center like Neighborhood Health to see up close the way you have integrated resources."

Neighborhood Health has grown from providing care to 1,500 patients at one clinic in 1997, to serving over 40,000 patients at fifteen clinics in 2024, including 16,220 people without health insurance.



HRSA Associate Administrator Jim Macrae, Neighborhood Health CEO Dr. Basim Khan, and HRSA Administrator Carole Johnson.



Fishing is just one of the recreation activities on the shores at Fort Belvoir.



The new travel camp will join the current recreational facilities at the base.

Belvoir Looking to Expand the Camping Facilities on Base

New 'Travel Camp' going through steps for approval.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

As Fort Belvoir evolves into a base with more recreational features for the residents and surrounding communities, a recently proposed "Travel

el Camp," is in the works for users to camp along the water on Fort Belvoir land overlooking Pohick Bay.

The proposed camp would be outfitted with spaces for 30 recreational vehicle camp sites located on 20 acres of Federal land. The sites are going to have full utility hook-ups, laundry facilities, restrooms, showers and associated access roads and walkways. It will be managed by the Installation Management Command's Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Directorate, the Army document stated. It will be located "in a highly desirable area along the Potomac

River," the description read.

Even though it is Army land and an Army facility, members of the Mount Vernon community and others will be able to use it, said Paul Lara, an Army spokesperson. "They just have to go through the visitors control center and get a pass," he said.

Right now, the Army is drafting an Environmental Assessment for the project, and this is available to the public at the Lorton Library, the Kingstowne branch, the Richard Byrd Library in Springfield and the Sherwood Regional branch in Mount Vernon. According to the Directorate of Family Morale,

Welfare and Recreation, which is spearheading this initiative, it is too early to report anything.

The permitting paperwork has been sent to the Capital Investment Review Board for approval. They will meet at the end of this month. If Fort Belvoir's request gets approved, the next steps would be a Project Validation Assessment and an Environmental Assessment.

According to Lara, there is already one RV park at Belvoir along the Potomac River and the new park will be close to that but separate.

PHOTOS BY EDUARDO MANTILLA-TORRES

PHOTOS BY ARMY COMMAND FORT BELVOIR

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www.WendySantantonio.com



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Are Humans Transmitting Covid to Wildlife?

VA Tech study documents cases in six species.

BY SUSAN LAUME
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Despite several concerted efforts, investigators have yet to conclusively determine whether the virus that causes Covid (SARS-CoV-2) had a zoonotic origin or was a leak from the bio-laboratory in Wuhan China. The virus became the disease COVID-19 which infected humans, and continues, in pandemic proportions. Here in Virginia, following a 2022-2023 study, several Virginia Tech researchers published their findings documenting transmission of the virus from humans to wildlife, after sampling sites across Virginia and D.C. The study appears in the July 29th issue of Nature Communications, part of the Nature portfolio. (<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-024-49891-w>)

Of particular interest in our urban area, is their finding that “areas with more human activity may serve as potential hotspots for cross-species transmission [from humans to wildlife].” And wildlife living in recreation areas and highly urbanized areas “likely have higher risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2.” The study further summarized that “Humans and wildlife rarely come into direct contact, but numerous indirect links likely exist.” Potential sources of exposure include trash receptacles and discarded food. Wildlife in urban areas “are regularly exposed to human refuse which could serve as a bridge for transmission between humans, companion animals, and wild species.”

During the study researchers trapped and sampled 23 species; a variety of common backyard species. They detected the SARS-CoV2 virus in six species: deer mice, opossums, raccoons, groundhogs, cottontail rabbits, and red bats. The highest incidence of the virus was found in creatures near hiking trails and high-traffic public areas. Further the study found a close match to virus variants which were circulating in humans at the time. This suggests that humans are passing the virus to wildlife.

Health researchers were already aware of human to animal transmission. In the Spring of 2020, several animals in zoos tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, including tigers and other big cats, and gorillas. The first cases were reported in the Bronx Zoo after animals were exposed to a caretaker with COVID-19. Several well documented cases in captive animals followed. Research also shows within-species transmission in the wild and in laboratories. Various studies show “a broad diversity of mammal species have been exposed to SARS-CoV-2 in the wild. ... White-tailed Deer had the most documented infections of non-captive animals.” (www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-16071-z?)

Virginia’s Department of Wildlife Resources includes a warning to those hunting deer. “While deer do not appear to become sick or



PHOTO BY OSULAK, USFWS

One opossum sampled in 2022 “revealed a novel mutation which might suggest animal-to-animal transmission or possible adaptation within the opossum”



PHOTO BY USGS

Eastern Red Bats are among bats found to carry coronavirus



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Eastern Cottontail rabbits sampled positive for the virus in VA Tech’s study.

show clinical signs of disease when infected, SARS-CoV-2 may be transmitted from deer to deer. There are currently no documented cases of humans becoming infected after contact with infected white-tailed deer and there is no evidence that humans can get COVID-19 by eating wild hunted game meat. While the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from deer to humans is unknown at this time, it is believed to be low.” The DWR site advises hunters to “continue to take standard precautions when field-dressing and processing harvested deer, regardless of concern over COVID-19 transmission.”

Olivia LoBalbo, a state and federally permitted wildlife rehabilitator with Animal Education and Rescue Organization, indicates DWR has required rehabilitators to use masks and gloves for any work with mammals for the past couple of years. The precaution prevents human to animal transmission, and potential animal to human transmission as well.

LoBalbo says that in 2020, DWR required testing any bats in rehab for Covid before



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Transmission of SARS-CoV-2, likely from humans to free-range White-tailed Deer, have resulted in subsequent deer-to-deer transmission across the United States.

release. She shares, “It was quite amusing trying to swab these tiny creatures. I had to poke them in the face enough times to make them angry and hiss at me, which is when I would quickly swab them. I rehabilitated a good number of bats, and none of them ever tested positive for COVID.”

She also says she has not had any other animals diagnosed with Covid under her care. Although “Covid symptoms are similar to those of many other common conditions, making it difficult to pinpoint one specific cause.”

Bats have been shown to carry at least three coronaviruses, however, they have not been tied to the emergence of Covid-19 despite early speculation about their role. David Lawlor, a Fairfax County Park Authority ecologist with its Natural Resources Branch, is conducting bat surveys in area parks, including Laurel Hill Park in Lorton, “to inventory bat species and confirm rare species

in parks with high quality habitat.” He says his surveys do not sample bats for viruses or other diseases. He further shares, “In 2020 and 2021, DWR did not permit mist netting bats in the state due to the coronavirus and possible transmission from humans to bats. In 2022, they began issuing permits to mist net bats again. As a precaution, Park Authority staff use leather gloves covered with disposable plastic gloves when handling bats for data collection to prevent spreading [any] virus from bat to bat [and from human handlers’] as they are being handled each night. The plastic disposable gloves are changed between handling each individual bat.”

As the Virginia Tech study extract concludes, “Continued broad surveillance and more detailed ecological research will be needed to fully determine the role of wildlife communities in SARS-CoV-2 transmission and evolution.”

Prepare for Tropical Storm Debby

Three-to-four inches of rain likely.

Fairfax County sent out a warning about incoming severe weather.

Here's what to expect:

❖ **Rain:** The heaviest period of rain is predicted for Thursday, with 3-4 inches of total rainfall possible over the next 72 hours.

❖ **Wind:** The strongest winds are predicted for Friday, with winds around 14 mph and gusts as high as 24 mph.

❖ **Tornado Threat:** As with most tropical storms, there may be a threat for tornadoes depending on the track of the center of low pressure.

FROM CHAIRMAN JEFF MCKAY:

Heavy rainfall and strong winds affecting our region in the next few days, especially Thursday and Friday, Aug. 8 and 9. Now is a good time to prepare for possible impacts from the storm.

Here are some things you can do to prepare for severe weather in general:

❖ Complete essential errands before severe weather hits. Stock up on non-perishable food, bottled water, medications, first-aid supplies, infant supplies, pet supplies, and anything else you may need during a storm.

❖ Fill up your car with gas.

❖ Assemble an emergency kit and review a family emergency plan.

❖ Move all valuables and important papers to an upper level of the house in case of flooding.

❖ Clear rain gutters and downspouts of debris.

❖ Find your stash of flashlights and your battery-powered radio. Check the batteries

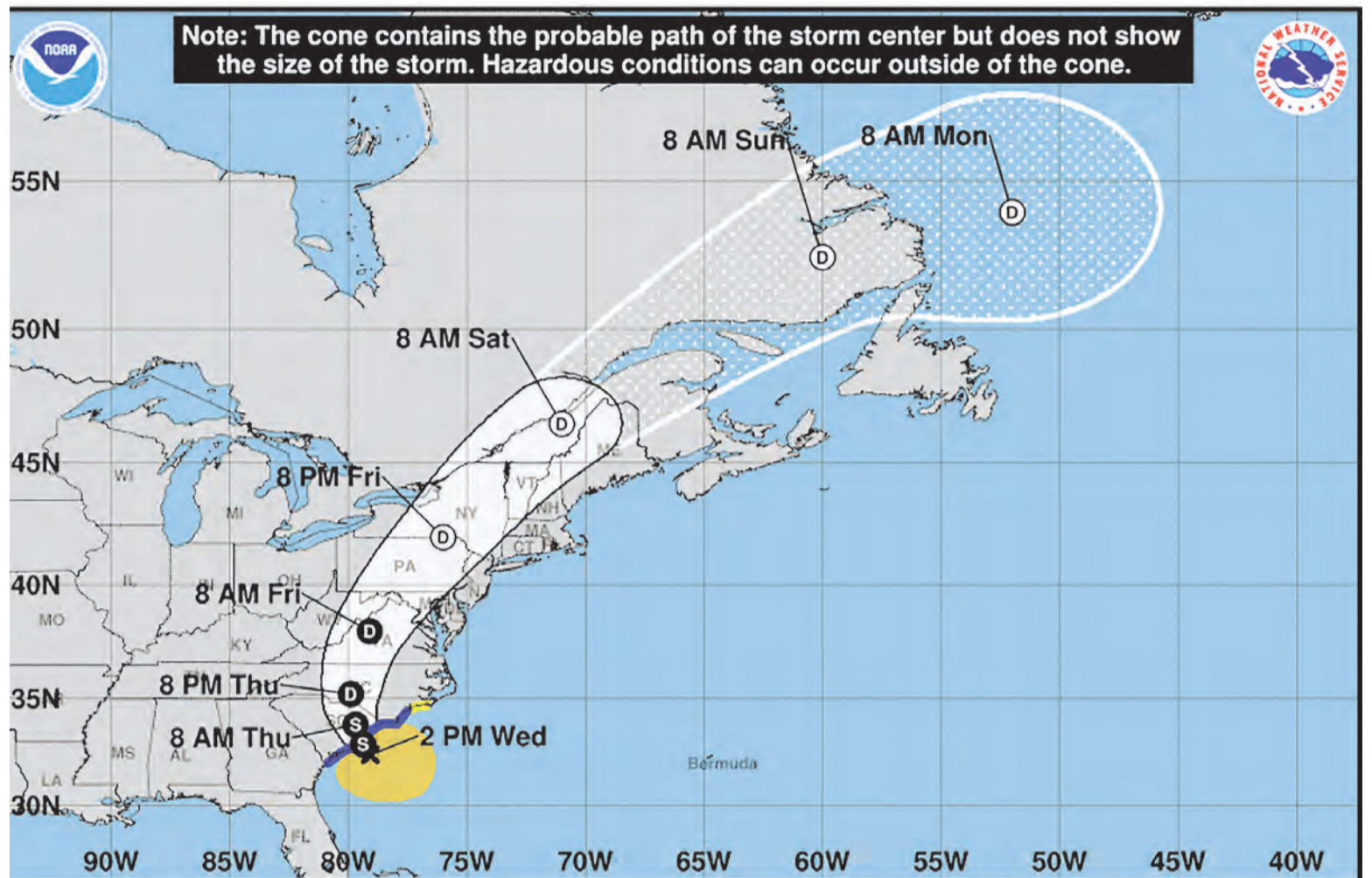
❖ Sign up for Fairfax County Emergency Alerts here.

❖ Follow the Fairfax County Emergency Blog here.

❖ Report any downed trees here.

❖ During a storm, if you have lost power, always report the outage to your service provider.

❖ Remember to stay away from



<p>Tropical Storm Debby Wednesday August 07, 2024 2 PM EDT Intermediate Advisory 21A NWS National Hurricane Center</p>	<p>Current information: x Center location 32.4 N 79.1 W Maximum sustained wind 60 mph Movement NE at 3 mph</p>	<p>Forecast positions: ● Tropical Cyclone ○ Post/Potential TC Sustained winds: D < 39 mph S 39-73 mph H 74-110 mph M > 110 mph</p>	
<p>Potential track area: Day 1-3 (solid line) Day 4-5 (dotted line)</p>	<p>Watches: Hurricane (pink) Trop Stm (yellow)</p>	<p>Warnings: Hurricane (red) Trop Stm (blue)</p>	<p>Current wind field estimate: Hurricane (brown) Trop Stm (yellow)</p>

any downed power lines. Always assume the lines are energized and make sure to report them to your service provider.

❖ Avoid driving through water because there is no way to tell how deep it is. The water could sweep your car away. Remember the phrase: Turn Around Don't Drown.

HANDY POINTS OF CONTACT VDOT/THE ROADS:

❖ To report hazardous road conditions, call VDOT's Customer Service Center at 1-800-367-7623 or visit online.

❖ Road conditions can be tracked here.

FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE:

❖ For Emergencies, dial 911
 ❖ For Non-Emergencies 703-691-2131, TTY 703-204-2264

❖ <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/fairfax-county-police-department>

POWER OUTAGES:

❖ **Dominion:** Report a power outage online here or call 1-866-366-4357.

❖ Download the Dominion Energy app ahead of time from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

❖ **NOVEC:** Report a power outage online here or call 703-335-

0500.

REPORT OTHER UTILITY PROBLEMS:

❖ **Verizon:** 1-800-837-4966
<https://www.verizon.com/support/residential/contact-us/contactuslanding.htm>

❖ **Cox:** 703-378-8422 text 54512
<https://www.cox.com/residential/support/outages.html>
<https://www.cox.com/residential/contactus.html>

❖ **Comcast/Xfinity:** 800-934-6489
<https://www.xfinity.com/support/contact-us>

<https://www.xfinity.com/support/articles/check-service-outage>

❖ **Washington Gas Emergency:** 844-927-4427, select option 1
 TTY 711 or 800-735-2258
<https://www.washingtongas.com/help/contact>

❖ **Columbia Gas:** 800-544-5606
 TTY 800-231-3238
<https://www.columbiagasva.com/safety/natural-gas-safety/report-gas-leaks>

❖ **Fairfax Water:** 703-698-5600
 After Hours Emergency, 703-698-5613
<https://www.fairfaxwater.org/contact-us>

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](https://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

ALIVE! Volunteers are needed to assist with multiple programs relating to their Food Program, ALIVE! House, and Alexandria Eviction Prevention Partnership Program

will distribute food at Mobile Pop-ups and Truck to Trunk events, etc. <https://www.volunteeralixandria.org/ALIVE>
 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.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

School supply drive in Lorton.

Lorton School Supply Drive was a Success

Supervisor Dan Storck and staff met with 2,400 parents and students.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

FCPS has a total of
199 schools and centers.

- 142 Elementary Schools
- 23 Middle Schools
- 28 High Schools
- 6 Secondary Schools

In early August, thoughts are on the last, hot month of summer and the swimming pools, but with school starting on Aug. 19 this year, Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon) put the school bus wheels in motion with a school supply drive on Saturday, Aug. 3 at a local park.

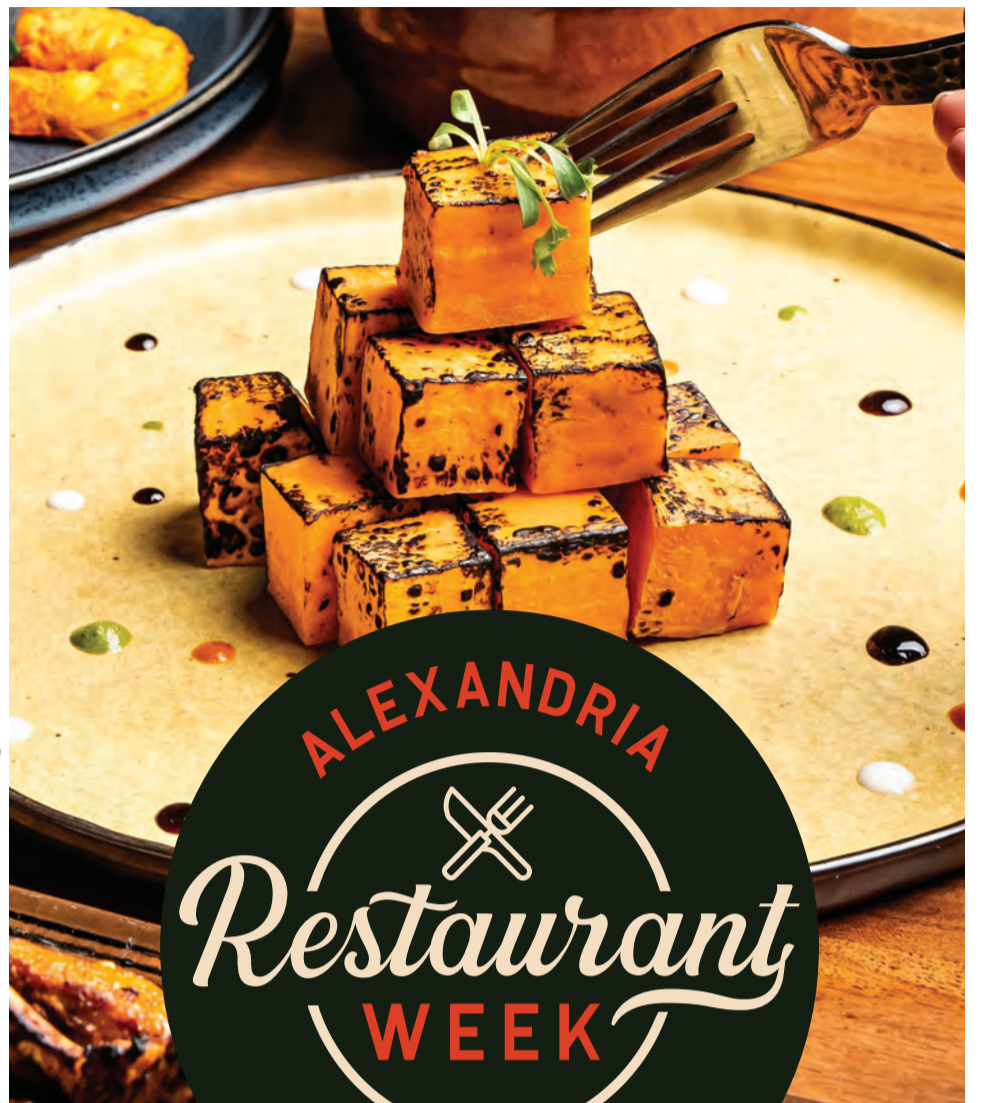
Nearly 2,400 people attended the event in Lorton and they handed out nearly 700 backpacks and supplies. It was made possible by

support from the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, School Board Member Mateo Dunne and the Lorton Community Action Center.



Over 700 backpacks given out.

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Wading Birds Disperse, Stand Out

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

A little-noticed sign of summer's end and the approaching fall is the gathering of large white birds, great egrets, in areas like Hunting Creek's mudflats and in wetlands like Dyke Marsh, Huntley Meadows Park and Mason Neck. "This is a phenomenon known as post-breeding dispersal," explains veteran birder Larry Cartwright. "Fledged young and adults depart the breeding grounds and forage in wetlands, rivers and lakes, places with food abundance. This can last for a month or more starting generally in August until birds depart for their wintering areas."

In Northern Virginia, great egrets, which can number well above 100 at times, are dispersing now, Cartwright notes, and can be seen locally. "In the past several years we have even seen American flamingos dispersing from their Gulf Coast breeding grounds and documented on the Hunting Creek mudflats."

In recent weeks, locals have delighted in some rare sightings for Northern Virginia. Several people have spotted American avocets in Dyke Marsh and nearby. These are regionally rare shorebirds more common near an ocean. They have long-legs, black-and-white bodies, rusty heads and necks and distinctive upturned beaks that they swish back and forth to nab invertebrates.

On July 22, Russell Jones saw several glossy ibises near the Porto Vecchio condos on the Potomac River. Glossy ibises, more common near the Atlantic coast, are long-legged wading birds with down-curved bills. They too disperse after the nesting season and forage in wetlands and mudflats. In a strong light, their stunning maroon, emerald, bronze and violet hues glisten.

In 2021, roseate spoonbills excited birders and non-birders. These are tall, pink water birds with football-shaped bodies and spoon-shaped bills, common in coastal southeastern U.S. states and South America.

Long-legged, Wading Birds

Wading birds typically have long legs, long necks and long bills. They wade in shallow water foraging for fish, frogs and other small aquatic animals. Shorebirds of varying sizes are also considered to be waders.

Great egrets are white birds around 37 inches tall that typically

stand still waiting for prey to pass by. "Then, with startling speed, the egrets strike with a jab of their long neck and bill," says Cornell University's All about Birds. They have an S-shaped neck and dagger-like bill.

Another regionally common long-legged wading bird with an S-shaped neck is the great blue heron, a tall blue-gray bird that often stands motionless scanning for prey or moves with long, deliberate steps. Great blues also make lightning-fast strikes to grab a fish or other food. These birds occur from the north coast of South America to the south coast of Alaska.

Mason Neck State Park has a heron rookery where birds come together in a colony to breed, rest and raise their young. They build clusters of stick nests high in trees which some joke are "bird condos."

Least bitterns and American bitterns are other wading bird species seen locally. The least bittern is chestnut brown and often draws in its long neck as it probes amid marsh cattails. Bitterns present challenges to even experienced observers because if threatened, to camouflage they freeze into a reed-like pose and point their neck and bill skyward. Virginia classifies the least bittern as a "species of greatest conservation need."

The American bittern is also a stealthy forager, often with a hunched posture. "There are relatively few Virginia occurrences during the breeding season," says Sergio Harding, a conservation bird biologist for the state. "I would characterize it as rare, but Virginia is toward the southern end of its breeding range, so I would not consider it imperiled. We just don't have many of them breeding here because we are at the edge of its range. I believe they are more numerous during the winter and would call them uncommon during that season, but again, not imperiled, as Virginia is toward the northern end of its wintering range."

Other long-legged wading birds include other egrets, herons, cranes and storks. All live near water.

Where to See Wading Birds

"Huntley Meadows Park is the best place to see wading birds this time of year," says Larry Meade, President of the Northern Virginia Bird Club. The park's Natural Resources Manager Chris King reports that the most common large wading birds spotted there are herons -- great blue herons, lit-

tle blue herons, green herons and yellow-crowned night herons; plus American bitterns and great egrets. Others seen less frequently include the least bittern, snowy egret, tri-colored heron, black-crowned night heron and white ibis.

The Mason Neck peninsula also has some large wading birds, including great blue heron year-round; green herons, least bitterns and great egrets in the summer; and snowy egrets, American bitterns and black-crowned night herons in spring and fall migration.

Dyke Marsh and the Hunting Creek embayment's mudflats are hotspots for many wading birds. From the bridge over the creek's mouth, people also spot smaller waders like sandpipers and yellowlegs.

Because many wading birds are large, up to five feet tall, they are relatively easy to see if you know where to look.



Great egrets often fish in groups.

PHOTO BY RUSSELL JONES.



Great egrets like these 40 gather on these old marina pilings on the Potomac River south of Old Town Alexandria every year. Great egrets gather on wooden pilings on the Potomac River near Porto Vecchio condominiums.

PHOTO BY ELDON BOES



A great blue heron catching and eating a fish.



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



A glossy ibis was seen recently, here probing in the Potomac River tidal flats alongside snowy egrets. Photo by Russell Jones.



American bittern, a somewhat furtive wading marsh bird.

PHOTO BY RANDY STREUFERT



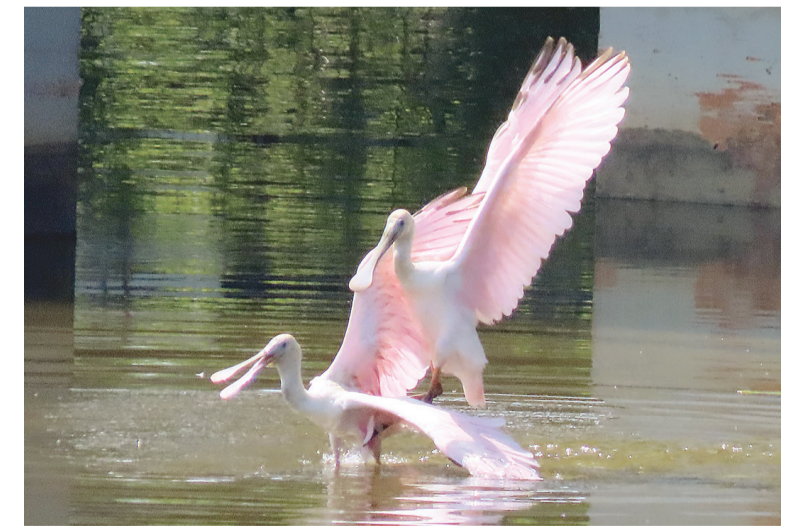
American avocet, rarely seen in Northern Virginia

PHOTO BY UECKER, SANDRA/USFWS



Least bittern, a stealthy wading bird that thrives amid wetland plants.

PHOTO BY RANDY STREUFERT



Roseate spoonbills provided much excitement in Northern Virginia in 2023.

PHOTO BY JOAN MASHBURN

ENTERTAINMENT



Alexandria Summer Sidewalk Sale takes place Saturday, Aug. 10, 2024 throughout Old Town Alexandria and Del Ray.



Alexandria Restaurant Week takes place Aug. 16-25, 2024 throughout Old Town Alexandria, Del Ray, Carlyle, Eisenhower and the West End.

WEDNESDAYS THROUGH SATURDAYS

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

34TH SEASON OF THE LYCEUM CHAMBER SERIES

The Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association (WMPA) announces the 34th season of its Lyceum Chamber Series, under the guidance of Music Director Laureate Ulysses James. Hosted at the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum, located at 201 South Washington Street in Old Town Alexandria, this series promises to offer an array of exceptional weekly performances throughout the summer. All concerts are at 3 p.m.; no tickets required. Suggested donation \$25.

LIVING. BREATHING. MUSIC.

Featuring Anna Binneweg, Music Director, Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic
Ulysses James, Music Director Laureate, Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic
Alberto Rodriguez, Music Director, Washington Metropolitan Youth Orchestra
Martin Garfield-Levine, Music Director, Washington Metropolitan Concert Orchestra
Caroline Mousset, Executive and Artistic Planning Director

MUSIC SCHEDULE

August 11: Tapestry Cello Ensemble
August 18: Quodlibet, Flute/Clarinet/Bassoon
August 25: Samuel Runolfson, Cello
September 1: Michael De Sapio, Violin
September 8: Hai Jin, Piano
September 15: John Sutherland Earle: Piano & Friends

JUNE 1 TO AUG. 31

Creative Summer Programs is a se-

ries of workshops exploring the arts. Learn techniques in drawing, stone carving, jewelry, resin, mosaics, and more from local artists. Delve into creative exploration solo or with friends. Free and paid programs are offered. Sign up for what inspires you! Held at Del Ray Artisans (2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria) unless noted. Details: DelRayArtisans.org/creative-summer

MOUNT VERNON NIGHTS Friday and Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m.

At Grist Mill Park
4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria
Fridays at 7:30 p.m.
AUGUST
9 Project Locrea (World Music)
16 Burn the Ballroom (Alternate Rock)
23 Deanna Bogart (Blues, R&B)
30 Melissa Qinn Fox (Country/American)

AT WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER
9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton
Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.

AUGUST
10 Ocho de Bastos (Latin/Pop)
17 Alex Hamburger (Jazz)
24 The U.S. Army Band Country Roads (Country)

AUG. 2-31

"The Science of Our Surroundings" exhibit at Del Ray Artisans gallery features art that draws inspiration from science and math, with a focus on diagrams, cutaways or cycles that the artist or creator may find particularly fascinating. View at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Opening Reception: Friday, August 2, 7-9pm. Open Thursdays 12-6pm, Fridays 12-9pm, Saturdays & Sundays 12-6pm (Closed September 1). Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

AUG. 2-16

ALX Bark Bingo. Come and celebrate Alexandria during the first two weeks of August with a free and fun game of bingo! ALX Bark Bingo is simple to play: 1) Fetch a bingo card from participating stores that feature a bright yellow box on the storefront; 2) Scan the QR code on the storefront's yellow box to reveal a dog, and 3) Have a match

on your bingo card? Pop into the store and get your card stamped! Win with one horizontal/vertical/diagonal bingo and email a photo of your winning card to barkbingo@alxdogwalk.com. Winning cards will be entered into a drawing on 8/19, and four winners will receive a bag of \$300 worth of gift certificates from participating stores! ALX Bark Bingo participating stores include: Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, Bad Ass Coffee of Hawaii, Beeliner Diner, Bellies & Babies, Benny Diforza's Pizza, Boxwood, Cameron Café, District Biscuit Company, The Dog Park, ERA Clothing & Accessories, fibre space, Fiscus Glassworks, Frizzles Hair Salon, Kungfu Kitchen, Lost Boy Cider, Magpie Reclamations, Ms. Moxie's Moon Shop, Pippin Toy Co., Taqueria Picoso, Ten Thousand Villages, Today's Cargo, Top it Off Accessories, Whiskey & Oyster, and Zuki Moon. Visit www.alxdogwalk.com

SATURDAY/AUG. 10

Alexandria Summer Sidewalk Sale.

Throughout Old Town Alexandria and Del Ray. One of the longest-running seasonal summer shopping events—Alexandria Summer Sidewalk Sale—returns to the D.C. region's "Shop Small" destination on Saturday, August 10, 2024, throughout Old Town and Del Ray. The event features dozens of Alexandria boutiques stepping out of their storefronts and offering deeply discounted summer merchandise. Learn more at VisitAlexandria.com/SidewalkSale. Visit AlexandriaVA.com/SidewalkSale

AUG. 16-25

Alexandria Restaurant Week.

Throughout neighborhoods in Alexandria, including Old Town, Del Ray, Carlyle, Eisenhower and the West End. For 10 days and two weekends, dozens of restaurants in Alexandria, Virginia, will offer a \$27.50, \$40 or \$50 in-person dinner for one during Alexandria Restaurant Week, August 16-25, 2024. The special \$27.50 offer is a playful nod to Alexandria's 275th anniversary. Find additional special offers and discounts at fast casual restaurants throughout Alexandria during Alexandria Restaurant Week. Alexandria Restaurant Week

showcases the inventiveness of local chefs and international cuisine in neighborhoods throughout the city, including Old Town, Del Ray, Carlyle and Eisenhower and the West End. In early August, guests will find a digital flip-book of menus at participating restaurants on AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com.

SATURDAY/AUG. 17

Port to Port Beer Festival.

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Port City Brewing Company, 3950 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria. Port to Port Beer Festival will bring 14 breweries from ports near and far to showcase their best brews. Featured breweries include Sideward Brewing and Jackie O's all the way from Orlando, Florida and Athens, Ohio, respectively, alongside local favorites like Lost Boy Cider and Cedar Run Brewing. Festival guests will receive a commemorative 5 oz. glass with their admission ticket along with three tickets for 4 oz pours. Additional drink tickets can be purchased during the festival to keep the party going. Guests will also enjoy yard games, tented seating, and live music from Road Street Avenue. On August 17th, the Tasting Room and outdoor Beer Garden will remain open to the public for regular business. However, festival beers are only available to ticket holders! Tickets are on sale for \$20 a person with an early-bird discount, increasing in price on August 10th to \$25 a person, so make sure to snag yours today for this fun new event in Northern Virginia's backyard.

SATURDAY/AUGUST 17

Del Ray Bands & Brews Bar Crawl.

12:30- 6 p.m. At Del Ray Business Association, 2308 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Join the fun and vibrant Del Ray community for a special summer event, featuring live music in outdoor restaurant venues along the Avenue! Bands & Brews. This event is being brought to you by the Del Ray Business Association and will benefit a local non-profit. The first 250 registrants will get a swag bag with a 16 oz souvenir collectors cup! Advance tickets are \$15 (\$25 at the door), and include specials on cocktails, beer, and food at each of the 20+ participating restaurants, live music at every venue, trolley

transportation, 50/50 raffles, a photo booth, and many more fun giveaways. You must be 21+ to participate in the crawl, but children and families are welcome at family friendly establishments and at the main stage at Pat Miller Square. Visit visitdelray.com.

FRIDAY/AUG. 23

Summer Concert Series.

The U.S. Air Force Band returns to the Air Force Memorial in Arlington. Free and open to the public.
Friday, Aug. 23 at 7:30 p.m. - Airmen of Note
Friday, Sept. 13 at 7:30 p.m. Air Force Birthday Concert.

SATURDAY/AUG. 24

Around the World Cultural Food Festival.

11 a.m. to 7 p.m. At Oronoco Bay Park, 100 Madison Street, downtown Old Town Alexandria. Come and enjoy delicious foods from around the world while watching a diverse folk show with singers and dancers from different countries, then take a break and go shopping from the ethnic artisans and crafters participating in the festival.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 7

Find Your Ancestors!

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Attend this conference featuring one of America's most popular genealogical lecturers. John Colletta will discuss how historical research can help to understand the day-to-day lives of our ancestors. Lively discussions will follow. Cost: \$40. Email: contact-us@mvgenealogy.org. Website: <https://mvgenealogy.org/store.php?sid=7>

SATURDAY/SEPT. 7

Used Book Sale:

10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 9

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 8

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 25

“Life in Alexandria’s Civil War Prisons Lecture. 7 p.m. At The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, Alexandria. The Alexandria Historical Society is pleased to announce its upcoming lecture, “Life in Alexandria’s Civil War Prisons.” Local historian Madeline Feierstein will present her research on the five military prisons of Alexandria during the Civil War. Her lecture will provide an in-depth look at life within these institutions for both Confederate and Union prisoners, examining how their presence disrupted the daily lives of Alexandria residents. Additionally, Madeline will explore the medical treatment of jailed soldiers and prisoners of war at hospitals such as Grosvenor Branch, which was the confiscated Lee-Fendall House. Attendees will gain insight into first-hand accounts from individuals who experienced imprisonment within Alexandria’s city limits, from the earliest days of battle to the beginnings of Reconstruction. For more information, contact David Heiby, Treasurer of the Alexandria

Historical Society, at davidheiby@gmail.com or 703-869-0872.

THE BIRCHMERE

At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. All shows are at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com. Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or www.Birchmere.com.

AUGUST

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Thu. 15: Keke Wyatt \$65.00
Fri. 16: JON B. \$69.50
Sat. 17: JON B. \$69.50
Sun. 18: The Secret Sisters w/ Jon Muq \$35.00
Fri. 23: Marcus Miller \$69.50
Sat. 24: Kim Waters \$35.00
Sun. 25: Sandi Patty \$59.50
Thu. 29: Dave Alvin & Jimmie Dale Gilmore with The Guilty Ones w/ Jon Langford & The Bright Shiners \$45.00
Fri. 30: Raheem DeVaughn \$85.00
Sat. 31: Raheem DeVaughn \$85.00

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 4

Join Friends’ Board. Those who care about mental health, the Alexandria community, and collaborating with fellow residents to make sure the City’s most vulnerable residents have a chance to thrive, then consider joining the Board of Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center. The Friends Board is an all-volunteer group of residents that oversees the administration of one of Alexandria’s top mental health charities. Friends has no paid staff, so Board members, working on average 10 hours per month, share the day-to-day work needed to accomplish its goals. Interested candidates should email FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com.

STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science’s STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or donaldrea@aol.com.

ALIVE! offers numerous programs that aid low-income families in Alexandria that rely on volunteers: monthly food distributions, furniture, houseware and emergency food deliveries, and community food drives. Individuals, families and groups are encouraged to participate. Students can earn community service hours by participating. Visit www.alive-inc.org/volunteer.htm or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@alive-inc.org.

Volunteer Drivers Needed. Drivers needed by the American Cancer Society to take cancer patients to treatment in Northern Virginia. To volunteer, call 1-800-227-2345 or go to cancer.org/drive.

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.

Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria’s preteens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for “Space of Her Own,” and “Space of His Own,” serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making healthy choices and succeeding in school and in life. Visit www.spaceofherown.org and www.spaceofhisown.org. For more information on how to become a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov or phone at 703-746-4687.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Postpartum Support Virginia sponsors a free, bi-monthly support group for women suffering depression and/or anxiety during pregnancy or in the first year following childbirth. Meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at Inova Alexandria Hospital, Health Education Center, rooms 1-2, 4320 Seminary Road. Contact co-moderator Susan Doyle at suzjdoyle@gmail.com or 571-403-0673.

The Parkinson’s Disease Support Group of Alexandria meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. At the Hollin Hall Senior Center, Room 109, 1500 Shenandoah Road. All Parkinson’s patients and caregivers are welcome.

The Caregiver Support Group is facilitated by the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services Division of Aging and Adult Services. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the Adult Day Services

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.
Published by
Local Media Connection LLC
1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
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A Connection Newspaper



Excessive Party Politics

To the Editor:

I wanted to comment on the Gazette publishing three opinion pieces on July 25 by local Democratic politicians concerning Joe Biden dropping out of the presidential race. Isn't that excessive? I can see where the congressman is allowed to comment on this matter but why are my state senator and state delegate being given this platform? Their job is to represent their constituents in Richmond not pontificate on presidential politics.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

These opinion pieces were nothing more than Democratic Party machine propaganda. The fact of the matter is Biden was forced out by the Democratic Party chiefs who told him he had to go because he was hurting the party.

Don't insult our intelligence by trying to compare Joe Biden to George Washington. Washington was a military leader who would have never created a fiasco like what Biden perpetrated with the abrupt, disgraceful withdrawal from Afghanistan where American lives were needlessly lost

and tons of equipment was abandoned to the Taliban.

As for Washington setting a precedent of serving only two terms, Roosevelt violated that custom by getting elected four times. What if Trump had been assassinated? Would Biden have dropped out?

It's important to recognize that not everybody in the area marches in lockstep with the Democratic Party machine.

Greg Paspatis
Alexandria, Va.

Addressing An Unimaginable Reality



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

(Yet again, not a cancer column.) Within the next month or so, I will have affixed all the self-address labels that I have received/accumulated over the years. And over those same years, the numbers and frequency of these self-address-label-senders has diminished greatly. So much so that I have reached my last sheet of labels (bottom of a previous stack). I can remember back in the heyday of receiving/accumulating these unsolicited labels and due to their numbers - and my interest in keeping them, I had to organize a place for them in my home office as their arrivals continued. And though I used the labels regularly, their supply nevertheless overwhelmed my demand.

In the recurring process of handling these various sheets of self-address labels (and adding new to old), I remember thinking that I would never get to the bottom of this newly organized pile. But here I sit, one measly sheet remains. If I don't receive new self-address labels soon, I'll have to actually, write, write, write my own name and address on my outgoing mail.

Perhaps you don't remember a time when you'd receive in the mail correspondence from a charity, a hospital, a 501c3-type organization, et cetera, presumptively quid-pro-quo "return cash contribution to pay for their 'gift' to you." "Gifts" almost always included sheets of self-address labels. In addition, there might be note pads (often personalized with your name on it) pocket calendars, appointment organizers, and let's not forget the light bulbs, the donation pins, the medallions, refrigerator magnets and my personal favorite: holiday/greeting cards - with envelopes. Over these many years of receiving these "gifts," I had accumulated quite an inventory of stuff. As for the underlying business of these mailed solicitations, a return envelope - self-addressed of course and an easy-to-understand reply card with denomination choices. I have to admit I didn't always pay my way, but neither did I ask to be solicited so regularly in this way. Occasionally phone calls followed to as we call it in the sales world: "pre approach," to confirm receipt and make the pitch in person, so to speak.

And being that longtime salesperson, I had no problem being courteous and appreciative of their outreach while turning down their solicitation. As many "nos" as any of us salespeople have heard, I found it not particularly difficult to say "No" myself. I thanked them for their initiative and wished them well with their next call. Oddly enough, as I write this column/share this memory, I can't recall now when it was that I last received labels in the mail or a phone call to confirm their receipt. Thanks to, or because of the Internet, mail is not quite what it used to be; either as a method of communication or as a method of soliciting/meeting prospects. And because of all this evolution and technology, it seems I'm running out of self-address labels.

Perhaps it's time, probably past time, that I join the ranks of those people who have embraced technology and assimilated it into their daily lives. Specifically, I'm referring to people who "online-bank" their way through life and/or who might not even have a checking account - where for us old-schoolers, actual paper checks are used to pay bills by mailing the check in the self-addressed envelope provided, back to the addressee. If I can click the keys on my keyboard or press the numbers on my phone, I can eliminate, almost, the need for ever needing a self-address label, and dare I say, standing in line at the Post Office. Perhaps when I've used up my current stack of blank checks? Presently, I'm at check number 1804. When I get to the end of checks, number 1941, I'll likely make the change. But until then, I could sure use some more self-address labels. Imagine that.

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

Fort Belvoir Access Tightened Up

Rules of entering the gates are changing slightly, impacting deliveries and guests.

By MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Access rules change at Fort Belvoir.

Getting onto the base at Fort Belvoir took another step in the secure direction when the Garrison Commander directed that, starting immediately, access to Fort Belvoir is limited to individuals with valid DoD ID Cards and their minor dependents, or those holding existing sponsorship privileges. This change is indefinite and will

remain in effect until ordered otherwise by the Garrison Commander.

All visitors that don't meet the above crite-

ria will need to meet their Fort Belvoir sponsor at the Visitor Control Center for access to the installation. To learn about visitor access, go to <https://home.army.mil/belvoir/about/Garrison/DES/physical-security/expedited-visitor-access-service>

This includes delivery and transportation services, the base rule states. No food delivery, taxis, or taxi-like services (Uber, Lyft, etc.) will be allowed on Fort Belvoir at this time. All food deliveries will need to occur outside of the gate.

To facilitate this change to the policy, Tulley Gate off Richmond Highway near the Town of Accotink will now be open 24 hours. Lieber Gate up by the hospital will be open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. All sponsors will now need to meet their visitors or pick up food deliveries in the parking lot of the Tulley Gate Visitor Control Center starting Saturday, Aug. 3.

For more information, go to <https://home.army.mil/belvoir/about/visitor-information>

BULLETIN BOARD

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Center, 1108 Jefferson St., 4-5:30 p.m. Participants are full- or part-time caregivers providing care locally or long distance to a family member or friend. Participants share their experiences, provide support for each other and receive resources to assist them with caregiving. The next Caregiver Support Group meeting is June 7. For more information or to register, contact Jennifer Sarisky at 703-746-9999 or email DAAS@alexandriava.gov.

FACE Center Support Groups provide parents with a space to share their daily parenting frustrations and triumphs while offering new strategies for helping parents to cope, build positive parent-child relationships and best support their children's learning.

❖ Support Group in English, every Monday, 6-7:30 p.m. at ARHA Main Building, 401 Wythe St.

❖ Support Group in Spanish, every Wednesday, 6-7:30 p.m. at Community Lodgings Brookside Center, 614 Four Mile Road.

Registration not necessary. A light dinner and childcare services provided free. Contact Krishna Leyva at 703-619-8055 or krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us for more.

Divorce Workshop for Women. Second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King St. The workshops are designed to provide education on the legal, financial, family and personal issues of divorce in a logical, yet

compassionate way. The workshop fee is \$25. Visit www.novasecondsaturday.com for more.

ONGOING

Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program.

The City of Alexandria has reinstated its sewer Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program for homeowners in designated areas that historically experience basement back-ups or flooding. The program reimburses homeowners for up to 50 percent of the cost of installing a BFP device by a licensed plumbing contractor, up to a maximum of \$2,000. The current program period is through Dec. 31, 2019. Alexandria homeowners should call the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services at 703-746-4014 or visit www.alexandriava.gov/tes.

Robust Walking. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9 a.m. at Mount Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Ave. Free 55+ robust walking 1-hour exercise class (with chair exercise option). No class on holidays. Contact jjkingconsulting@yahoo.com.

Seeking Donations. Computer CORE, which is dedicated to helping low-income adults become computer literate is seeking donations. Visit www.computercore.org/contribute.

Senior and Job Programs. 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Queen of Apostles Church, 4650 Taney Avenue, Alexandria. St. Martin de Porres Center offers senior and job placement programming Monday through Friday at the parish. Email

Kathryn Toohey, ktoohey@ccda.net.

Be Heard at the City's Monthly Public Hearings. A schedule of the meetings can be found at www.alexandriava.gov. Voice opinions, speak about something on the docket or just speak about something you are concerned about. Sign up in advance to speak through the city's website. Anyone is welcome at any of the public hearings.

Eligible low income households can now use their SNAP benefits to buy local foods at the Old Town Farmers' Market. SNAP customers are able to use their electronic benefits transfer cards to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables and other eligible food products at the market. The Old Town Farmer's Market is located at 301 King St., and is open on Saturdays, year round from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Public Space Recycling. Alexandria has placed more than 80 bright blue recycling containers next to public trash cans in the commercial districts along Mount Vernon Avenue and King Street, as well as other public spaces, including parks, recreation fields, and other high-traffic pedestrian areas. Visit alexandriava.gov/Recycling.

English as a Second Language Class. Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St. Tuesdays and Thursdays, all levels 10 a.m.-12 p.m., intermediate workshop 3-5 p.m. All classes free. Call the information desk, 703-746-1702.



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