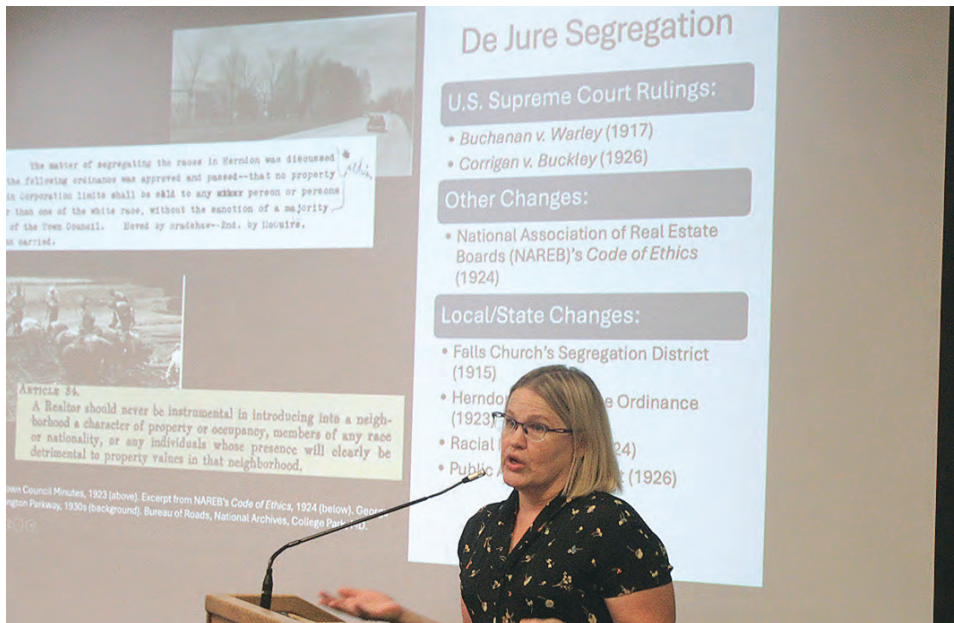


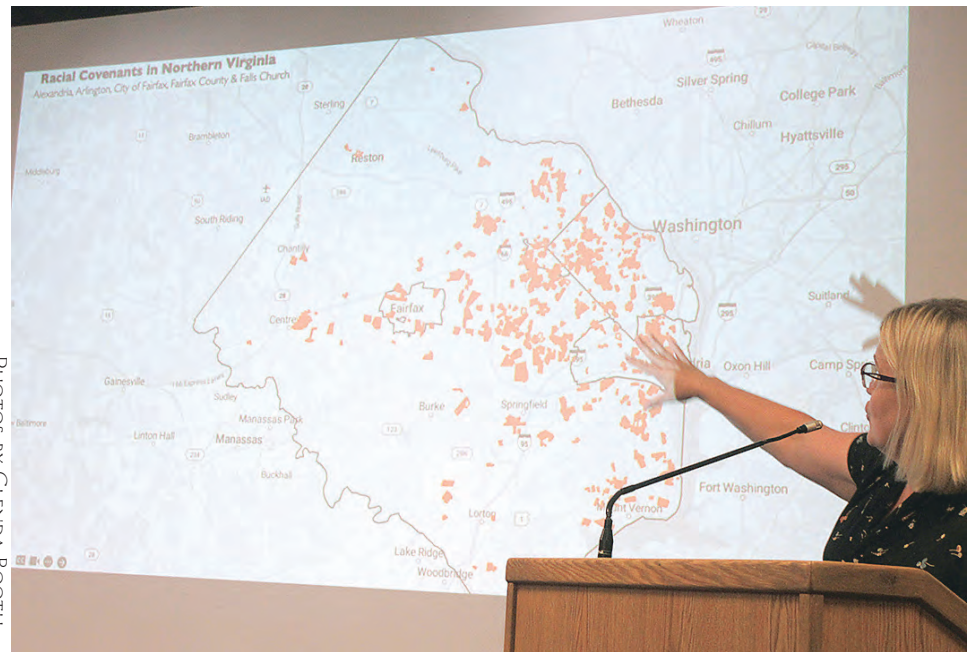
Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

SEPTEMBER 5, 2024



Dr. Krystyn Moon covered the history of racial discrimination in housing in Northern Virginia.



Dr. Krystyn Moon showed a map of racial covenants in Northern Virginia.

The Legacy of Race-based Covenants

3 practices that created housing inequity: racial covenants; zoning; and limited access to mortgages based on race.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Some real estate developers and others selling property in Northern Virginia from 1900 through the 1960s used race-based, restrictive covenants to maintain segregation, and Virginia's state and local governments were enablers at times, Dr. Krystyn Moon, University of Mary Washington history professor told a packed room of 120 on August 27 at the Sherwood Regional Library.

In a talk titled "A History of Fairfax County's Racial Covenants in Property Deeds," she presented her research on the history and locations of racial covenants in Fairfax and Arlington counties and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church. She has identified and geo-located racially-restrictive covenants across the region.

In introductory remarks, Lydia Lawrence, Nature Forward's Director of Conservation, noted that with EMBARK's redevelopment coming to U.S. 1, investments should be made "in an equitable way. We cannot treat

something unless we understand the underlying cause," she said, adding, "We must understand the intentional actions that shape the community in a particular way."

Typical racial covenants were put into property deeds to prevent people "not of the Caucasian Race" from buying or occupying the land, Moon said. The covenants could have time limits or some would "run with the land," extend beyond the original owner.

Some covenants restricted sales to Jewish people.

"We built a system for privileged whites

SEE HISTORY OF RACIAL COVENANTS, PAGE 12

COURTESY OF KRYSTYN MOON
Ad touts: "Restricted to the Caucasian Race"

ELLISON HEIGHTS
West Falls Church, Va.
The Town Site Beautiful
The natural beauty of our gently sloping hillside beggars description. You will have to come out and see for yourselves. Our green meadows and shady groves, where the mosquito is rarely found, will make you long to live here and our terms will make it an easily accomplished fact.
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"I begin with a farm and end with a town"
Originator and Builder of "Homettes"
West Falls Church, Va.



One sponsor was the Mount Vernon Regional Historical Society.



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Stunning, modern, like-new Craftsman home with 6 bedrooms and 5 full/3 half bathrooms situated on over half an acre has a gourmet kitchen, 2 offices, fully finished walk-out basement, and a gas fireplace, offers unparalleled warmth & style. 4501 Dolphin Lane
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www.RealtorHeidiB.com



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Olde Belhaven Towne | \$899,900

Bright and spacious 3-level 4-bedroom, 3.5-bathroom brick townhome overlooking a park-like square. Updated kitchen, bathroom, roof, systems, windows & more. Lower level features media room and built-in gas grill & professionally designed patio. 6303 Golf Course Square
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Wendy Santantonio 703.625.8802
www.WendySantantonio.com



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www.TheLynnTeamRE.com



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Mary Taylor & Pat Tierney 703.850.5630
www.MaryTaylorRealtor.com



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Sarah Bobbin 571.225.8716
www.SophisticatedLivingNOVADC.com



OPEN SUN 9/8, 2-4

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FCPS Superintendent Attempts To Unwind ‘Misrepresentations’

Dear Governor: FCPS outperforms state averages in all state-mandated subjects.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

Fairfax County Public School officials want to unwind selective data reporting the Aug. 20 Virginia Department of Education press event, “The Release of Virginia’s Annual Assessment of Student Performance, with a review of the 2024 Annual Standards of Learning Assessment Rates.

After the event, headlines such as these appeared online: Fairfax Co. Students See Major Drop in Test Scores, Fairfax School system saw declines in history and English writing, Fairfax County’s public schools are failing their most vulnerable students, and others.

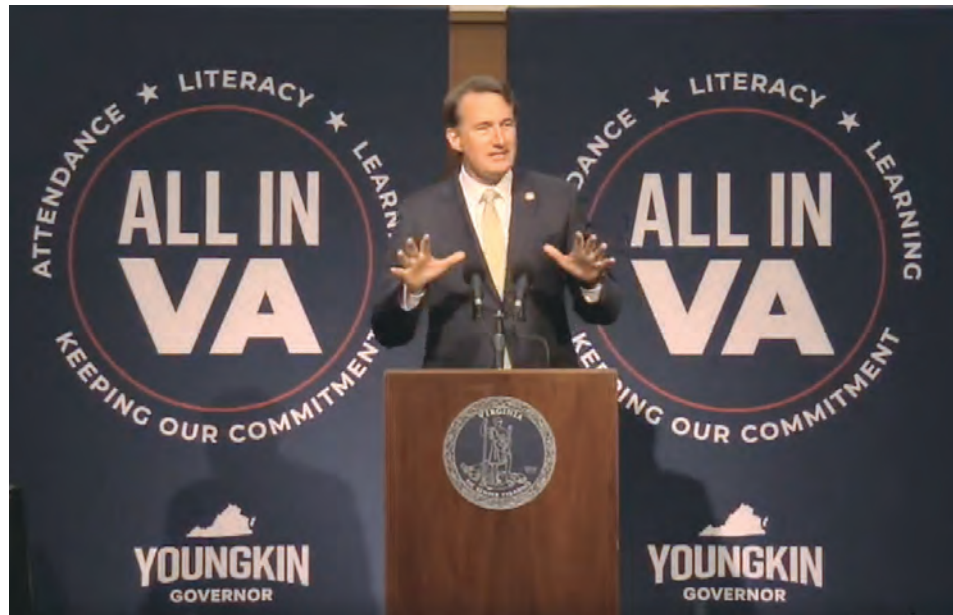
On Aug. 23, Dr. Michelle C. Reid, division superintendent of FCPS, wrote a letter to Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin, Secretary of Education Aimee Rogstad Guidera and Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Lisa Coons. Reid said, “Early this week, the VDOE released this state-wide data [Annual Assessment of Student Performance] to schools after hosting a press event where the achievements of large school systems like Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) were not recognized.”

On Aug. 30, Fairfax County School Board member Melanie Meren wrote in her weekly online newsletter, “Governor Youngkin and his education administration of the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) were silent about the achievements of the majority of FCPS students ... during a media conference ... [This led to some] media misrepresent[ing] FCPS students’ achievement on outdated SOLs in writing (110 students) and history/social sciences (474 students) – while tens of thousands of students took VDOE-approved alternative assessments and continued to perform extraordinarily well ... This selective data reporting by Virginia’s leadership is a disservice to students, teachers, and taxpayers.”

According to FCPS online, the Virginia Assessment Program is commonly known as the SOLs or Standards of Learning. The tests measure student learning and achievement in math, reading, science, writing, and history/social science. Under Virginia law, the tests are administered to students in grades 3-8 and 9-12 for state and federal accountability. All students in grades 3-8 are expected to participate in SOL tests, and all schools must offer SOL tests to all students who need to fulfill federal or graduation requirements.

That is unless the students meet specific state criteria, such as students with disabilities eligible to participate in the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP).

Reid noted in her letter that in 2021, VDOE granted FCPS a School Division of Innovation (SDI). Students can demonstrate mastery using a variety of state-approved alternative assessments, including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate



Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin

SCREENSHOT



Dr. Michelle C. Reid,
FCPS superintendent

SCREENSHOT



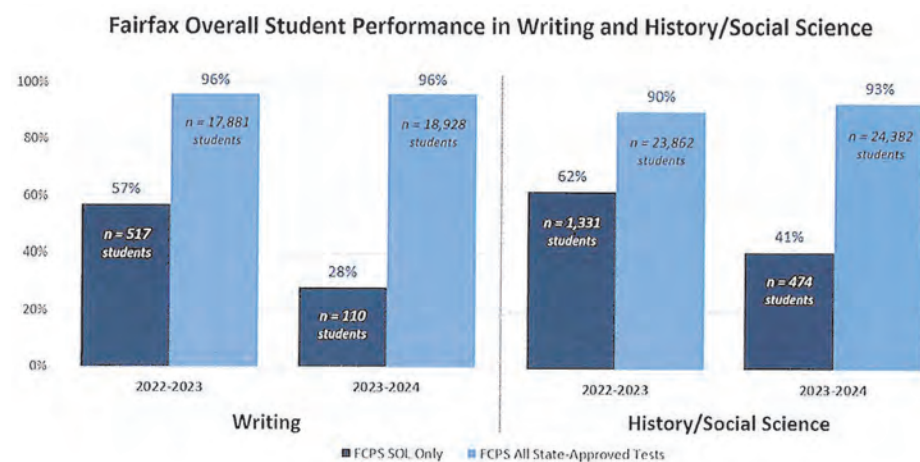
Virginia Superintendent of
Public Instruction
Lisa Coons

DOE.VIRGINIA.GOV



Melanie Meren, School
Board (Hunter Mill)

INSTAGRAM



SCREENSHOT REID’S LETTER

Yearly comparisons, 2022-2023 & 2023-2024, of Fairfax County Public Schools overall student performances in Writing and History/Social Science; dark blue denotes FCPS SOL only, and the light blue denotes FCPS All State-Approved Tests

exams. The flexibility ensures FCPS students engage in rigorous assessments with higher performance standards than the SOLs.

Reid countered that VDOE’s writing SOL assesses the outdated 2010 writing standards. “FCPS has also elected to embrace VDOE flexibility in history/social sciences to offer more authentic assessment experi-

ences for our students, aligned with their classroom learning,” Reid said. She added that more than 18,000 FCPS students took VDOE-approved alternative assessments and continued to perform extraordinarily well, as indicated in the chart she provided within the letter.

“By omitting the tens of thousands of

students who performed exceedingly well on VDOE-approved alternative assessments and publishing only the fraction of students who took SOLs, the hard work of our students and staff is not recognized,” Reid said. “To be clear, FCPS, which is Virginia’s largest school division, continues to outperform state averages in all state-mandated SOL subjects.” Reid included a table that details FCPS results in reading, math, and science.

THE VDOE PRESS event featured three speakers. The first was Emily Ann Gullickson, the Deputy Secretary of Education. She recognized key education champions.

Gov. Youngkin followed, and he described public education in Virginia. He reviewed that over the last eight years, there has been a systemic reduction in the number of questions required to get right to determine proficiency on the standard tests, leading to an “honesty gap.” That is where students performed better on Virginia tests than on national assessments.

According to Youngkin, Virginia has experienced 40 percent increases in K-12 budgets since 2021, a 12 percent increase in teacher pay over the first two years with two subsequent 3 percent increases, the launch of the \$418 million “ALL In Virginia” initiative in response to learning loss from the pandemic, a 16 percent reduction in chronic absenteeism and improvements in reading and math scores.

Coons spoke next and provided data analysis of the assessment. She showcased very small school districts that experienced educational and school attendance gains, explained how Virginia’s student learning loss persisted last September, and the need for intensive tutoring.

“We know that our smaller divisions are showing improvements faster,” Coons said, calling attention to economically disadvantaged students. “We are seeing double rates of growth.”

Coons highlighted a handful of small school divisions, such as Bath County, [student population 504] “that leaned into the work ... creating intervention with tiered supports that supported their most vulnerable learners ... and used their ‘All In’ funds to expand the tutors.” Brunswick County [student population 1,419] hired instructional coaches to train teachers and hired more tutors. The Colonial Beach district [student population 580] provided early intervention for students who were off track, did home visits to create attendance plans and redesigned transportation to provide double bus routes.

“These case studies show the effort and hard work of our leading school divisions,” said Coons. None of the smaller divisions Coons discussed come close to the 181,000+ students Fairfax County Public Schools serves as the largest division in the Commonwealth.

SEE ‘SELECTIVE DATA’, PAGE 7

BAT WALK



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

The group of 21 people who attended a bat walk in Dyke Marsh on Aug. 25 had a tutorial on bats.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Deborah Hammer, the walk leader, used a replica stuffed animal of an Egyptian fruit bat to describe bats' characteristics and behavior.



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Cluster of little brown bats during hibernation in an abandoned limestone mine in Ohio. Little brown bats are a state endangered species in Virginia.

Bats – Superheroes of the Night

As dusk fell on a recent bat walk, these nocturnal aerialists zipped about above the trail seeming to streak by every 30 seconds.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Derogatory expressions like “ding-bat,” “going batty” and “blind as a bat” seem ingrained in the American lexicon. For starters, bats are not blind, but many bat myths abound.

Bats are valuable wildlife with “excellent eyesight,” Deborah Hammer told the 21 people who attended a bat walk in Dyke Marsh on a balmy Aug. 25 night. Hammer is a board member of both the Friends of Dyke Marsh and Bat Conservation and Rescue of Virginia.

As dusk fell, these nocturnal aerialists zipped about above the trail, a bat silhouette seeming to streak by above every 30 seconds or so. “They are waking up and coming out,” she said.

Observers have documented over 1,400 bat species in the world, seventeen in Virginia and at least seven in Dyke Marsh.

BATS ARE BENEFICIAL

Many bats eat insects like mosquitoes, beetles, moths and flies. They can “consume their body weight in insects in one night, perhaps up to 1,000 insects,” Hammer said.

“All bats in the mid-Atlantic are insect eaters,” notes the Audubon Field Guide to the Mid-Atlantic.

In some parts of the world, bats disperse



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

A trio of tri-colored bats in a cave in North Carolina. Tri-colored bats are a state endangered species in Virginia.

seeds. Worldwide, around 80 percent of fruits are pollinated by bats, fruits like papaya, guava and mango. Bats have a role in fertilizing and disseminating seeds of trees, including breadfruit, plantain, fig, clove, banana and peach, says the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) website.

Bats are mammals, meaning their young are born alive and mothers feed their young milk. They are the only mammal that can fly. (Flying squirrels do not fly; they glide.) A bat's wing is a membrane stretched across

Resources & Information

Conservation Status and Threats to North American Bats, 2023, <https://batconservationalliance.org/>
Virginia bats, <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/bats/>
Bat Conservation and Rescue of Virginia, <https://www.virginiabats.org/>

the slim bones of its forearms and fingers. Most bats in Northern Virginia have a mouse-like body. During the day, they roost in a secluded spot by hanging upside down.

Bats navigate to find food using what's called echolocation. “By emitting a high frequency pulse that travels out and bounces off an object and then returns to the bat, they are able to determine distance, size and direction of the object,” says DWR. Usually, the echolocation sounds are at a high frequency, inaudible to humans. They also emit high-pitched twittering sounds which Hammer shared by using a sonar detector.

By mid-October in the Washington region, insects are gone most bats move south or hibernate until spring. Tree bats hibernate in tree cavities, like woodpecker holes; cave bats, in caves. In Northern Virginia, they might hibernate in tree holes, woodpiles or rock crevices. Hoary bats can curl up and camouflage like a pinecone. Red bats hanging by their feet can resemble a leaf, Hammer said.

In sum, bats help maintain balance in nature, say experts.

SEE BAT WALK, PAGE 5

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BAT WALK



PHOTO BY DEBORAH HAMMER

**Hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*),
a declining species**



PHOTO BY LESLIE STURGES

Big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*)



PHOTO BY DEBORAH HAMMER

**Silver-haired bat
(*Lasionycteris noctivagans*)**



PHOTO BY LESLIE STURGES

**Tri-colored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*),
a state endangered species**



PHOTO BY LESLIE STURGES

**Little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*),
a state endangered species**



PHOTO BY LESLIE STURGES

Eastern red bat (*Lasiurus borealis*)



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

**Some people want to help bats by
providing a bat house, which is not
always successful.**

FROM PAGE 4

THREATS AND CONSERVATION

At least 52 percent of bat species in North America are “at risk of populations declining severely in the next 15 years” and need conservation action, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

Hammer lamented that a fungus called “white-nose syndrome” is killing bats. This white fungus appears on the muzzles or noses of infected bats, Hammer explained. “It has a 90 percent mortality rate,” she said.

Other threats include wind turbines, climate change, habitat loss, roost disturbances and disease.

Mount Vernonite Clarence Monteiro attended the bat walk and commented, “Bats have huge benefits to farmers by keeping mosquitoes and other insects in check. I wanted to learn more about our native bats. Hearing that their numbers are greatly diminished due to white nose syndrome was concerning.”

Some scientists are trying to protect bats’ hibernating and maternity sites. Some people install bat houses to provide habitat and cover. For guidance, see <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/bats/bat-houses/>.

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As bat fans scanned the darkening sky, a likely predator, a barred owl, called nearby. “There is still much to be learned about the biology of bats in Virginia and around the world,” says DWR.

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Good Shepherd Dedicates New Altar

Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington, presides over service for altar dedication.

BY GALE CURCIO
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Four years ago, Reverend Thomas P. Ferguson, pastor of Good Shepherd Catholic Church, met with the planning committee to discuss a major renovation to their church.

They came up with a plan to raise funds for building a chapel, meeting spaces, and renovating the sanctuary in the church.

“When we decided to build the chapel, we made the decision to move the altar, ambo, tabernacle and crucifix which had been in the church (since its dedication in 1984) into the new chapel, and thus we needed to provide for a new altar, ambo, tabernacle and crucifix in the church,” said Ferguson.

Once the renovation was completed, it was time to dedicate the new altar.

This isn’t the first time that Ferguson has participated in an altar dedication. He said, “The altar that is presently in the new chapel was dedicated by Bishop Keating in 1984 and was used in the main church from 1984 until it was moved to the chapel in April, 2024.”

The ceremony to dedicate the new altar was held on Sunday, June 23, 2024, and it was spectacular.

Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington, was the celebrant and homilist. He was assisted by Deacon Patrick Ouelette and Deacon Mike O’Neil. Reverend Lino Rico Rostro is the Parochial Vicar at Good Shepherd,



The new altar for Good Shepherd.

and Reverend Cedric Wilson, OSA, is in residence.

Incorporated into the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Bishop first blessed and sprinkled water on the congregation.

As part of the dedication of the new altar, Bishop Burbidge re-

ceived the relics of Saint Oscar Romero and Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.

A relic is defined as “the mortal remains of a saint; in the broad sense, the term also includes any object that has been in contact

SEE GOOD SHEPHERD, PAGE 11



Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington, presides over the service. He is assisted by Deacon Patrick Ouelette and Deacon Mike O’Neil.



The choir led by Rosemarie Spollen, Good Shepherd’s Coordinator of Music, provides uplifting hymns and songs throughout the service.



Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington, gives the homily.



Relics are sealed within the new altar for Good Shepherd.



After the relics are sealed in the altar, Bishop Burbidge washes the altar thoroughly.

'Selective Data Reporting'

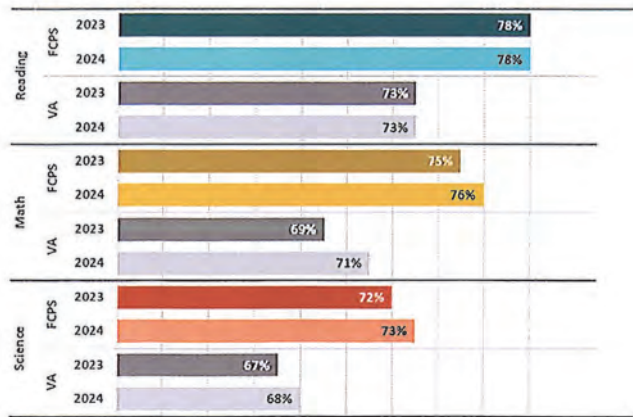
FROM PAGE 3

Youngkin closed the event, saying, "We are making progress... The reality is that when the foundations aren't in place, recovery is hard ... Sometimes, the smaller school divisions are more nimble and can move more quickly."

A VDOE spokesperson stated, "School divisions may offer students the opportunity to complete Board-approved substitute tests rather than the SOL Writing test to meet this state testing requirement. This is a local decision left up to each school division. However, per U.S. Department of Education requirements, the substitute test results are not reflected in the SOL results that were released. Most Board-approved substitute test results are included in the state's Accreditation results, which will be released in September."

There are likely more opportunities for selective data reporting ahead. Meren brought forward a second concern in her newsletter: "The Governor's appointed State Board of Education voted Wednesday (8/28) to

Fairfax and Virginia 2-Year Comparisons, All Students Annual Pass Rates



SCREENSHOT REID'S LETTER

Two-year comparisons, all students annual pass rates.

change the established standards that measure school and student performance at unprecedented rapid speed and without dedicated funding resources for this major transition. The changes reposition how local schools will educate students, reverting instruction back to the defunct practice of using high-stakes, standardized testing as the measure of student learning."

Meren said options are limited in counteracting the change and urged the public to contact their elected officials.

Commuting Center in Springfield Set to Open This Fall

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

After years of anticipation, the Springfield Parking Garage is opening this fall providing the commuters and community further transportation options in Central Springfield.

The new garage Near Old Keene Mill Road and Springfield Blvd is more like a transportation center, offering transportation options, parking options and community activity space that is needed in central Springfield.

The center has seven bus bays, over 1,000 parking spaces, secure bicycle room and bike racks, two commuter slug line loading zones, car-pool waiting/short-term parking and a pedestrian bridge over Old Keene Mill Road.

The price tag for this center is \$58,375,220 which was funded with a combination of Federal, State, and County sources. The center will be maintained by Fairfax County. The architectural firm was WDG and the contractor behind the construction was Manhattan Construction, based out of Arlington.

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PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Springfield Commuter Garage

The project was delayed during the pandemic due to a suspension of office work and a halt in the regular commuting practices.



FALL 2024

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22nd Annual Alexandria Art Festival in Carlyle

SEPTEMBER
19

Taste of Old Town North

SEPTEMBER
21

82nd Annual Historic Alexandria Homes Tour

SEPTEMBER 26
- OCTOBER 6

Old Town Cocktail Week

OCTOBER
4-6

Fall Wine Festival & Sunset Tour at George Washington's Mount Vernon

OCTOBER
5

29th Annual Art on the Avenue in Del Ray

OCTOBER
26

Old Town Family Trick or Treat

OCTOBER
27

Old Town Doggie Trick or Treat

OCTOBER
27

Del Ray Halloween Parade

NOVEMBER
23

Alexandria Cider Festival at Lloyd House



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OSPREY



Ryce Zink operates auger to create deep hole to accommodate platform pole



Crew raises pole with osprey nest box attached



Project crew celebrates osprey nesting platform installation on disc golf course before moving to the second pole installation

Dominion Energy & Park Authority Connect to Help Ospreys

Nest box platforms installed at Laurel Hill Park.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE GAZETTE

Recently, Dominion Energy teamed up with Fairfax County Park Authority's Natural Resources Branch and Laurel Hill Park volunteers to provide more potential nesting space for Ospreys (Pandion haliaetus). With multiple nesting pairs of the impressive raptors in the area, typically raising two or three chicks each season, it is hoped that additional nesting platforms will encourage young birds to return, pair, and breed here in coming years.

Dominion Energy's manager, John Higbee shares that they regularly look for community

service projects in which to participate. "Giving ospreys a safe place to nest keeps them from nesting on our facilities and protects our service to customers. Ospreys nesting here is evidence of strong ecosystems, and evidence that efforts under the Chesapeake Bay Act are working." The company donated recycled treated utility poles, use of specialized installation equipment and their crew's work to erect two nesting platforms in Lorton's Laurel Hill Park.

Watching a pair nesting on a light pole at the former Nike missile site over several seasons led Park Area 4 Maintenance and park volunteers to team up for a solo venture at platform installation last year. (See The Connection, Oct. 19, 2023). The team was successful in raising

a 60 foot pole using only available equipment. Wanting to raise more platforms but realizing the shortfalls of their equipment, the team looked with envy at Dominion Energy's specialized digger derrick equipment and expert pole installation crews. When the County's wildlife ecologist Dave Lawlor reached out for a helping hand, Dominion Energy's construction and operations supervisor, Jonathan Copus responded positively.

Volunteer, Bill Beletsky of Springfield, built the nest boxes for placement on the poles, following a Cornell Ornithology Lab design for two boxes. For a third box, he made minor adjustments of his own design, including to the resting perch for the male to alight near the female laying on the eggs, and a central attachment design on the pole. The boxes were attached to the poles while on the ground; a few sticks added

to the box bed to encourage nest building. Then the full nesting platform and pole were hoisted into a six-foot hole augured to receive it.

Ospreys inhabit locations thorough-out the world, making a come-back from the ravages of the insecticide DDT in the 1960-70s, which devastated their numbers. The world's heaviest concentration of nesting Osprey's now is in our own Chesapeake Bay region. The Bay area supports 10,000 to 12,000 breeding pairs. As their numbers grow, more of the elegant fish hawks, which eat only fish, are making homes near other Virginia waterways. Osprey's are finding local rivers, lakes, and wetlands acceptable places to raise their young with their bounty of fresh water fish.

There are concerns about Virginia's menhaden fishery impacting food sources for the birds and other creatures. Menhaden are an import-

ant food source for ospreys and many predator fish, bald eagles, dolphins, and whales.

Commercial interests harvest menhaden for use as fertilizers, animal feed, and bait for crab and lobster fisheries.

But the osprey population is in trouble in parts of the Chesapeake Bay where ospreys are producing far too few nestlings to sustain their numbers, said Robin Todd of the Maryland Ornithological Society. Recent research by Bryan Watts of William and Mary's Center for Conservation Biology indicates that a major cause is the industrial fishing of menhaden, a key food source for these birds.

Ospreys typically build nests near fish sources; on top of trees, telephone poles, buoys, or human-made nesting platforms. The Lorton platforms are within birds' view of the Occoquan River, Lake Mercer, Burke Lake, and Huntsman

Lake. Nests constructed by ospreys are large and make use of sticks, reeds, and grasses. The birds are notorious for also using man-made nylon or plastic netting, plastic bags and other garbage, often with disastrous results, when talons, or necks of young chicks, get stuck in the unyielding materials.

In a successful breeding season, a pair will hatch two or three chicks, feed them through fledging, then teach them to hunt on their own before their migration south for the winter.

Once they successfully raise chicks in a nest, the osprey pair will return to it year after year. As pairs successfully raise more and more chicks, available nesting spots for young birds are in demand. The Lorton volunteers hope the three new nest platforms installed in Laurel Hill Park will be occupied when young birds return from the Caribbean and South America next March.



With auger retracted, the derrick with pole guides and winch maneuver the pole



County ecologist, volunteers and Dominion Energy crew conservation efforts bring osprey nesting platform to Laurel Hill Park; Dave Lawlor, Bill Beletsky, Jon Copus, Ryce Zink, Erik Whitmev, Aiden Marshall, Bren Knight, Andre Miller



Dave Lawlor and Bill Beletsky attach osprey nest box to donated utility pole



Ground crew members Andre Miller, Aiden Marshall and Bren Knight guide pole on winch to placement



Nike site osprey family rests together on nest platform before fledging this season

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Reston Encampment To Be Shut Down Sept. 10

County officials don't answer the tough questions.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

People experiencing homelessness and living in a tent encampment in Reston, located in the woods behind the INOVA Emergency Room on Baron Cameron Avenue, need to leave the area by Sept. 10, according to posted signs.

"Any property remaining on Sept. 10 will be considered abandoned and will be discarded," reads paper-posted signs in plastic sleeves attached to metal No Trespassing signs bearing the insignia of Fairfax County.

On Thursday, Aug. 22, Allyson Pearce with Fairfax County, emailed The Connection, saying that the county would begin closing the Reston encampment on Aug. 27, when the No Trespassing signs would be posted.

Walter Alcorn is the Fairfax County Supervisor for the Hunter Mill District, which includes Reston. "This is an important and necessary step forward towards ultimately building a new homeless shelter with permanent supportive housing in Reston," said Alcorn in a released statement.

According to a Fairfax County spokesperson, the North County Human Services Temporary Overnight Shelter opened in July to welcome individuals experiencing homelessness who resided on The Hill in Reston. Reportedly, "dozens of community outreach workers" spent countless hours meeting with all persons residing on The Hill. They assessed individual needs and connected people with customized services.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE GAZETTE

Notice zipped tied to Fairfax County No Trespassing sign at Reston tent encampment

Q&A between The Connection and County Spokesperson

Q. What happens to those individuals on the property who do not want to go to a shelter or might not qualify for housing?

A. Outreach workers will continue meeting with neighbors to assess individual needs with a goal of a compassionate and successful

transition to the North County Temporary Overnight Shelter or other available housing options. Our goal is for everyone to make a successful transition.

Q. One of the nonprofit organizations is Cornerstones. What is their goal, and how are they going about it?

A. Fairfax County and its community partner, Cornerstones, have been working to compassionately wind down the encampment of people experiencing homelessness on the property known as "The Hill." During the past few

months, outreach workers have spent countless hours meeting with each person residing on The Hill to assess their individual needs and connect them with housing options and customized services. Ultimately, our shared goal is for everyone to successfully transition to the North County Temporary Overnight Shelter or other housing options.

Q. What is the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness's goal in this matter, and how will it be achieved so that all unhoused individuals at the encampment and those living in vehicles in the adjacent parking lot have housing?

A. The goal of Fairfax County and its partners in this effort is to compassionately wind-down the encampment of people experiencing homelessness on the property known as "The Hill." During the past few months, outreach workers have spent countless hours meeting with each person residing on The Hill to assess their individual needs and connect them with housing options and customized services. The Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness is in the community daily assisting people experiencing homelessness in all its forms. Our ultimate goal is synonymous with our name: to prevent and end homelessness in Reston and across Fairfax County.

Q. How is the housing funded?

A. Budget for the Temporary Overnight Shelter is from the Fairfax County General Resource Fund.

Q. What about unhoused individuals who may not have all the qualifying paperwork, such as those who may be undocumented?

A. Fairfax County follows its Trust Policy when it comes to sup-

porting the needs of our immigrant community.

Q. Who are the other nonprofit partner(s), and what are they doing?

A. Other partners include the local faith-based community and various homelessness services providers. These partners have been supporting the effort in a myriad of ways: from donating food and clothing to providing access to employment assistance and daytime services.

Q. Some people living in the tents have accumulated many possessions. Will physical assistance be provided to help them move themselves and their possessions elsewhere? If so, please describe it.

A. As with any of Fairfax County's shelters, people experiencing homelessness are welcome to bring their belongings to the North County Temporary Overnight Shelter. Suitcases are provided for the temporary storage of personal belongings.

Q. And if any people refuse to move, then what?

A. Outreach workers will continue meeting with neighbors to assess individual needs with a goal of a compassionate and successful transition to the North County Temporary Overnight Shelter or other available housing options. Our goal is for everyone to make a successful transition.

Q. How will police involvement be limited?

A. Outreach workers will continue meeting with neighbors to assess individual needs with a goal of a compassionate and successful transition to the North County Temporary Overnight Shelter or

SEE RESTON ENCAMPMENT, PAGE 15

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Good Shepherd Dedicates New Altar

FROM PAGE 5

with the saint – cloth, bone, hair or prayer book.”

The tradition of placing relics in altars goes back to the persecution of Christians in Rome. As early as 125 A.D., Christians crept into the catacombs below the city of Rome to celebrate Mass. Early priests chose the tombs of Christian martyrs as altars. Relics became ingrained in Catholic Church orthodoxy at the Second Council of Nicaea in 787, when church authorities passed a law stating that every church should have a relic at its altar.

Ferguson said, “We chose Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton because she is the first native-born American saint, born in New York in 1774. She is one of the patrons of the Diocese of Arlington; she is also the patron saint of Catholic schools. Saint Oscar Romero was the archbishop of San Salvador (El Salvador) who was a martyr (d. 1980), who was known and revered by many of our parishioners, especially those from El Salvador; he was courageous in his preaching in defense of human life, human rights and human dignity.”

After receiving the relics, Burbridge placed the two relics into an open area of the altar. As part of the process, the relics are then required to be sealed in the altar.

A representative, carrying a regular caulk gun, proceeded to place a tile over the relics and seal it. A rather lengthy process of sealing and wiping ensued, before the altar could be washed and dressed in linens, candles and flowers.

Burbridge commended Ferguson and all the staff on their dedication to the project.

Ferguson then addressed the crowd, “How lovely is your dwelling place. I give deep gratitude to God and can see the fruits of his completion.”

He thanked the Bishop for his unwavering support, as well as his brother priests, some of whom have been friends for decades.

“I am thankful for the support of the consultants and architects from Forester Construction,” continued Ferguson. “I am Thankful for one and all – and my faithful staff who put up with the construction site for many months. Nothing was cancelled. Everyone was so faithful and so helpful. And I especially thank Claudia, who spent more hours

than anyone else.”

“I am very happy with how the entire project turned out – the chapel, meeting spaces and the renovation of the sanctuary: the chapel gives us a smaller, more intimate setting for daily Mass, weddings, funerals and private, personal prayer throughout the day; the new meeting spaces enable us to accommodate in a better way our ever-increasing numbers of prayer groups.

“Bible studies and other ministries, as well as our ever-growing faith formation program for children and teens; and our renovated sanctuary enables us to be renewed in our love for Jesus in the Eucharist, especially in the celebration of Sunday Mass,” said Ferguson.

Claudia Fiebig, Pastoral Associate, said, “The decision to renovate our church was prayerfully considered and led by our Pastor, Father Tom Ferguson, after listening to the ideas, hopes, and dreams of our parishioners. Our parishioners come from all parts of the world - Asia, Africa, Europe, and South America. They bring their experiences of Mass and prayer along with traditions. Considering the existing architecture of the church, input from parishioners, and the desire to create a central focal point of the most significant aspects of our Mass and prayer opportunities, the altar, tabernacle, and crucifix were aligned so that parishioners could see all three elements from any part of the church.

“Already more people than ever have been taking time to pray and participate in daily Mass in our new chapel. A spirit of wonder and awe fills the hearts of all who look upon our new crucifix and tabernacle for the very first time in our church. And it is only a matter of time before parishioners and visitors of every age will fill the halls and meeting spaces of the Saint Teresa of Calcutta Faith Formation Center.”

Fiebig also said, “The parishioners are very pleased with the renovations to our church, the addition of the Mary Queen of Peace Chapel, and the Saint Teresa of Calcutta Faith Formation Center. The outcome far exceeded my expectations. We are grateful to our parishioners for their prayers, donations, and support that will allow us to pray, worship, and serve each other and our community.”

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HISTORY OF RACIAL COVENANTS

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Dr. Krystyn Moon described the legal and legislative steps that made housing covenants illegal.



Around 120 people attended the Aug. 27 presentation.



Senator Scott Surovell and Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck attended and will act.



Dr. Krystyn Moon discussed her findings with Franconia Supervisor Rodney Lusk.



Ron Chase and Audrey Davis commended the presentation.

FROM PAGE 1

to come to Fairfax County and covenants are part of that,” Moon maintained. She cited three practices that created housing inequity, “why things are the way they are”: racial covenants; land and aesthetic zoning; and limiting access to mortgages based on race.

Suburbanization and Jim Crow came together like a “perfect storm” in Northern Virginia, she asserted. Jim Crow refers to laws that legalized racial discrimination in the American South. In the 20th century, as roads and vehicles exploded and the state and federal governments encouraged road building, selling farmland to developers was more lucrative than farming and developers started converting farms to subdivisions. Also, in the 1940s, housing demand increased as people moved to the area for federal jobs.

In 1924, the National Association of Real Estate Boards adopted an “ethics” policy, declaring that Realtors should not introduce “into a neighborhood ... members of any race or nationality, or any individuals whose presence will clearly be detrimental to property values in that neighborhood.”

Advertisements often included coded language, Moon said, terms like “fully restricted,” and “fully state of the art covenants,” which euphemized the practice as “modern.” Subdivision names today like “estates” or names of former plantations could be coded language as well, she suggested.

Covenants in Hybla Valley Farms

Moon highlighted developer V. Ward Bos-

swell who in 1935 bought 125 acres along U.S. 1 next to the historically-Black Gum Springs community and built a subdivision called Hybla Valley Farms. She shared his 1935 deed for the lots which included this language: “No part of the said land shall be granted, leased, sold or conveyed to a person or persons of African descent, nor for the use and/or occupancy of a person or persons of African descent; and if any attempt to grant, lease, sell or convey any part of said land to a person or persons of African descent, the deed of said land shall revert to the grantor as though said deed or leased had not been made; and adjoining property owners may eject such person or persons of African descent from said property or cause them to be ejected by the proper actions in the courts of Virginia.”

Citing a 1970 census of Hybla Valley Farms and nearby communities that included property owners’ race, Moon concluded, “The restrictions had an impact.” A street today ending on the east side of U.S. 1 still bears Boswell’s name.

State Action

In 1912, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation that allowed cities and towns to establish “segregation districts,” to designate specific neighborhoods for Black or White people. “A year after the maps were created, no Black individual or family could move into the white section of the town/city and vice versa,” she explained.

In 1924, the Virginia Racial Integrity Act categorized people as “colored” or white,

“the most extreme in the U.S.,” charged Moon. “This informed racial covenants in Fairfax County,” she contended, adding, “This room would be illegal in 1926.” In 1928, the Board of Supervisors created a process to review plats for developing subdivisions.

Removing Covenants Today

Several court decisions and the federal Fair Housing Act eventually made using racial covenants illegal. Some Northern Virginians sued to remove them and organized pickets and petitions to promote desegregation and fair housing. In 1968, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved an “open occupancy” ordinance, designed to protect housing rights.

Though illegal, some covenants are still in legal records. In 2020, the General Assembly passed a law to provide a simplified process for homeowners to remove racial covenants from their chain of title. The state Supreme Court has created a form for landowners to prepare deeds at <https://www.vacourts.gov/forms/circuit/cc1508.pdf>.

Virginia Sen. Scott Surovell and Del. Paul Krizek will hold a workshop to help people who want to remove these covenants. “We intend to work with a local real estate closing company, title researchers and others to provide homeowners with the information and resources necessary to prepare and file these deeds in less than 30 minutes,” Surovell said.

Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck and

Franconia Supervisor Rodney Lusk attended the meeting and will propose that the Board of Supervisors remove or redact racial covenants language from County property deeds. “While the covenants are not applicable, we recognize the importance of removing this legacy,” Storck said.

Storck continued, “It was wonderful seeing so many residents engaged with our county and Mount Vernon history. I look forward to learning more and leading the county in updating our property deeds to remove or redact these racial covenants.”

Ron Chase said, “It was an excellent introduction, describing the obstacles African Americans face and so many nuances. This is an introduction to the trials and tribulations people experienced in our evolving culture.” Chase is president of the Gum Springs Historic Society and Museum.

Audrey Davis remarked, “The presentation shows us the many lessons we need to talk about. Most young people have no idea of this history. We still need to get some covenants removed.” Davis is Director of the African American History division of the Office of Historic Alexandria.

Moon’s book, “Proximity to Power: Rethinking Race and Place in Northern Virginia,” will be published by the University of North Carolina Press in 2025.

Cosponsors were Nature Forward, the South County Task Force, Fairfax NAACP, Mount Vernon Regional Historical Society and the Gum Springs Historical Society and Museum.

Information: <https://documentingexclusion.org>

ENTERTAINMENT

WEDNESDAYS THROUGH SATURDAYS

Tours Aboard Tall Ship Providence and Sen. John Warner Maritime Heritage Center. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Alexandria's Waterfront Park, 1A Prince Street, Alexandria. Guests of all ages are recruited into the Continental Navy aboard Tall Ship Providence with legendary Captain John Paul Jones. Recruits are 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://tall-shipprovidence.org/>

NOW THRU SEPT. 22

Fleeting Moments: Street Photography II. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Artist Reception: Sunday, August 18, 4 - 6 p.m. Artist Talk, Sunday: September 22, 2:30 p.m. Fleeting Moments features photographs that capture candid moments, revelatory interpretations, and brilliant reflections of the mundane - work commonly referred to as "street photography."

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.

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Caroline Mousset, Executive and Artistic Planning Director

MUSIC SCHEDULE

Sept. 8: Hai Jin, Piano

Sept. 15: John Sutherland Earle: Piano & Friends

THURSDAY/SEPT. 5

Cheesetique Celebrates 20 Years in Del Ray. In honor of its milestone birthday on September 5th, and to thank the Del Ray and wider community, Cheesetique will launch a year-long celebration, filled with community events, contests and giveaways, including the chance to win a year of cheese. Guests will also have the opportunity to revisit two decades of owner Jill Erber's and customers' favorite artisan cheeses, wines, and most popular menu items with a special 20th birthday menu. 20 Years of Delicious Memories: Under the theme Aged to Perfection, Cheesetique introduces a nostalgic 20th-anniversary menu on September 5, featuring popular dishes from the



FLEETING MOMENTS 2024 STREET PHOTOGRAPHY AT THE ATHENAEUM

Fleeting Moments: Street Photography II can be seen now thru Sept. 22, 2024 at the Athenaeum in Alexandria.

first 20 years. Guests can order classics like Lobster Mac, Gjetost and Banana Melt, grasshopper parfait, a pairing of 20 Year Cheddar and 20 year Port, a deluxe wine flight from the original menu, and a brand-new Apple Martini that, of course, comes garnished with 20 Year Cheddar. Live Celebrations: The festivities kick off with a Del Ray "First Thursday" neighborhood party on September 5th, in collaboration with the Del Ray Business Association, to celebrate Cheesetique's 20th birthday in style.

SEPT. 6-28

"Fascinating Fiber, Alluring Fabric"

Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Features art that is either created with fiber or fabric or depicts fiber or fabric as its subject. Opening reception on Friday, Sept. 6, 7-9 p.m. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed on Sunday, September 29). Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

FRIDAY/SEPT. 6

Something Country. 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. At Electric Palm Restaurant, 12745 Sea Ray Lane, Woodbridge. Rockin' country that gets you dancing.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 7

Country-Western Dance. 6-9:30 p.m. At Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 North Chambliss Street, Alexandria. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a dance. Lessons early in the evening (one line dance lesson, one couples dance lesson) followed by open dancing. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Admission for NVCWDA members \$10; non-members \$15; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. Visit www.nvcwda.org.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 7

Sidewalk Sale. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Experience a delightful day of shopping and dining at Belle View Shopping Center, 1632 Belle View Boulevard, Alexandria. Get ready for the Fall season. More than 30 merchants will be offering exclusive deals and special offers throughout the day. Discover fantastic bargains at popular spots like Top It Off Outlet, Pampered Pet, LIGHT, and Virginia Florist, with sales tables set up both inside and outside. To add to the festivities, Revel and UnWined

will be hosting a wine tasting from 2 to 5 p.m., either indoors or outdoors depending on the weather.

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>.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 13

Summer Concert Series. 7:30 p.m.

The U.S. Air Force Band returns to the Air Force Memorial in Arlington. Free and open to the public.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 14

Alexandria Library Black Family Reunion. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Kate Waller Barrett Branch Library, 717 Queen Street, Alexandria. The event aims to bring neighborhoods together and help fill gaps in the documented history of Alexandria's African American community. African American families are invited to bring documents and images to be scanned and added to the Library's Local History/Special Collections archive and preserved as part of the City's historical record. The event will feature music, games, food trucks, and more. Guests who bring a picture of people or places that have to do with Alexandria's black neighborhoods will receive a ticket for a free meal and dessert.

SEPT. 14-15

22nd Annual Alexandria Old Town Art Festival. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At 300 John Carlyle Street, Alexandria. Rated one of the top 100 art shows in Sunshine Artist Magazine, the annual art festival features a

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SEPT. 17-23

Fall Book Sale. The Friends of the Beatley Central Library will hold their Fall Book Sale from Tuesday, Sept. 17, 3 p.m.-7:30 p.m. (\$15 memberships available at the door); Wednesday, Sept. 18, 10 a.m.-7:30 p.m.; Thursday, Sept. 19, 10 a.m.-7:30 p.m.; Friday, Sept. 20, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Saturday, Sept. 21, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sunday, Sept. 22, Half Price Day, 1-4:30 p.m.; Monday, Sept. 23, \$10 Bag Sale, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. \$4 or less, unless specifically marked: hardbacks, paperbacks, children's books, and media. All genres. Charles E. Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria; info: 703-746-1702; www.beatleyfriends.org.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 19

Coffee & Connections. 8:30-9:30 a.m. At The Landing Alexandria, 2620 Main Line Blvd., Alexandria. Join The Chamber ALX's Professional Women's Network for September Coffee & Connections. Hear from Dr. Sarah Johnson Conway, a practicing internal medicine physician at Johns Hopkins Hospital and the interim Senior Vice President of the Office of Johns Hopkins Physicians, who will share her story and highlight ways to stay healthy heading into the Fall.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 19

Taste of Old Town North. 4 to 8 p.m. At Montgomery Park, 901 N. Royal Street, Alexandria. The Taste of Old Town North is a free, family-and pet-friendly event featuring an artisans' market, gourmet restaurant tastings, children's improv with Alexandria Children's Theater and other activities for all

to enjoy, including music from two local bands. Participating Old Town North restaurants include Julia's on the Potomac, the Perfect Pita, Hank's Oyster Bar, MacMillan Spirit House, Hotel AKA Alexandria's a.lounge+bar, St. Elmo's Coffee Pub and Royal Restaurant.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

Country-Western Dance. 6-9:30 p.m. At Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 North Chambliss Street, Alexandria. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a dance. Lessons early in the evening (one line dance lesson, one couples dance lesson) followed by open dancing. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Admission for NVCWDA members \$10; non-members \$15; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. Visit www.nvcwda.org.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

82nd Annual Historic Alexandria Homes Tour. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At various locations throughout Old Town Alexandria. The 82nd Annual Historic Alexandria Homes Tour will showcase some of Alexandria's finest homes. This year's event will include a bonus tour of Gadsby's Tavern Museum. Presented by The Twig, the Junior Auxiliary of INOVA Alexandria Hospital, the Historic Alexandria Homes Tour is a ticketed tour with proceeds benefiting INOVA Alexandria Hospital. Their designated Tour Book serves as a guide to the homes and will be accessible to ticket holders via mobile device. Hard copies of the Tour Book are available for purchase.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 15

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Reston Encampment To Be Shut Down Sept. 10

FROM PAGE 10

other available housing options. Our goal is for everyone to make a successful transition.

Q. What happens if some of those who have lived at the encampment relocate to other areas in Reston, such as beside

Target?

A. The Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness is in the community daily assisting people experiencing homelessness in all its forms. We will continue to compassionately support our community with a goal of transitioning people experi-

encing homelessness to a shelter or other housing option.

Related story: <https://www.connection-newspapers.com/news/2024/apr/02/unsheltered-homeless-persons-at-reston-encampment/>

ENTERTAINMENT



Maryland's Dale Rogers uses steel along with an incredible imagination to weld and hand-finish larger-than-life whimsical, outdoor sculptures.

Alexandria Old Town Art Festival

The Alexandria Old Town Art Festival returns to John Carlyle Square for the 22nd year. The popular, free showcase featuring thousands of fine art works from local and national artists happens Sept. 14 - 15 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days.

Presented by Howard Alan Events, the Annual Alexandria Old Town Art Festival throughout the decades has become a hallmark staple event for residents and visitors alike. Local and national artists will display their works in a show encompassing fine jewelry, exquisite works of art and handcrafted apparel and decor. Art enthusiasts discover spectacular paintings, life-sized sculptures,

jewelry, glasswork, photography, ceramics and more. All artists will be on site for the duration of the festival, allowing visitors to discover the inspiration behind each original piece. Admission for patrons is free, and ample parking is available.

Once again, The Art League brings back its popular "Ice Cream Bowl" Fundraiser on Saturday, September 14. Patrons can visit their booth and select from hundreds of handmade bowls lovingly created by the talented artists of The Art League's ceramics department — and enjoy an ice cream treat, all for only \$15 per bowl. Proceeds benefit the League's ceramics department.



Fairfax painter Jill Banks uses daily life as inspiration for her breathtaking impressionistic oil works.

FROM PAGE 13

chase in advance for \$5 each. Visit thetwig.org/homes-tour

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

2024 American Horticultural Society Gala. 6-10:30 p.m. At River Farm, Alexandria. The annual soirée not only highlights the vibrant culture of gardening and horticultural practices but also raises vital funds to support AHS's outreach and educational programs and the stewardship of River Farm, headquarters of the AHS. The gala will feature cocktails, dinner, dancing and mingling set amongst River Farm's stunning gardens on the Potomac River. Complimentary valet is also included. Attire is black-tie. Individual tickets are \$375 each, and sponsorships start at \$1,250. Visit www.ahsgardening.org/2024gala to purchase tickets and sponsorships.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

Tons of Trucks. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Chinguapin Park, 3210 King St., Alexandria. Attendees of all ages are invited to explore and get behind the wheel of their favorite City vehicles, meet the staff who help build, maintain,

serve, and protect the community, and learn about the vehicles they use. Other activities include an art project with the City's Mobile Art Lab, giveaways, photo opportunities, and food truck vendors. Parking is available at Alexandria City High School, 3330 King St.; the First Baptist Church, 2932 King St.; and Oakland Baptist Church, 3408 King St. The City will also provide a sensory-friendly hour for the first 60 minutes of the event, 10 a.m.-11 a.m. For additional information, visit alexandriava.gov/rpca/tons-of-trucks-2024.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 22

Community Baby Shower.

12-2 p.m. At Charles Houston Rec Center, 901 Wythe Street, Alexandria. Join ALIVE! member congregation @sixteenth_tabernacle_beth_el for the annual Community Baby Shower. Discover a wide range of resources for ensuring healthy pregnancies, self care and parenting. Topics and information range

from nutrition in pregnancy to what to expect in the first year, both mother and child. There will also be free raffles for large prizes, baby walkers, cribs, strollers and more. For more information text 347-495-9233.

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 25

"Life in Alexandria's Civil War



The Chalk-A-Block will be held on Sunday, Sept. 29, 2024 in Old Town Alexandria.

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 Feirstein 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.

Really Dina? Part II



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

After finishing yet another piece of Entenmann's "Marshmallow Devils Food Iced Cake," one described on the Entenmann's website as a "sinfully good cake with a "Heavenly Marshmallow Frosting," Dina says to me: "That's pretty good cake" in her usual underwhelming way.

Really Dina? I've only been obsessing over locating this particular cake item for years while complaining how its availability locally is inexcusably limited - as in zero. "You're telling me?" The last time I found this cake, other than a week or so ago at my local Safeway (miracles do happen), I found it, actually good friends found it their local supermarket in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania a year or so ago. The purchase of which spawned two Kenny-columns which discussed in excruciating detail the exact circumstances surrounding this momentous occasion.

However, this random-type purchase is hardly sufficient to keep my "sweet teeth" satisfied. As such, I regularly stop at away-from-home supermarkets in search of this non-buried treasure. And though I can semi find, generally speaking the location of items within a certain radius on the Entenmann's site, it doesn't give me chapter and verse (address and phone number) so I can confirm the cake's presence and secure its purchase. Moreover, having called supermarkets before attempting to locate and confirm an item's availability, I have realized that searching in person is more reliable. Inventory control isn't quite up to the task, in my experience. Therefore, when convenient, I will walk into a store unannounced and "spy with my little eye" where the Entenmann's items are displayed and keep my fingers crossed. I've had some success finding this object of my desire. So, when away from home, I "stop and pop," to invoke a basketball play-by-play expression, and walk into supermarkets wherever and whenever.

Amazingly however, twice in the last month, out of the blue, at my local Safeway, I saw - and of course purchased, multiple "Marshmallow Devils Food Iced Cakes." I couldn't believe my eyes. After years of walking by the Entenmann's display and seeing the same old selections, there the cake was, as if it was waiting for me. I did a double take. After the second take, the cakes were still there and so I grabbed them, giddy in my good fortune. Unfortunately, I was alone at the point of purchase, so I had no one with whom to share my extraordinary find. I did so when I got home as I told/showed my wife, Dina; and I do so now with a somewhat larger audience, and one quite frankly, that's semi interested in what I have to say/write.

Perhaps you might understand the great pleasure I experienced when later that evening after dinner, Dina and I had the cake for dessert, and Dina uttered her assessment of the cake. It's almost akin to Mikey in the old Life cereal television ads in which Mikey was offered the bowl of Life cereal by his brothers who weren't interested in trying it, and voila: "He likes it." Mikey was a fussy eater which added an extra layer of doubt to the outcome. Dina is the opposite: not a fussy eater but rather one with a sophisticated palate (lamb kidneys was a particular family favorite growing up, which of course, I wouldn't touch or try) though somewhat worn-down over years of sharing meals with yours truly.

This cake comment was an example of Dina entering my food wheelhouse and agreeing with me. Not a common occurrence. In fact, hardly an occurrence at all. That's why it's so memorable - to me, anyway.

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



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