

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

OCTOBER 17, 20204

Two Entangled Bald Eagles Fell from the Sky

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

When Janet Challender was walking from the Hollin Hall Senior Center to her car around 2 p.m. on Oct. 15, as she rounded the corner, suddenly, out of the sky, two bald eagles intertwined with each other “crashed into the parking lot like a meteor,” she said.

The birds, wide-eyed and alert, then seemed to quietly rest on the pavement. As the 15 or so bewildered onlookers watched, amazed to see two eagles up close, to their great relief, they observed that the eagles were breathing. The birds’ “audience” was eager to find a solution.

The center’s director, Alexa Fuerth, asked everyone to keep their distance to help protect the birds. About 10 seniors and center staffers made a loose circle of vehicles and bodies around the birds to keep the curious at a distance, especially since they expected parents to be arriving soon to pick up their children from A Child’s Place, the child care center there.

The eagles watched their fans intently, but they barely moved.

Fuerth made several calls to government officials and wildlife rescue organizations. Around 4 p.m., Mitchell Mansfield from the Fairfax County Police Department’s Animal Protection Unit arrived in a white van. He said he came im-

mediately from a training in the Dulles Airport area when they got the call.

Mansfield said he would try to capture the eagles and take them to a wildlife rehabilitator. After discussing the challenge with Fuerth and others, Mansfield threw a red towel toward the birds to cover them and instantly, they separated and flew up and away in a startling “whoosh.” They did not appear to be injured.

“Fighting is common among bald eagles and occasionally they will trap each other when their feet lock together during combat,” said Jeff Cooper, Wildlife Biologist with the Nongame Bird Program, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. “Eagles fight over territory and food resources.”

Fuerth said, “I am very grateful to all our members and staff who were so compassionate. It was heartfelt to see how many people stepped up and helped. It was really emotional to see the birds fly away.”

“We send a special thanks to the Fairfax County police for coming and to the Owl Moon Raptor Center that was working to find a rehabilitation center for them in case they were injured,” she said.

Excitement at the senior center usually centers around bus trips to Wegmans, Railroad Club talks or bingo. Bald eagles suddenly plummeting from the sky no doubt topped the usual thrills at this pop-



Two bald eagles with talons locked together “landed” on the Hollin Hall Senior Center parking lot on Oct. 15, captivating onlookers. The two eagles were apparently unhurt.

ular senior hangout.

On Bald Eagles

Mature bald eagles have a white head and tail, a yellow hooked bill, yellow talons and a chocolate-brown body. Adults can weigh from 10 to 14 pounds and have an eight-foot wingspan.

They are raptors, powerful flyers that grasp their prey with their

SEE TWO ENTANGLED, PAGE 4



The eagles were wide-eyed, very alert.



The two eagles “crashed into the parking lot like a meteor,” said Janet Challender.



The bald eagles in the Hollin Hall Senior Center parking lot created quite a sensation.

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

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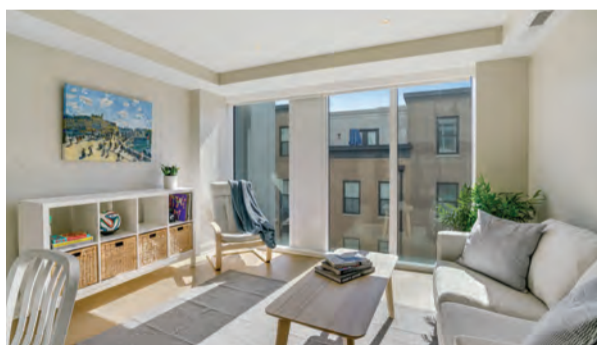
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Junk Fee Warning: Rent at Your Own Risk

Are the 2024 Virginia Residential Landlord Tenant Act updates on your lease?

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Virginia 8th District
Representative: Don Beyer

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT HOUSING PROFILE



DISTRICT-LEVEL RENTER STATISTICS

	Total Renter Households	Severely Burdened Households*	% with Severe Burden		Affordable and Available Rental Units Per 100 Households	Surplus/ (Deficit) of Affordable and Available Rental Units
Income at or below 30% of AMI	29,477	23,232	79%	Income at or below 30% of AMI	21	-23,300
Income between 31% and 50% of AMI	18,824	6,524	35%	Income at or below 50% of AMI	32	-32,670
Income between 51% and 80% of AMI	16,058	1,506	9%	Income at or below 80% of AMI	72	-18,134
All Renter Households	152,623	31,912	21%			

Renters make up 48% of all households in the District

Source: 2016-2020 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data

STATE-LEVEL RENTER STATISTICS

	Total Renter Households	Severely Burdened Households*	% with Severe Burden		Affordable and Available Rental Units Per 100 Households	Surplus/ (Deficit) of Affordable and Available Rental Units
Income at or below 30%** of AMI	263,914	201,352	76%	Income at or below 30%** of AMI	30	-183,843
Income between 31%** and 50% of AMI	165,544	56,072	34%	Income at or below 50% of AMI	54	-197,937
Income between 51% and 80% of AMI	238,413	13,156	6%	Income at or below 80% of AMI	95	-30,845
All Renter Households	1,097,577	273,996	25%			

Renters make up 32% of all households in the state

Source: 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)

REGIONAL RENTAL AFFORDABILITY STATISTICS

Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) and Counties in Districts	Total Renter Households	AMI	30% of AMI	Rent Affordable at 30% of AMI	One Bdrm Fair Market Rent	One Bdrm Housing Wage	Two Bdrm Fair Market Rent	Two Bdrm Housing Wage	Hours at Minimum Wage for Two Bdrm	Avg Renter Wage
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria HMA	352,553	\$154,700	\$46,410	\$1,160	\$1,803	\$34.67	\$2,045	\$39.33	131	\$29.95

SCREENSHOT NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

Housing Profile, Virginia 8th District, U.S. Rep. Don Beyer.



Isamar Ortega, lead advocate New Virginia Majority.



Marcia L. Fudge, Secretary of HUD (March 2021-March 2024).



Del. Alfonso Lopez (D-Arlington).



Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D-Herndon).



Adam Rust, Consumer Federation of America.

Resident Statement

Resident:	[REDACTED]	Move In Date:	8/29/2022	Deposits Required:	0.00
Resident Id:	[REDACTED]	Current Lease:	11/29/2023	Deposits Received:	350.00
From:	09/23	Notice To Vacate:		Current Balance:	3,020.95
Through:	09/24	Vacate Date:			

Date	Type	Description	Charges	Payments/Credits	Balance
8/6/2024	Late Fee	RM LATE FEE	181.00	0.00	3069.95
8/3/2024	Cash	Cash Receipt	0.00	1895.00	2888.95
8/1/2024	Forced Placement Admin F	August Charge	10.25	0.00	4783.95
8/1/2024	Forced Placement Insur	August Charge	10.75	0.00	4773.70
8/1/2024	Rent - Residential	August Charge	1810.00	0.00	4762.95
8/1/2024	Trash Fees	August Charge	15.00	0.00	2952.95

Junk fees accumulate on a Fairfax County resident's Rental Resident Statement, 8/6/2024: Late fee \$181, Forced Placement Administrative Fee \$10.25, Forced Placement Insurance, \$10.75, Trash Fee \$15, total of \$275 added to the monthly rent. The contract balance in fees from 10/6/2023 to 8/6/2024 adds up to \$3069.95.

sumer Federation of America testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, stating that junk fees also "include fees at inflated prices, fees for services that a property manager should provide to provide a habitable space, and fees for services of little or no value."

At the Sept. 20 meeting, the rental residents shared their experiences of unexpected fees on their billing statements through the interpreters. Their fees included the so-called junk fees, which raise the price of their previously agreed-upon monthly charges. One resident's total fees accumulated over \$8,000, and another over \$3,000. One resident recounted the accumulation of late fees, which she refused to pay, and her unsuccessful attempts to discuss concerns with management. It led to an eviction process in Fairfax County District Court. Other speakers told similar stories.

On Jan. 10, 2024, Del. Alfonso Lopez (D-Arlington) introduced the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, also known as the fee disclosure statement HB 967. Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D-Herndon) introduced SB 405, identical to HB 967, at the same time. The bills became effective on July 1, 2024, two and a half months before the Sept. 20 tenant meeting. The bills require landlords "subject to the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act to include on the first page of a written rental agreement a description of any rent and fees to be charged to the tenant." The new law requires that rental agreements also state: "No fee shall be collected unless it is listed below or incorporated into this agreement by way of a separate addendum after

In Virginia, tenants, prospective tenants and landlords should know that the 2024 General Assembly introduced several bills to amend the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (VRLTA). The following story is the first in a series addressing tenant-related bills in Virginia that were enacted on July 1, 2024. The story looks at HB 967, introduced by Del. Alfonso Lopez (D-Arlington), which sets specific requirements for landlords to disclose fees. Its identical companion bill is SB 405, introduced by Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D-Herndon). The deficit of affordable and available rental units for severely burdened households, especially those at or below 50 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) in Virginia's Congressional Districts, the 8th, 10th, and 11th, which include all or parts of Fairfax County, Arlington County and Alexandria, cannot be understated as households compete to secure rental units.

Nearly three months after HB 967 and SB 405 became law on July 1, 2024, approximately 40 Latinx residents, most non-English-speaking, gathered outdoors after staff at the property management office of their 100-unit-plus rental complex in Fairfax County had left for the day on the evening of Sept. 20. The residents had united to tackle shared issues. They waited for leaders of the New Virginia Majority to start the 7 p.m. meeting near the apartment community's playground. Tenants had been surprised by the additional fees added, some for multiple years, to their residential statements. The fees increased their monthly housing statements beyond the agreed rent, straining and burdening their budgets.

The Richmond-based nonprofit alliance/advocacy organization New Virginia Majority led the meeting and provided a Spanish-to-English translator. Local elected officials and others gathered to hear the residents' concerns and possibly provide support for a positive change.

The residents reported that despite their attempts to seek remediation by speaking with property management staff, they frequently found them unavailable to answer questions about added fees, costs and other concerns. Additionally, language barriers, the lack of Spanish-speaking staff and their leases in English exacerbated the tenants' frustrations and left their concerns, especially the numerous fees, including some fees penciled by onto their statements, unresolved.

Some fees are added for method of payment, \$3 for an echeck; \$61 for VISA; 3 percent of total rent for other credit cards.

"To secure and maintain rental housing, renters today typically face a dizzying array of unavoidable fees," the National Consumer Law Center said in "Too Damn High," (March 2023). "These junk fees render safe and decent rental housing even more out of reach because renters must pay them on top of sky-high rents."

Junk fees can include excessive late fees, utilities-related fees, administrative processing fees, insurance fees, check cashing fees, high-risk fees, month-to-month fees in addition to market rent if the lease is not renewed before it expires, new account fees,

and more. Other fees include security deposit, pet fees, pet rent, pet move-out fees for deodorizing and shampooing, trash fees, pest control fees, cleaning fees, late fees, attorney fees, court costs, and more.

On May 9, 2024, Adam Rust of the Con-

SEE RENT AT, PAGE 5



Shortly after the two eagles flew away, a bald eagle circled over the parking lot.



Officer Mansfield attempted to cover them with a towel.

Two Entangled Bald Eagles Fell from the Sky

FROM PAGE 1

sharp talons. They eat mostly fish, but also other birds, small mammals and snakes. Bald eagles build nests five to six feet in diameter and two to four feet tall, usually near water, in Northern Virginia typically on the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers.

In the lower 48 states, by 1963, bald eagle numbers had plunged to 417 known nesting pairs from around 100,000 nesting bald eagles in the 1700s. Scientists determined that DDT and other pesticides' compounds moved up the food chain and thinned eggshells so severely that the shells broke and chicks did not hatch. In 1967, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) listed the bald eagle as endangered. After Congress banned DDT in 1972, the numbers began to rise and by 2007, FWS officials announced the bald eagle's recovery and removed it from the endangered species list. Bald eagles are protected under other laws. The bald eagle is the United States' national bird.



When Mansfield threw the towel at the pair of interlocked eagles, they separated.



Once freed, this eagle took care of some "business."

Janet Challender found a broken feather near the spot where the eagles rested. The birds flew away and did not seem to be injured.



Hollin Hall Senior Center Director Alexa Fuerth and Mitchell Mansfield, Fairfax County Police Department. Mansfield came to rescue the birds.

Rent at Your Own Risk

FROM PAGE 3

execution of this rental agreement.”

More examples of fees found by the Connection: forced placement administration fee, forced placement insurance, trash fee, and late fees amounting to 10 percent of the periodic rent for payments made one day late by the rental tenants through their Apartment Lease Contracts, Addendums, and Resident statements. The management company utilizes the National Apartment Association’s monthly-dated Apartment Lease Contracts for Virginia.

Rental junk fees occur nationwide. On July 19, 2023, the Briefing Room at The White House drew attention to the pervasive issue of junk fees, “announcing a new front in [the] crackdown on junk fees: rental housing.” “From repeated rental application fees to surprise ‘convenience fees,’ millions of families incur burdensome costs in the rental application process and throughout the duration of their lease. These fees are often more than the actual cost of providing the service or are added onto rents to cover amenities that renters assume are included—or that they don’t even want,” said the release from The White Briefing Room.

“I believe that every renter should know the true cost of finding and staying in their home and not be hit with hidden costs and junk fees,” said HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge in a released statement by the Federal Trade Commission on Oct. 11, 2023.

Lopez and Boysko addressed what effect rental junk fees have on tenants and potential tenants, particularly those with extremely low income (0-30% of Area Median Income) and those who are severely cost-burdened (31%- 50% of Area Median Income) in light of the scarcity of affordable and available rental units in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV (Metro) region.

“Without a doubt, these fees harm all families, but especially those struggling to make ends meet,” said Del. Lopez. “They sign a lease thinking their monthly rent is one thing, and they budget accordingly. Then the rent comes due, and a whole bunch of fees get tacked on, and families are fighting to cover the gap,” he said. “That is why, during this past session, I introduced a bill with Sen. Jennifer Boysko that required all mandatory monthly fees to be listed at the beginning of leases. People need to know what they are getting into.”

Sen. Boysko answered the question inquiring about how junk

fees affected her constituents. “My rental fee transparency legislation, SB 405 and Del. Lopez’s identical counterpart require something quite simple — a listing upfront in every lease agreement of all the fees that could be charged,” she said. “I’ve heard from constituents who are upset because they’ve been charged for calling to have a stove repaired and other maintenance.”

“Our advocates at the Virginia Poverty Law Center combed through several lengthy lease agreements to create samples of what this fee listing would look like and found 22 items in one lease and 30 in another. Renters should know what they are signing up for — the total possible cost of the rental unit,” Boysko said. “Ideally, many of these fees should not be allowed. Landlords are required to keep units in repair. Unfortunately, the Governor vetoed Delegate Tran and Senator Ebbin’s legislation to make that responsibility clearer. With rents as high as they are now, there should be no surprise charges,” Boysko said.

The following organizations may be able to help resolve disputes, provide basic information, or give legal advice:

- ❖ Fairfax County Department of Cable Communications and Consumer Affairs Online complaints: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/csd/tenant-landlord> Fairfax County maintains a tenant-landlord commission within this office. This office does not conduct telephone counseling but takes written complaints and produces and distributes a tenant and landlord booklet specific to Fairfax County at no cost to

- ❖ The Virginia Fair Housing Office: 888 551-3247; FairHousing@dpor.virginia.gov; <http://www.dpor.virginia.gov/fairhousing/> Contact the Virginia Fair Housing Office if you believe you have experienced discrimination in the rental of a home or a manufactured home lot.

- ❖ The Virginia Poverty Law Center provides information and assistance on landlord and tenant issues. 804-782-9430; <http://www.vplc.org/housing-law/>.

- ❖ Virginia Legal Aid Central Intake Line: 1-866-534-5243 www.VALegalAid.org Central Intake will direct callers to the appropriate local resources and can provide an attorney in certain circumstances. Self-help forms can be accessed at <https://www.valegalaid.org/self-help-forms>.

- ❖ Eviction Legal Helpline: 1-833-NoEvict Tenants in the process of or at risk of eviction can receive services from this hotline.



Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Jurisdiction	Fair Share ID	Route #	Trunk Name	Culvert	Posted Date
GRAYSON	8758	58	HIGHLANDS PKY	HELTON CREEK	9/17/2024
DINWIDDIE	8066	642	CONTINENTAL ROAD	BUTTERWOOD CREEK	9/17/2024
PATRICK	13365	687	MICROFILM ROAD/ ROUTE 687	BLACKBERRY CREEK	9/11/2024
POWHATAN	13836	603	PETERSBURG ROAD	BUTTERWOOD CREEK	9/10/2024

The list above is not a comprehensive list of all structures with weight restrictions in the Commonwealth but shows only structures that have new or changed weight restrictions within the last 30 days. The list contains only basic structure identification and location information and the date the new or changed weight restriction and signage became effective.

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit vdot.virginia.gov and navigate to Traffic and Travel/For freight operators/Truck restrictions. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov or the Load Rating Program Manager, Manjil Devkota 804-786-4064.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT’s Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation’s Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730 or corina.herrera@vdot.virginia.gov.

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Domestic Violence Prevention

BY DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK

President Biden issued a proclamation recognizing October as National Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. October's observation serves as a way to connect and unite individuals and organizations working to combat and raise awareness about domestic violence, to support domestic violence survivors, hold abusers accountable, and create and strengthen legislation to further these goals.

This year also marks 30 years since the first passage of the Violence Against Women Act, which established a coordinated, nationwide response to gender-based violence, lifting social and legal burdens off survivors and onto perpetrators, where they belong. This legislation also created the first-ever National Domestic Violence Hotline, which answered its seven millionth call this year.

Domestic violence is a family, community, and public health issue — and we all share responsibility in working together to prevent it. Domestic violence is characterized as a pattern of coercive behaviors used by an individual to gain or maintain power and control over

another individual in the context of an intimate, dating, or familial relationship. These behaviors are not limited to physical violence, but can also include stalking, sexual assault, financial control, verbal abuse, isolation from family and friends, and threats to harm loved ones and pets, among other tactics.

Domestic violence is all too terribly common. It is pervasive across all walks of life, varying age groups, all backgrounds, all communities, all education levels, all economic levels, all cultures, all ethnicities, all religions, all abilities, and all lifestyles. One in three women and one in four men in the United States have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Each year, more than 12 million adults experience domestic violence, and 1 in 15 children are witnesses to intimate partner violence. Intimate partner violence accounts for 15% of all violent crimes in the United States.

72% of all murder-suicides in the United States involve an intimate



Krizek

partner, and 94% of the victims of these killings are female. An abuser's access to a firearm in a domestic violence situation increases the risk of homicide by 500%.

Over the past several years, the Virginia General Assembly has taken several steps to combat this issue. In 2020, we passed a law prohibiting respondents to domestic violence protective orders from possessing, purchasing, or transporting firearms, and a bill to require background checks for firearm purchases. Also in 2020, my bill HB 1044 passed, increasing the penalty for the unauthorized use of tracking devices, frequently used by abusers to stalk victims. On July 1st of this year, domestic or sexual abuse victims who have obtained a permanent protective order gained the right to terminate a lease agreement early, if they need to move for their safety.

Domestic violence doesn't end when October does. Everyone should do their part to learn and recognize the signs and symptoms of domestic violence and learn how to be an engaged bystander on this issue that, unfortunately,

affects so many of our neighbors. The Virginia Department of Social Services, and organizations like the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence provide fact sheets and resources on their websites to educate everyone on these abusive behaviors, how to seek help in an abusive relationship, and how to support victims and survivors in our lives.

Sexual and domestic violence programs provide crisis services, emergency shelter, and resource-based support. The Virginia Statewide Hotline is ready to help (24 hours a day, 365 days a year), and sexual and domestic violence programs all over the state. If you or someone you know needs help, please call: 1-800-838-8238, text: 804-793-9999, or chat: <https://www.vadata.org//chat/>.

To report a crime, call the Fairfax County Police Department at 703-691-2131 or, for emergencies, please call 911. To support charitable efforts to combat domestic violence please consider donating to the Family and Children's Trust Fund <http://www.fact.virginia.gov/donate-2/>, the only statewide organization in Virginia devoted to treating and preventing family violence across the lifespan.

Free Safe Rides for Would-be Drunk Drivers

Free safe rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during Halloween celebration time, 4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 26 and until 4 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 27.

Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) offers these rides as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk period.

During this twelve-hour period, area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download the Lyft app to their phones

then enter the SoberRide® code in the app's 'Payment' tab (under the 'Add Lyft Pass' option) to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's 2024 Halloween SoberRide® promo code will be posted at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 26 on www.SoberRide.com.

Last October, a record 1,321 persons in the Washington-metropolitan area used WRAP's Halloween SoberRide® program as opposed to possibly driving home drunk.

WRAP also offers its SoberRide® program on St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day and

the winter holidays through and including New Year's.

SoberRide® is offered throughout Lyft's Washington D.C. coverage area.

Sponsors of WRAP's 2024 Halloween SoberRide® campaign include 395 Express Lanes, Anheuser-Busch, Beer Institute, Brown-Forman, Constellation Brands, Diageo, District of Columbia Association of Beverage Alcohol Wholesalers, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, Giant Food, Glory Days Grill, Lyft, Molson Coors Beverage Company,

New Belgium Brewing, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association. WRAP's 2024 Public Partner SoberRide® Sponsors include the District of Columbia Highway Safety Office, Maryland Highway Safety Office/Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration and Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

Since 1991, WRAP's SoberRide® program has provided 90,769 free safe rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

Boysko Is Humane Champion

To the editor:

The Humane Society Legislative Fund recently released their 2024 Virginia Humane Scorecard, which

grades sitting lawmakers' votes on animal protection issues. It comes as no surprise that Senator Jennifer

Boysko earned a perfect score. Senator Boysko went above and beyond this past session for animals, patroning four bills included

in HSLF's scorecard. She carried legislation to prohibit those convicted of felony animal cruelty from

possessing companion and equine animals, allow localities to create animal cruelty conviction registries, analyze deficiencies in publicly funded animal testing facilities, and permit clinics to offer rabies

vaccinations and microchipping services. All these critical bills were

signed into law by the Governor.

Senator Boysko is committed to making a difference for the most vulnerable among us.

Her work on a range of animal protection issues will directly impact the lives of Virginians and their animals for the

better. Please join me in thanking Senator Jennifer Boysko for being a humane champion.

Gina Marie Lynch
Mount Ve

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A Connection Newspaper



OPINION

Virginia Communities Can Apply for Climate Adaptation Grants

Chesapeake Bay Foundation: Grants highlight importance of Virginia's RGGI reentry and investment in climate resilience.

Another round of grant funding opened recently for projects that strengthen communities' resilience to climate change and protection from extreme weather. These grants are funded through the Community Flood Preparedness Fund.

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is encouraging communities to take advantage of this fifth round of grant funding, which supports a variety of projects including flood mitigation measures, stormwater management initiatives, coastal resilience projects, and green projects, that feature natural solutions to flooding. Other grant rounds have supported projects in localities from Petersburg to the Town of Chincoteague on the Eastern Shore to Buchanan County in Southwest Virginia.

The announcement of the grant funding comes as Southern Environmental Law Center lawyers argued in court last week to reinstate Virginia in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). RGGI, a multi-state carbon emissions reduction program, was the state's only dedicated funding source for community-based climate resiliency projects. CBF filed a legal brief in court to support the effort.

RGGI has been instrumental in reducing greenhouse gas emis-

sions, as well as funding the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF). CFPF in turn supported these climate adaptation grants. After Virginia withdrew from RGGI, no money was allocated in the second year of the state budget for CFPF.

The grant round will close on Nov. 9. For more information on eligibility requirements and the application process, please visit here. <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/dam-safety-and-floodplains/dsfpm-cfpf>

Jay Ford, Virginia Policy Manager at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, said, "We're coming out of the hottest summer on record, and a year where communities across Virginia suffered through extreme weather causing school closures and damage to their homes and businesses. The need for effective climate resiliency projects has never been more urgent and the Community Flood Preparedness Fund gives localities the opportunities to invest in their communities prior to damage occurring. ...

"This highlights one of the many reasons Virginia should return to RGGI as soon as possible. CBF continues to advocate for additional General Assembly funding for the CFPF and the state's participation in RGGI to reduce our emissions and strengthen our resilience to inevitable extreme weather."

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Virginia's Finest Shine at the State Fair

By GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Coping with traffic snarls, ever-sprawling development and debates about data centers and casinos, few Northern Virginians likely realize that agriculture is Virginia's largest private industry with an economic impact of \$82 billion a year.

From sweets to swine, from goats to grains, from milking to quilting, Virginia agriculture was on full display at the State Fair from Sept. 27 to Oct. 6 in Doswell, 23 miles north of Richmond. Over 200,000 visitors strolled around the Meadow Event Park gobbling up turkey legs, deep-fried oreos, blooming onions, corn dogs, pretzel-wrapped brats, raspberry honey and dill pickle fudge.

Fair-going engaged all the senses, sights like thousand-pound steers and 10-ounce ducklings, mooing cows and squealing pigs. Enticing aromas of straw, sawdust, animal hides, fried chicken and cinnamon buns wafted across the fairgrounds.

Loving Livestock

In one pavilion, youngsters ages 16 to 19 participated in Senior Beef Showmanship, leading their steers calmly around a ring, positioning them just so and handling them gently with a show stick.

Ethan Randall from Page County, age 13, brought his 1,241-pound black crossbreed. "I've been raised up around them," he said. "My cow is just like a puppy dog."

Gracie Cooke from Madison County offered a running commentary on the Herefords and Simmental cattle in the showing. She has been showing cows since age five and now in her last year, lamented, "I've aged out of this contest." Analyzing the muscling, frame and volume of the bovines, she explained that judges look favorably on whether the hair on the cow's tail head is the same height as the bottom of the cow's ear. The Farm Bureau awarded almost \$100,000 in scholarships to the youngsters.

Around 1,000 head (animals) were entered each weekend, said Bill Bonwell with the Farm Bureau. Virginia has 1.3 million head of cattle.

In another pavilion, goat owners tenderly groomed their goats, a task they call "fitting," by securing them on a stanchion, brushing their hair and moisturizing them with a spray. Youngsters led their



Gil Roberts is proud of his 10,000-pound tractor manufactured in 1884.



Many fair-goers gobbled up turkey legs.

goats, many of them Boer goats, with a halter, presented them, prodded them into a wide stance and held their noses up at an angle. It seemed like a goat beauty contest.

At the "dairy classroom," Megan Day was a verbal encyclopedia, as she petted 800-pound Clover, a female Jersey from Weyers Cave, a cow that eats 40 to 60 pounds a day, drinks a bathtub of water daily, has her first calf at age two and produces over 400 gallons of milk a day. Robots do the milking two to three times a day and computers track the cows, she said, as she attached milking tubes to Clover's teats. "All cows have different personalities," she offered, "and happy cows produce more milk. Dairy farming is very hard."

Over 70 breeds of 350 squirming, strutting and pecking pigeons lured the curious to the Pigeon and Dove Pavilion. Forest Malcomb

from Chester expounded on pigeon esoterica. There are three types: racing homers, Indian fantails and American fantails. His German owl pigeon, with a white head and rounded crest, won a blue ribbon.

Pigeons get a "bad rap," said Malcomb. People view them as pests that peck and poop in parks, but in fact, they are smart birds. They carried messages in World Wars I and II. On Saturday, John Tigert released 15 Birmingham Rollers, birds that flew up a few hundred feet and did backflips. His pigeons are number two in the U.S., he said

Crops, Crafts and More

Southeastern Virginia peanut farmers grow 4,830 pounds of peanuts per acre on 28,818 acres.

SEE STATE FAIR, PAGE 10



Over 200,000 people attended the state fair in Doswell.



Ethan Randall and his black crossbreed cow.



American fantail pigeon.



Grooming or fitting a goat for the show.



A youngster learns how to milk a cow.



The milking machine at work on Clover, a Jersey cow.



This beeswax candle won best in show.



Pork Chop Downs had racing flags and stuffed pigs for sale.

At Pork Chop Downs, fans screamed and cheered, enthralled by 15 pigs running around a 180-foot track, complete with a call to the post, checkered race flags and a fast-talking announcer. Competing in the first race were hybrid pigs, with names like Shakin' Bakin' and Oscar Meyer. Up next, the swine speedsters, including Lady Hoga and Bustin Bacon Bieber. The stars of the final race were rotund, waddling, Vietnamese pot-bellies, pigs with short legs, low-hanging bellies and names like Rolling Thunder and Tyrone the Terrible. In the first two races, the contestants zipped to the finish line in seven seconds. The third races competitors took several minutes to rumble around, with some dallying to sniff here and there. Their fans went hog wild.



Rosaire's Racing Pigs.

PHOTOS BY
GLENDA BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE



Many food vendors fed the crowds.

Virginia's Finest Shine at the State Fair

FROM PAGE 9

Charles Hood, from Boykins, who has a "small farm of 24 acres," said that growing peanuts "gets into your blood." Farmers "combine," which means they separate peanuts from the plant by machine. He offered peanut soup and whoopie pie recipes.

Soybeans are a substitute for petroleum, touted soybean farmers, who displayed a Goodyear tire, straws and a non-carcinogenic fire-fighting foam made of soybeans.

Tobacco was a traditional Virginia mainstay, starting with the Jamestown colonists, said Jennifer Atkins, a state marketing specialist. Virginia's 275 "tobacco operations" produce cigarettes, smokeless tobacco and cigar wrappers. "Every cigarette has its own recipe," she said.

Steady streams of fans swarmed around tables loaded with honey and beeswax. Artisan wood turners made spinning tops, a spinner spun yarn, glass blowers made ornaments. Delicately-stitched quilts and baked goods brightened one pavilion. Women from Beaverdam, dubbed Grace-Full Knockers 4 You,



Contestants line up for the judge in the goat show.

offered their knitted, cotton "boobies" offered free to mastectomy patients, prosthetics that are soft and fit in a bra.

For culinary arts, horticulture, crop growing and creative arts, there were 1,620 exhibitors, 4,850 entries and 2,000 ribbons awarded.

Entertainment Galore

Musicians performed on stage and on truck beds and the Strolling Piano man rolled through the crowd belting out tunes like "Sweet Caroline." Fans gripped their bleacher seats watching bicycle motocross cyclists doing 40-foot jumps and aerial acts.

A state fair adventure would be a good family getaway for a day or two, said Alexandrian Susan Koscis, who was especially impressed with the youngsters so dedicated to their animals. Cooke expanded, "Today's kids are hooked to electronics. We spend hours with our animals. We work hard to get here. Here, you can learn how much work it is. This is real life."

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH/MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE



Teens ages 16 to 19 entered their cows in the Senior Beef Showmanship class.



The Virginia Peanut Growers Association displayed peanut plants. The peanuts are legumes which grow underground.



Blooming onions were a favorite.



Prize-winning quilted art from Fairfax County



Schoolmarm Susan Kelly explains her role during Civil War Camp Day Sept. 28 at Fort Ward.



An officer gets help with the banner flag of the Irish 28th of Massachusetts during Civil War Camp Day Sept. 28 at Fort Ward.



Lt. Geoff White in the officers' quarters during Civil War Camp Day Sept. 28 at Fort Ward.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Civil War Camp Day Fort Ward showcases living history.

Fort Ward showcases living history.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Fort Ward, the best preserved of the system of Union forts and batteries built to protect Washington, D.C. during the Civil War, brought that history to life with its annual Civil War Camp Day Sept. 28 at Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site.

The popular living history event featured military and civilian reenactors in camp settings in and around the historic fort. The program showcased camp life activities, infantry and artillery drills and firing demonstrations, equipment displays, and civilian impressions.

"I tell the story of a Yankee schoolmarm," said reenactor Susan Kelly. "My interest is to educate the public not just on the military side of the war but also on the civilian side."

Among the living history units participating were the 28th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, Co. B, the 3rd U.S. Regular Infantry, Co. K, and the 1st U.S. Artillery, Co. Special interpretations included a U.S. Army Quartermaster tent, a Union company surgeon, and a soldier in the reconstructed Officers' Hut portraying the daily routine and living quarters of an officer in the Defenses of Washington.

"The U.S. Army thrives on paperwork," said 1st Lt. Geoff White as he occupied the officer's hut. "Paperwork is a big part of it so officers needed larger quarters."

Jim Wilson demonstrated the use of the telegraph during the Civil War.

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Reenactor troops pose for a photo during Civil War Camp Day Sept. 28 at Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site.

"The telegraph was invented about 20 years before the Civil War began," Wilson said. "President Lincoln and President Davis were able to communicate directly with troops in the field. Wires stretched for thousands of miles and allowed instant transmission. It really was the beginning of the electronics revolution."

As a Northern schoolmarm, Kelly interpreted 19th-century education and pastimes for children, including the less than warm welcome schoolmarms received.

"Schoolmarms were cruelly treated," Kelly said. "These women were hired by abolitionist groups and churches to come south.

"My interest is to educate the public not just on the military side of the war but also on the civilian side."

— Reenactor Susan Kelly

And while the local people would tolerate a Union soldier, the schoolmarm was their worst enemy for teaching Northern ideas to their children. There were no schoolhouses



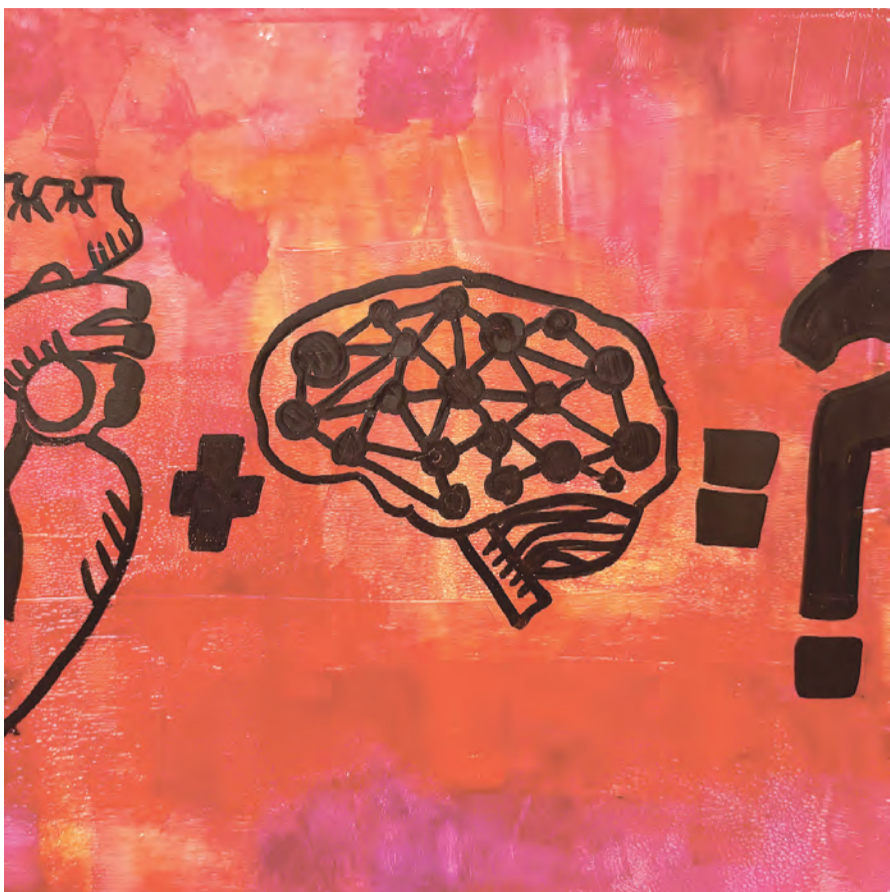
Jim Wilson at the telegraph machine during Civil War Camp Day Sept. 28 at Fort Ward.

so teaching was sometimes done on the battlefield, sometimes in burned out buildings - wherever they could hold classes."

In addition to the living history displays, the 8th Green Machine Regiment Band performed a concert of 19th century music on authentic period instruments.

Fort Ward Museum interprets the site's history with exhibits on Civil War topics, education and interpretive programs, tours, and living history activities throughout the year. The Museum also interprets Alexandria as an occupied city and the city's role as a vital Union Army crossroads. About 90 percent of the fort's earthwork walls are preserved and the Northwest Bastion has been restored and reconstructed to its original condition.

www.alexandriava.gov/FortWard



The "Artificial or Intelligence?" Art Exhibit runs Oct. 4-26, 2024 at Del Ray Artisans Gallery in Alexandria.



Alexandria Ghost Tours and Haunted Pub Crawls have started at various locations in Old Town Alexandria.

ONGOING

Alexandria Ghost Tours and Haunted Pub Crawls. Alexandria Ghosts offers guided ghost tours and adults-only haunted pub crawls nightly that highlight the city's dark history and unique local lore highlighting Alexandria's haunted history. The tours feature stories from historic sites and iconic locations like the Carlyle House, Ramsey House, and the infamous Wilkes Tunnel. Each experience transports you to the city's eerie past, a time before it was a trendy place to live, work, and play. Alexandria has a tragic history so disturbing it's often hidden from tourists who descend upon the city daily.

The Four Terrifying Tour Experiences of Alexandria Ghosts:

1. Alexandria Ghosts: Phantoms of the Potomac: Explore Alexandria's haunted history as you follow in the ghostly footsteps of George Washington and other restless spirits in this colonial city.
 2. Alexandria Ghosts Boos and Booze Haunted Pub Crawl: Combine history, hauntings, and a lively pub crawl in Alexandria's haunted bars.
 3. Alexandria Ghosts Ultimate Dead of Night Haunted Ghost Tour: A deep dive into Alexandria's eerie past, from Native American history to Civil War hauntings.
- ❖ Meeting Locations: 323 Cameron St, Alexandria, VA 22314 (Phantoms of the Potomac); 138 N Royal St, Alexandria, VA 22314 (Pub Crawl & Ultimate Dead of Night Tour); 301 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 (Washington's Footsteps). Visit <https://alexandriaghosts.com>.

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/>

GROW WITH YOUR GARDEN AT GREEN SPRING GARDEN TALKS

The Park Authority is here to help gardeners this fall with a plant-tastic lineup of Green Spring Garden Talks, 4603 Green Spring Road in Alexandria. Learn some tips and techniques that will spruce up your plants and other "soil-mates" with the help from fellow gardeners, VCE Master Gardeners and naturalists. All events are held at Green Spring Gardens and are \$12 per person. Additional fees apply for out-of-county residents.

Make a Backyard Sanctuary for Wildlife. Saturday, Oct. 26, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Learn gardening techniques for attracting pollinators, birds and other native insects into your garden to improve habitat loss.

Composting Made Simple. Friday, Nov. 8, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Learn the value that comes with putting compost into your yard and garden instead of your trashcan.

Adapt & Thrive with Climate Change. Saturday, Nov. 16, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Extension Master Gardeners share ways to adapt your garden practices to changing climate patterns through plant selection, water management and more!

NOW THRU OCT. 27

Alexandria Plein Air. At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. Six artists began regular outdoor painting sessions in and around Alexandria, VA to

help cope with the pandemic. They have continued the practice and this exhibit displays their interpretations of local sites, natural and man made, in a variety of seasons. Featuring: Mary Anne Cochran-Fox, Calina Franzosa, Seana Gallagher, Renee Lachman, Theresa Miller and Karen Thuermer.

OCT. 4-26 The "Artificial or Intelligence?" Art Exhibit.

At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features art that explores what the future might look like with AI and whether machine learning feels artificial or intelligent at the present moment. Opening Reception: Friday, October 4 from 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed October 27). Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

OCT. 12-20

5th Annual Old Town Oyster Week. 11 a.m. 5th Annual Shucking Competition at Daniel O'Connell's Irish Restaurant & Bar at 112 King Street on Saturday, October 12th at 11 a.m. Visit participating restaurants throughout the week for featured oyster and Guinness pairings, and don't forget to vote for your favorite one!

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 16

Yacht Haven Garden Club Benefit. Yacht Haven Garden Club's 40th annual Fashion Show, Silent Auction and Luncheon fundraiser "40 Years of Friendship, Fashion and Flowers," will be held at the Mount Vernon Country Club in Alexandria. Fashions will be provided by Sara Campbell. Tickets are \$60.00. Deadline is October 9. For reservations, contact: Joyce Tami at yachthavengardenclubva@gmail.com.

SATURDAY/OCT. 19

Aware. 1-3 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Join in a family friendly, free event curated by the Athenaeum's Poet in Residence, KaNikki Jakarta. Aware is a community-based collaboration with a mission to entertain and

inform the community. Twelve (12) pre-selected poets, musicians, and storytellers will provide awareness artistically that focuses on important topics bringing forth their knowledge, personal experiences, and perspectives using the Power of Words and Voice to focus on such topics as: What it means to be Brave, Running Towards Love, Women's Mental and Physical Health, Kidney and Liver Health, Cancer, Musical Self-exploration, and more! Space is limited and RSVP is required. RSVP to great-publishing@yahoo.com

SATURDAY/OCT. 19

9th Annual Tour de Mount Vernon. TDMV Ride 8:30 a.m.; Youth and Family Ride at 9 a.m. Starting and ending at Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. Early bird special! Register for the 9th Annual Tour de Mount Vernon by August 31 for a discounted rate and be guaranteed a pair of Tour de Mount Vernon socks! #Tdmv2024 Register now: <https://buff.ly/46VNVtX>

OCT. 24 TO DEC. 21

"A Focus on Nature." At Coldwell Banker Realty, 310 King Street, Alexandria. Opening reception Oct. 24 from 6-7:30 p.m. Art exhibit featuring the nature-themed photographs of Steven Halperson and mosaics of Nina Tisara. Steven Halperson, Tisara Photography, has over 30 years' experience in portrait and event photography. For this exhibit, he is returning to his roots in fine art photography and making use of digital camera software to create strikingly beautiful images. Nina Tisara retired from the photography studio in 2007 and began creating intricate mosaics which are now widely exhibited and collected. Nina is the founder of Living Legends of Alexandria. A portion of all sales will be donated to the Coldwell Banker Realty Cares Foundation, a program that helps support selected nonprofits in Alexandria and throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. For additional information, contact Rachel Carter, RCarter@cbmove.com or Nina Tisara, Ninat@ninatisara.com.

SATURDAY/OCT. 26

Old Town Family Trick or Treat. 11 a.m. to 3 pm. At Various locations

in Old Town Alexandria. Bring the family and enjoy trick-or-treating in various shops and restaurants in Old Town along upper and lower King Street and select side streets. Visit oldtownbusiness.org in the coming weeks for details on the starting point and map pick-up location.

SUNDAY/OCT. 27

Old Town Doggie Trick or Treat. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At The Dog Park, 705 King Street, Alexandria. Bring your dog for a howling day of walking through Old Town and visiting participating merchants who will offer treats for your four-legged companion. Start at The Dog Park boutique, located at 705 King Street. Visit oldtownbusiness.org.

SUNDAY/OCT. 27

28th Annual Del Ray Halloween Parade. 2 p.m. Begins at Mount Vernon Ave., south of E. Bellefonte Ave. Alexandria. One of Del Ray's favorite traditions, the annual Del Ray Halloween Parade, returns once again. Costumed children, pets and babies in decked-out strollers are invited to march and show off their finest and scariest Halloween garb. For more information, including details on entering the house decorating contest, pet costume contest and stroller decorating contest, head to visitdelray.com.

NOV 1 TO DEC. 1

Del Ray Artisans "\$100 & Under" exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Showcases members' artwork all priced at \$100 or less. The art is sold on an art-to-go basis. The gallery walls are packed with great art at prices all art-lovers can afford. Opening Reception: Friday, November 1, 7-9pm. Open Thursdays 12-6pm, Fridays 12-9pm, Saturdays & Sundays 12-6pm. Closed Thanksgiving Day. Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

SATURDAY/NOV. 2

Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501

ENTERTAINMENT EXTRA

NOW THRU OCT. 27

“Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors.” At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. September: Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. October: Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 4 p.m. Special October Twilight Performances: Dracula show combined with admission to the haunted trail that same evening. Filled with clever wordplay and pop culture references, Dracula is a gender-bending, laugh-out-loud reimagining of the gothic classic. In the treacherous mountains of Transylvania, a meek English real estate agent takes a harrowing journey to meet a new and mysterious client, the most terrifying and ferocious monster the world has ever known: Count Dracula! Famed female vampire hunter, Jean Van Helsing, and company chase Drac from Transylvania to the British countryside to London and back. Visit www.workhousearts.org.

OCT. 4 TO NOV. 2

Workhouse Haunt: Twisted Tales of Terror. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, plus Halloween night. Gates open at 6:30 p.m. Back for its 11th season, one of Northern Virginia’s most popular Halloween events is bringing even more scares (and laughter) to its creepy outdoor walk-through trail. The Haunt will lead guests on a frightening journey that brings them along the abandoned, historic buildings of the former prison, where they will encounter terrifying characters and sights and sounds that are not for the faint of heart. This year’s theme, Twisted Tales of Terror, features more than a dozen creepy live-action scenes portraying classic fairy tales gone wrong, including Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel, Pinocchio and more. To keep everything moving along, guests will travel in small groups via a timed entry. While waiting for their timeslots, or following their trail experience, guests can enjoy Halloween fun in the Rizer Pavilion: DJ-mixed music (Fridays, Saturdays, and Halloween Night); refreshments at the bar, including Halloween-themed alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks; sweet and savory food truck treats; and Halloween art and trinkets in the Haunt Pop-up Shop. Tickets are on sale now; prices start at \$25 per person. Visit www.workhousearts.org for schedule and event details.

SATURDAY/OCT. 19

9th Annual Tour de Mount Vernon. 8:30 a.m. Starting and ending at Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton. Riders will enjoy a fun ride through the many Potomac Bank’s historic, ecological and cultural sites in the southern and central parts of the Mount Vernon District. The route consists of paved roads, paved trails and has



The Workhouse Haunt: Twisted Tales of Terror takes place Oct. 4 to Nov. 2, 2024 at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton.

some challenging sections. The event is rain or shine. Kickoff at 8:30 a.m. Short Route 20 miles; Long Route 40 miles. Youth and Family Ride Kickoff at 9 a.m. Youth Route 3 miles. Visit FairfaxCounty.gov/MountVernon

FAMILY SKATE AND DANCE NIGHT

This fall, the Family Skate and Dance Nights at Franconia Rec Center will feature a lively schedule. Skaters of all ages will enjoy the festive themes, tasty food and fun music of these skate nights hosted by the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Join the fun and break out your quad skates, inline skates or dancing shoes (bring your own skates/footwear) and take a spin around Franconia Rec Center’s gym floor. Each skate night includes music from a guest DJ, as well as food, snacks and drinks available for purchase (Please note that outside food/drink not permitted). Tickets for everyone (skaters, dancers, spectators and chaperones) cost \$10



A Fall Festival will be held Sunday, Oct. 13, 2024 at Simple Changes Therapeutic Riding Center in Lorton.

and can be purchased in advance online. Or you buy them at the door for \$15.

Oct. 26: Halloween Costume Party (6-10 p.m.)

Nov. 16: Franconia Hold ‘Em Skate and Dance Night (Country Night) (6-9 p.m.)

Dec. 21: Holiday and Ugly Sweater Skate and Dance Night (6-9 p.m.)

SPOOKTACULAR FUN IN FAIRFAX COUNTY PARKS

Get ready for a spooky, fun-filled Halloween season in Fairfax County parks! The Park Authority is presenting a fantastic lineup of Halloween programs and events are designed to delight all ages. Whether you’re looking for ghostly mini golf, tricks and treats or family-friendly ways to show off your favorite costume, we have events planned

for all ghosts and goblins!
Goblin Golf. Burke Lake Park; Oct. 19-20, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Grab your Halloween costume (not required) and join them at Burke Lake Park for Halloween-themed mini golf, treats and spooky fun! Cost is \$10 per person.

Farm Harvest Festival -- Big Trucks, Carnival Rides and Fall Fun! Frying Pan Farm Park; Oct. 18 – 20

Join in at Frying Pan Farm Park for the Farm Harvest Festival, featuring Big Truck Night, carnival rides, games and tasty fair food! Enjoy unlimited ride specials on Friday night or Sunday for \$25, or grab individual tickets on Saturday for even more fall fun. Parking is just \$10 per day, so bring the family and celebrate the season with us!

Ghost Town. Burke Lake Park; Oct. 26 and 27, from 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Get ready for a full day of fun at Burke Lake Park’s Ghost Town! Enjoy themed activities, a train ride, carousel, crafts, mini golf and a bounce house—all with no scares, just treats. Join the fun and make it a Halloween to remember! Cost is \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door.

Family Skate Night - Halloween Costume Skate and Dance Night. Franconia Rec Center; Oct. 26, from 6 – 10 p.m.

Wear your favorite Halloween costume. Party to the sounds of our DJ while showing your costume. Ghouls and Goblins be aware. Cost is \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door.

SUNDAY/OCT. 20

Student Piano Recital. 4-6 p.m. At Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria. Franconia United Methodist Church Music Ministry presents a free Student Piano Recital. Contributions will go to the Professional Concert Series. Visit the website: <http://www.franconiaumc.org>.

SUNDAY/OCT. 20

N Gauge Model Trains on Display. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. N Gauge

(N-TRAK) model trains will be on display and running at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5, \$6 for special events. Military (active and retired) \$4. Seniors, \$4. <http://www.fairfax-station.org>, <http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR>, 703-425-9225.

SUNDAY/OCT. 27

Burke Historical Society Meeting. 3-4:30 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. A panel of co-authors will speak on their recently published book, Black Communities of Fairfax: A History. Free to attend.

SUNDAY/OCT. 27

No Fairfax Casino Coalition Forum. 3-4:30 p.m. At McLean High School, 1633 Davidson Rd, McLean. Learn the latest news on what to expect - Senator Jennifer Boysko will explain that the threat of legislation to allow a casino in Fairfax County is real. The bill can be continued as early as Fall 2024. Who will be there? Current and past legislators from Northern Virginia, both Republican and Democrat, the media, and you.

SUNDAY/OCT. 27

Halloween Carnival. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Come and Trick or Treat with the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. Each child will receive a goodie bag (while supplies last) and 6 tickets for games. Weather permitting, there may be outside events; if not, all games will be inside. Each game requires 1 ticket to play. Prizes for each game will consist of candy. There will be entry forms for the items on the prize table. You need not be present to win. You will be called or emailed if you have won any of the wonderful gift baskets. Additional game tickets can be purchased at \$1 for 5 tickets. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5, \$6 for special events. Military (active and retired) \$4. Seniors, \$4. <http://www.fairfax-station.org>, <http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR>, 703-425-9225.

SUNDAY/NOV. 3

Venture Into Volunteering. 12-4 p.m. At Springfield Town Center, 6500 Springfield Mall, Springfield. Attend this annual event to meet representatives from various nonprofits and local government agencies who will tell you about ways to volunteer in the community and answer your questions. Visit the website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/family-services/older-adults/volunteer-solutions/volunteer-fair>

NOV. 8-9

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

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 12

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>.

THURSDAY/NOV. 7

Evening of Perfect Pairings: Wine + Chocolate, Women + Business. 5:30-7 p.m. At Goodwin House Alexandria, 4800 Fillmore Ave., Alexandria. Presented by The Chamber ALX’s Professional Women’s Network. Join in an unforgettable night of curated wine and food pairings, networking, and celebration. Contact Maria Ciarrocchi at mcia-rocchi@thechamberalx.com

SATURDAY/NOV. 9

Designing American Living. 3-4:30 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Hwy., Alexandria. Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House provide a unique opportunity to put two American styles of architecture – separated by over a century – in conversation with one another. Take a close look at both houses to examine what it was that the architects who

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 15

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BULLETIN

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

VOLUNTEERS WANTED
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.

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.

Farmer's Market Volunteers Needed. To volunteer for the Farmer's Markets, email Brian Morreale, brianmorreale@gmail.com

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 13

built these homes were trying to convey about the people who lived here, the period they lived in, and what they thought the future held. Cost \$25 for adults, \$12 students (K-12). Website: <https://www.woodlawnpopeleighy.org/upcomingevents/2024/10/12/designing-american-living>

SATURDAY/NOV. 16

Celebrate Gum Springs' 191st Anniversary. 6-9 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon. Celebrate Gum Springs -- The oldest African American community in Fairfax County with Keynote Speaker Don Scott. Tickets \$125. Event host: The Gum Springs Historical Society and Museum and the Mount Vernon Ladies Association.

SATURDAY/NOV. 23

The Good Folk Performs. 7 p.m. At Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road, Alexandria. FocusMusic and WFMA present The Good Folk at Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church. The Good Folk, Meghan Mette, Eileen Estes, Joanna Clare, Sophie Chang, Agi Kovacs, and Patrick Winch, deliver powerful instrumentals, haunting vocals and three styles of percussive dance. Cost is \$25 in advance (members \$22.50) / \$30 at door (members \$25) Virtual Tickets: \$15 (\$13.50 for members. Info at <https://focusmusic.org/shows#sat-11-23-the-good-folk-alexandria>



"A Focus on Nature" can be seen Oct. 24 to Dec. 21, 2024 at Coldwell Banker Realty in Alexandria.

and-virtual

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. OCTOBER

Wed. 16: Debbie Gibson – Acoustic Youth: Songs and Stories from The Electric Youth Era \$59.50
Thu. 17: Yächtley Crëw \$45.00
Fri. 18: The Whispers \$95.00
Sat. 19: The Whispers \$95.00
Sun. 20: Boney James \$95.00 SOLD OUT!
Wed. 23: Private Event
Thu. 24: AJ Ghent & His Singing Guitar \$35.00

Fri. 25: William Clark Green with Erin Kinsey \$29.50
Sat. 26: Tom Paxton & The Don-Juans with sp. guest Noel Paul Stookey of Peter, Paul & Mary \$49.50
Sun. 27: Oleta Adams "Farewell Tour!" \$55.00
Tue. 29: The Robert Cray Band \$59.50

Not Having My Cake



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

It's been approximately two weeks since my last Entenmann's "Marshmallow Devils Food Iced Cake" purchase. And it's been not quite two weeks since my last bite finished the box. And believe it or not, I am able to still think clearly about my dessert options. Meaning, I think I need a break from my recent cake routine. As for this item no longer being purchased at the local Safeway, and Safeway no longer reordering them for me-ish - since I'm the one buying them, I feel I've satiated that urge and need to revisit some of my other standard dessert fare: Mallomars at the Safeway, Whoopie Pies from the Dutch Country Market and some heavily frosted cupcakes from anywhere. As they say in volleyball: it may be time to rotate. This is where my sister-in-law Vanessa usually chimes in as she has many times in the past to my brother Richard (her late husband) and me: "Boy, your mother did some job on the two of you." And we would all laugh because it's mostly true.

Be it "half-moons" from Feldman's Bakery in Newton Centre, Ma. or pastry from Eagerman's Bakery on Rte. 9 in Natick, or any variety of snack cakes and cookies from our neighborhood "Oak Hill Market," or the "Stop & Shop" supermarket, our mother, may her memory be a blessing, loaded Richard and I up on dessert morning, noon, mid-afternoon, evening and nighttime before bed. Richard and I were literally, having our cake and eating it too, maybe too much, but who knew? But as we have learned about our late mother, she was simply following advertising orders from television that said children needed to drink eight glasses of milk per day to help build strong bones and muscles. And since getting us to drink milk by itself was a challenge, she realized that drinking it with a dessert was not. Being Jewish, though not being kosher, still we never had milk with a meal, it had to be after, as in dessert. And so, it became the story of my life: Dessert, milk; dessert, milk; dessert, milk, and on and on and on.

Not that Richard or I ever resisted. But I think we might have been somewhat indoctrinated by mother's commitment to getting us to consume calcium/milk to help strengthen our bones growing up. You could say that getting her children to drink milk was a win-win: My mother got her two sons to drink upwards of eight glasses of milk per day - helping to build those strong bones; and for us two boys, we were eating sweets all the time, which naturally we'd do so with a glass of milk - or two.

Unfortunately for my wife Dina, and Vanessa (my late brother's widow), Richard and I never outgrew our milk and dessert habits. Dessert was always top of mind. Although, our respective dessert preferences diverged a bit when we grew up. I was still drawn to commercially baked products: Hostess, Drakes, Nabisco, Keebler's, Entenmann's, et cetera. Richard was more inclined to shop at bakeries on the street or in-store and buy fewer brand items than I did and more pastry. Though our dessert upbringing was the same, our adult choices were different. Nevertheless, we rarely strayed from our respective lanes. Whenever we did, however, it wasn't a hardship. I would say that between the two of us, we had the entire dessert inventory covered.

Now I'm on my own. Still focused on commercial products. But right now, after weeks of Entenmann's "Marshmallow Devils Food Iced Cake," I dare say, I need a change. Perhaps, in Richard's memory, I should go to a bakery.

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

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 14

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 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, ktoohy@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.

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.

Composting and Food Waste. Alexandria now has Resource Recovery Stations, located at the City's Farmers' Markets (Old Town, Del Ray) to collect food waste. More than 270 people have participated in the food waste program over the last several months. Participants drop off items weekly, over eight tons of waste has been collected, to be composted to make a natural fertilizer. To learn more about composting visit alexandriava.gov/YardWaste.

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