

**ICE!** A CHARLIE BROWN Christmas  
GAYLORD NATIONAL

**BOOK NOW**

© 2024 Peanuts Worldwide LLC

# CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station ♦ Lorton ♦ Clifton

## Sweet and Timely

PAGE 6



Emily Kikta and Aaron Sanz performing with the New York City Ballet. Kikta and Aaron Sanz will lead a cast of 50 dancers that includes Fairfax Ballet Company members and Russell School of Ballet students in the Nutcracker at Fairfax High School.

## Devastating Story of Veteran's Sacrifice

PAGE 3

## Falling Far Short on Affordable Housing

PAGE 7

OPINION, PAGE 4 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 12 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 14

PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW YORK CITY BALLET



## 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	Fed Dist/Alt	Route #	Route Name	Structure	Posted Date
STAFFORD	18062	1	ROUTE 0001	RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER	11/1/2024
LUNENBURG	11672	688	OWL CREEK ROAD	OWL CREEK	10/11/2024
PETERSBURG	21087	0	FORT LEE ROAD	INTERSTATE-85	10/8/2024
LOUDOUN	11300	709	SANDS ROAD	TRIBUTARY OF CROOKED RUN	9/30/2024

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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:corina.herrera@vdot.virginia.gov).

## NEWS

# Rachel McQuillen Joins Fairfax City Council

Rachel McQuillen is moving from the Fairfax City School Board to a seat on the Fairfax City Council. In the Nov. 5 election, Mayor Catherine Read easily won re-election to her post. But in the race for Council – where 11 candidates battled for six seats – one of those seats wasn't decided until the end of the week.



Rachel McQuillen

of the night, incumbent Kate Doyle Feingold and challenger McQuillen were still vying for the sixth seat, separated by just four votes and .01 percent of the total votes cast.

In the election, Stacy Hall, another former City School Board member, received the most votes, followed by Tom Peterson, incumbent Billy Bates, Stacey Hardy-Chandler and Anthony Amos. But at the end

And even when all the votes – including absentee and provisional ballots – were finally counted, the four-vote gap remained. McQuillen led with 5,236 votes to Doyle Feingold's 5,232. However, instead of asking for a recount, Doyle Feingold opted to concede the election to McQuillen. The new Council members will assume their positions on the dais in January 2025.

## Local Nonprofits Need Your Help

### Britepaths, Lamb Center seek holiday donations.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Nonprofits Britepaths and The Lamb Center serve different populations in Fairfax County and Fairfax City, but both fill critical needs in the lives of the people they help. However, in order to carry out their work, they need a helping hand from local residents and businesses. And with Thanksgiving, Christmas and colder weather coming up, the community's aid is especially crucial.

ly challenging for the families we serve, our holiday program offers a meaningful way for the community to come together and make a positive impact," said Britepaths Executive Director Abra Kurt. "With the continued support of our donors, volunteers and partners, we're able to provide a brighter holiday season for local children and their families."

This year, Britepaths aims to reach more families than ever. Last year's holiday program helped 265 children. This year – with rising costs of living impacting even more households – Britepaths plans to meet this growing need by serving at least 340 local children.

Contributions made to the holiday program let Britepaths' clients enjoy the holidays with dignity and warmth. Mail checks or gift cards to Britepaths at 3959 Pender Drive, Suite 200, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please write "HP24" on the memo line.

Britepaths welcomes local businesses, schools and community groups to join the program by making a donation or hosting a holiday giving drive. For more information, go to [britepaths.org/holiday24](http://britepaths.org/holiday24) or contact Britepaths at 703-273-8829 or [events@britepaths.org](mailto:events@britepaths.org).

#### The Lamb Center

The Lamb Center, a daytime drop-in shelter for the homeless, is now accepting lightly used winter clothes such as coats, thermal underwear (long johns) and hoodies for its guests. Male or unisex items are best (no children's clothing). For more information, contact Katie Glick, [katieglick@thelambcenter.org](mailto:katieglick@thelambcenter.org). Donation hours are Mon-

#### Britepaths

Britepaths is dedicated to building resilience and financial stability for individuals and families in need. It's currently seeking donations to provide holiday meals, plus gifts for children in needy families. These things will bring warmth and joy to people facing financial hardship.

Through its holiday program, Britepaths connects local donors with clients needing assistance to celebrate the holidays. Community members are encouraged to participate by sponsoring families through financial contributions which enable Britepaths to purchase and distribute \$50 Walmart gift cards, per child, to client families. These gift cards allow families to purchase essentials, groceries and gifts for their loved ones.

"In a season that can be especial-

SEE LOCAL NONPROFITS, PAGE 15  
[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



# ICE!

## A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS

CIRQUE: SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS | SNOW FLOW MOUNTAIN  
SNOWBALL BUILD&BLAST | MERRY SNOOPY CHRISTMAS SCAVENGER HUNT  
PHOTOS WITH SANTA | MRS. CLAUS' CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS | BUILD-A-BEAR WORKSHOP™  
GINGERBREAD DECORATING CORNER | HERE WE GLOW A-CARDLING LIGHT SHOW | SNOOPY & FRIENDS HOLIDAY TREATS

Nov. 15 - Dec. 28  
[ChristmasAtGaylordNational.com](http://ChristmasAtGaylordNational.com)

SO MUCH CHRISTMAS

© 2024 Peanuts Worldwide LLC | © Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc. Used with permission. All rights reserved.





The presentation of the Colors at the start of the ceremony.



Veterans and residents at the Veterans Day ceremony in Fairfax.

## ‘Reminder of the Painstakingly High Cost of Freedom’

Fairfax City celebrates America’s veterans.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City’s Veterans Day ceremony last Monday, Nov. 11, honored those who served and those who’ve suffered because of it. American Legion Post 177 hosted the event, along with VFW Post 8469.

Besides local residents and veterans, attendees included Del. David Bulova (D-11th), Sen. Saddam Salim (D-37th), Del. Dan Helmer (D-10th), Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid, Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read and City Councilmember Tom Ross.

“We have to remind our nation that Veterans Day is not just another holiday on a calendar,” said VFW Post 8469 Commander Mac McCarl. “It’s a reminder not only of the commitment and courage of all those who have served, but of the painstakingly high cost of freedom – paid by those who have selflessly sacrificed for it.”

Toward that end, he said, he was honored to introduce keynote speaker Frank Larkin, who’s served his country in many ways and continues to do so. Larkin was a special-warfare operator in the Navy SEALs, served two decades as a special agent and was deputy assistant director in the U.S. Secret Service.

He was also a senior leader in the Defense Department, heading a unit designed to mitigate the effects of IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) on American and Allied forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. Said McCarl, “IEDs were directly responsible for over 80 percent



The Unmuted singing patriotic songs.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

of the total casualties we suffered in those two places.”

Larkin was also a police officer and investigator in Philadelphia and a trooper/flight paramedic with the Maryland State Police. And although partially retired, he’s still an active firefighter/paramedic for the City of Annapolis.

Yet one of his top priorities is advocating nationwide for veteran suicide prevention and traumatic brain injury (TBI) research. That’s because he’s seen these things firsthand – and they’ve both hit home.

“I’m proud to be here to honor those who’ve served in uniform and those that have made the ultimate sacrifice to protect

our nation,” said Larkin. “We should never forget the service of those who selflessly often went into harm’s way – and that includes all local first responders. For many of us, 9/11 taught us that things can change quickly. People left the comfort of their jobs and homes to protect what we have today,

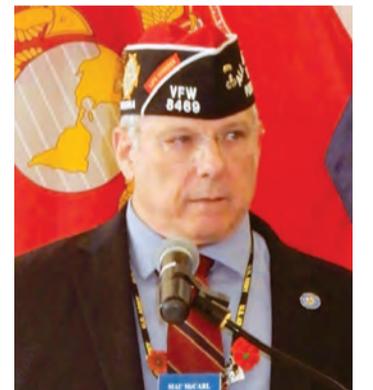
SEE FAIRFAX CITY, PAGE 9



Frank Larkin speaking about preventing veterans’ suicide.



Ryan Larkin.



Mac McCarl.

## Small Business Saturday: Support Local, Strengthen Community

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK

With Small Business Saturday on Nov. 30, I want to take a moment to highlight the vital role that small businesses play in driving Fairfax County's economic growth and success. As we celebrate these local entrepreneurs, we are reminded of their invaluable contributions, not only to our economy but also to the unique character of our neighborhoods. Supporting small businesses is not just good for business; it's good for education, growth and

opportunity.

As the Chair of the Fairfax County Council on Economic Opportunity, I'm committed to helping create an environment where businesses of all sizes can thrive. Small businesses are the backbone of our local economy, and their success directly impacts the prosperity of our community. By shopping locally and supporting Fairfax County's small businesses, we invest in our own future, strengthening the local economy, creating jobs and ensuring that local dollars we spend here have a multiplier effect that benefits the services we all rely on,

from our schools to our public services.

Fairfax County has earned its reputation as one of the best places in the nation to do business, and that's thanks in large part to the hard work and innovation of our small business owners. When we support these businesses, we are fostering a culture of growth and opportunity that benefits everyone. This is why, as part of our ongoing commitment to strengthening the local economy, I encourage all of us to make a conscious effort to shop local and support small businesses, not just on Small

Business Saturday, but every day of the year.

By working together, we can help ensure that Fairfax County remains a thriving place to live, work and do business for generations to come. Thank you for your continued support of our local businesses and for being an essential part of what makes Fairfax County such a vibrant and successful community.

Are you a local small business, or looking to start one? The County has information and resources for you! Check out Fairfax CORE - <https://fairfaxcore.com/>.

## Your County Board Wants a New Tax on Food

Here's why it's a bad idea for everyone.

BY GARY COHEN

Local government budgets are hard to manage. We all get that. Finances are strained and our county board is limited in how they can raise revenue. But, too often, to government officials, it's just a numbers game. They forget that, when the government at any level raises revenue, it comes from taxpayers.

Fairfax County isn't immune from budget woes. If anything, the size and diversity of our county places bigger demands on government than is the case in many of our surrounding jurisdictions. Funding infrastructure, services and schools is a huge job with huge price tags. Too often, government leaders forget that there are two sides to the ledger, and that spending restraint can be an effective budget balancing tool just as tax hikes can.

Sadly, today, in the face of anticipated budget shrinkage, Fairfax County officials are squarely focused on new taxes, not spending restraint. And, if that's not enough, the tax they are eyeing is a food tax of up to 6%, levied on all restaurant meals, prepared ready-to-eat foods (sandwiches, grocery store chickens, etc.) and beverages sold in the county. We already pay 6% sales tax to the state on these items, so piling on another

tax of up to 6% would effectively tax costs of meals and many food items by 12%. When you consider that inflation has raised food costs by 20% since the pandemic ended, it's easy to see how many family budgets are strained to the breaking point.

Imposing a new tax on restaurants and ready to eat foods is not the answer to the county's budget concerns. The reasons are clear, and simple.

First, it burdens Fairfax County families the most. County leaders want you to believe that a food tax will fall mainly on out-of-county diners at expensive restaurants ... business travellers on expense accounts. And, while some of that is true, study after study has shown that a food tax – and a restaurant meals tax – impacts local county residents disproportionately. According to the National Restaurant Association, 70% of restaurant meals between \$15 - \$25 were paid by local citizens. For meals less than \$8, that number rises to 85%. That means a meals tax will tax people who can least afford it, where it hurts them the most.

Second, it will place an unfair strain on county restaurants with far reaching ripple effects. It will reduce the number of diners in our restaurants, how often they dine out, what they order, and how much they tip their wait staff. This isn't just "spin" from restaurants, it's fact. Restaurants are still reeling from the economic impacts of Covid and inflation. More restaurants have gone out of business in the last year than we can count. We operate restau-

rants all around the DMV area. When neighboring Prince William County implemented a new food tax in June of 2022, the impact on our restaurants there and our employees was clear and significant. Upon imposing the new tax, sales in our Prince William restaurants fell almost immediately 4% lower than any of our restaurants in Fairfax County. Diners were coming in less frequently, and when they did come, our check average was lower by approximately \$1. This also resulted in smaller tips for our employees as diners, stung by the higher price, sought ways to control their spending. And, when we serve fewer meals, we buy fewer supplies so business for our suppliers falls off accordingly, impacting their employees as well.

What this means in a practical sense, for county budgeters, is that the revenue they expect to see from a new food tax will not likely materialize. It will be less because taxpayers will reduce their purchases. Put simply, if you tax something more, people buy less of it.

But, from a bigger picture perspective, the government attitude towards taxation, and this tax in particular, result in lower stan-

dards of living for all our residents hitting lower income families the hardest. When incomes fall, families make adjustments. When business is off, restaurant owners like us do the same. It's time the county took the same level of responsibility towards finances that its residents do and make adjustments that won't lower the standard of living of our people and won't damage the businesses here that support communities with jobs, payrolls, opportunities, and choices.

Fairfax County Supervisors will consider this new food tax early next year. They hope to include the authority to impose the tax in the budget to generate as little attention and opposition as possible. Then, once authority is approved, they'll put a number on it of 1 to 6%.

They hope you won't notice, but you will when you dine out or buy that rotisserie chicken at the grocery store. Tell them no.

*Gary Cohen is the Executive Vice President of Government Affairs and Franchising for Glory Days Grill, a 45 year resident of Fairfax County and a lifelong restaurateur.*

### Thanks for Story

Just wanted to thank Connection for the to your journalism hind my small business.

LETTER

thank Mike Salmon and The time and energy you devote and for telling the story be- I appreciate it.

Stephanie Kuroda, Ready Player N, LLC, Herndon

[www.ConnectionNewspapers.com](http://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com)

Twitter @followfairfax

An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Free digital edition delivered to your email box. Go to [connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe](http://connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe)

NEWS DEPARTMENT:  
[south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com)

Mary Kimm  
Editor and Publisher  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)

Bonnie Hobbs  
Community Reporter, 703-778-9415  
[bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com)

Mercia Hobson  
Staff Reporter  
[mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com)

Mike Salmon  
Contributing Writer  
[msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com)

Ken Moore  
Contributing Writer  
[kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com)

ADVERTISING:  
For advertising information  
[sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com)  
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk  
Display Advertising/National Sales  
703-778-9444  
[debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com)

David Griffin  
Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
[dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com)

Classified & Employment Advertising  
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher  
Mary Kimm  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
@MaryKimm

Publisher  
Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
[jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com)

In Memoriam  
Managing Editor  
Kemal Kurspahic

Art/Design:  
Laurence Foong  
Production Manager:  
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION  
Circulation Manager:  
Ann Oliver  
[circulation@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:circulation@connectionnewspapers.com)



# COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE



SCREENSHOTS ENGAGE FAIRFAX

City of Fairfax Mayor, Catherine S. Reid shares information about the Willard-Sherwood Health and Community Center redevelopment project.



The Willard-Sherwood Health and Community Center redevelopment project.

## Update: Willard-Sherwood Health and Community Center

### Fairfax County and City of Fairfax work together.

The Willard-Sherwood Health and Community Center redevelopment, led by Fairfax City and Fairfax County, moved toward construction with a community update on the final design held on Saturday, Nov. 16. The project will offer childcare options, senior center, public health facility,

and at-door public transportation. Participants saw what the outside facade and the interior of the building would look like.

The new campus features underground parking, rooftop recreation, and LEED-certified design that will unite health, wellness, childcare, and arts facilities into a comprehensive community hub serving residents of all ages. For more about this project, visit the project page online.

See the video at <https://engage.fairfaxva.gov/willard-sherwood-health-and-community-center>.

— MERCIA HOBSON

## 8 Things about Domestic Violence and Homelessness

Learn more about the connection between domestic violence and homelessness and how to find available resources. Survivors of domestic violence deserve to feel safe, and securing housing is a crucial step in their healing journey. No survivor should be forced to stay with someone who harms them just to keep a roof over their head.

Source: Fairfax County

Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness; studies show it is a reason for between 22% and 57% of homeless-

ness among women. More than 90 percent of homeless women experience severe physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives, and 63 percent have been victims of intimate partner violence.

Housing is safety. Survivors of domestic violence often must flee their homes to escape life-threatening violence from an abuser. Securing safe, affordable housing is a crucial step on the pathway to a survivor's long-term security and often means the difference between being

SEE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. PAGE 14



### NOTICE OF WATER RATE AND BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

December 12, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2024, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2025, include the following:

- An increase in the Availability Charge from \$4,800 to \$4,930\*.
- An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$22,910 to \$24,290.
- An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,830 to \$1,840\*.
- An increase in the Account Charge from \$47 to \$48.
- An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$15.60 to \$16.55\*.
- An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$3.84 to \$4.03 per 1,000 gallons of water.
- An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$4.10 to \$4.15.
- An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$57 to \$58.
- An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
- An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge Inspection Fee from \$46 to \$47.

\*Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is also proposing a \$240 million budget for calendar year 2025.<sup>1</sup> Water sales are expected to provide \$209 million and the remaining \$31 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2024	2025
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 66,956	\$ 74,371
Power and Utilities	14,667	14,630
Chemicals	15,970	16,910
Purchased Water	7,713	9,013
Supplies and Materials	6,871	7,401
Insurance	1,507	1,558
Fuel	776	890
Postage	620	642
Contractual Services	12,667	14,194
Professional Services	1,191	1,940
Other	2,605	3,168
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>131,543</b>	<b>144,717</b>
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(11,014)	(12,005)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 120,529</b>	<b>\$ 132,712</b>

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$49,871,656
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$43,885,000

<sup>1</sup> Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes can be viewed on our website at [fairfaxwater.org/rates](http://fairfaxwater.org/rates).

Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Jessica Love at 703-289-6029. Interested parties may submit written comments to [PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org](mailto:PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org) or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water  
Public Hearing Comments  
8570 Executive Park Avenue  
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on **Wednesday, December 11, 2024** to be included in the record of the public hearing.

## BALLET

# Fairfax Ballet Company Presents 'The Nutcracker'

**Chantilly High student dances with NYC professionals.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax Ballet Company will present a holiday classic, "The Nutcracker," and this year's production features a Chantilly High student and two dancers from the New York City Ballet.

Show times are Saturday-Sunday, Nov. 30- Dec. 1, at 4 p.m., at Fairfax High, 3501 Lion Run in Fairfax City. Tickets are available at <https://www.etix.com/ticket/o/15726/fairfaxballet>.

Starring as the Nutcracker Prince is Zane Wilders, a freelance guest artist and teaching artist whose professional career includes performing with the Los Angeles Ballet. And New York City Ballet soloists Emily Kikta and Aaron Sanz will lead a cast of 50 dancers that also includes Fairfax Ballet Company members and Russell School of Ballet students. (Fairfax Ballet Company is part of the Russell School of Ballet in Chantilly).

Kikta dances the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy, and Sanz performs as both the Cavalier and the Snow King. Chantilly High sophomore and Fairfax Ballet Company member Caroline Musci is featured as Clara.

This dazzling, full-length production will have an updated snow scene including a new pas de deux for the ballet company's senior dancer, Hazel Lindquist, and Sanz. There's also a new act-two opening which highlights the Fairfax Ballet Company Youth Ensemble dancers. In addition, performers will have new costumes in select scenes, and there'll be enhanced sets for the Kingdom of the Sweets.

Musci has been dancing for 12-1/2 years, the last eight with the Russell School of Ballet. "I was put into baby ballet classes when I was younger, and I fell in love with ballet and decided to continue," she said. "There's always something you can improve upon, and it inspires me to keep going."

She describes her character, Clara, as "an



Emily Kikta and Aaron Sanz performing with the New York City Ballet.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW YORK CITY BALLET



Chantilly High's Caroline Musci

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEBBIE WERFEL

energetic, trusting, 13-year-old girl who's excited about her new nutcracker. Although she can be almost snobby and is a little upset



PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW YORK CITY BALLET

Emily Kikta

when she doesn't get a doll at the party like everybody else."

Musci said dancing this role is a "dream come true. Clara is such a wonderful character to get to portray, and she's just so full of life that it's exciting to make her come alive onstage." However, she added, "It can also be nerve-wracking because Clara's such an important part of the show, and it's up to the dancer portraying her to decide how to interpret her. I especially do that in the pantomime movements within the party scene; there are some points where I look toward either Clara's friends, her mother or the Nutcracker."

As for dancing with two professionals from the New York City Ballet, Musci said, "It's really special to get to watch them

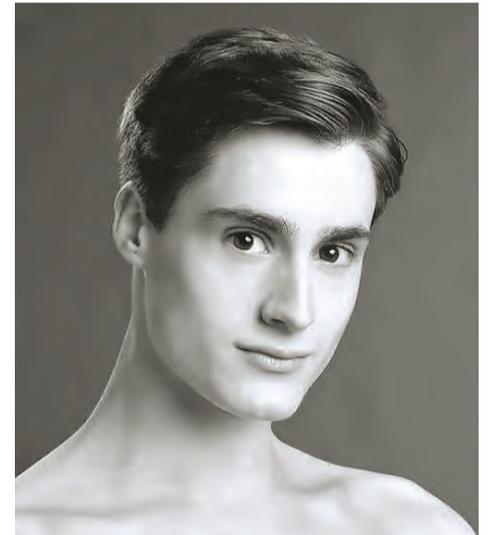


PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW YORK CITY BALLET

Aaron Sanz

dance in person. It's truly spectacular and inspiring. And it's also really cool getting to see them perform up close, rather than from the audience."

She's also been impressed with how Kikta and Sanz "present themselves in class. They're confident in what they do. Their dancing has very nice artistry, and they have the stamina to keep performing even when they're very tired."

Musci's favorite number in the show is "Marzipan" because "it's a fun and energetic piece, but also fancy. And it's fun to watch the soloists dancing together." Overall, she said, "The audience will like how passionate all the performers are about their dancing. People will be able to tell how much everyone really loves to dance."

# Market Fails Affordable Housing Targets

Progress insufficient, challenges and solutions discussed.

By MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The National Capital Region, which includes Fairfax County, is not meeting the regional housing targets set by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments: COG in 2019. Jill Norcross, executive director of the Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance (NVAHA), told guests at the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce's panel discussion INNOVATE 2024 on Nov. 14 that COG had determined in 2019 that the region was short 374,000 units of new housing and needed to get them developed by 2030, with 75 percent targeted at low and moderate-income workers.

"That's not what the market is delivering," Norcross said.

The COG targets aimed to guarantee an adequate supply of affordable housing for the region's current residents and the workforce, as well as the anticipated influx of new residents and workers. MWCOG stated

SEE MARKET FAILS, PAGE 10



SCG DEVELOPMENT

The two-phase affordable rental housing development in Fairfax County, Somas at McLean Metro, is under construction, developed by SCG Development, for households earning between 30-60 percent of AMI.

Sign up for  
**FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION**  
to any or all of our 15 papers  
[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/SUBSCRIBE](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/SUBSCRIBE)

Same Company, Same Employees,  
Same Great Value - Now Celebrating 20 Years!

## TWO POOR TEACHERS

### Kitchen and Bathroom Remodeling



- Electrical (ELE)
- Gas Fitting (GFC)
- Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVA)
- Plumbing (PLB)
- Residential Building (RBC)

Fully Insured & Class A Licensed  
Since 1999



Free Estimates **703-999-2929**

Check if your contractor is licensed at the state level  
<http://www.DPOR.virginia.gov>

Visit our website: [www.twopoorteachers.com](http://www.twopoorteachers.com)

# John Mason Honored by General Assembly



From left are Karen and John Mason Jr., Charles Mason and dad Jeff, and Jeanette Mason.



From left are Dan Helmer; Saddam Salim; John Mason Jr. and wife Karen; Charles, Jeff and Jeanette Mason; and David Bulova.

## ‘Emblematic of the unflinching spirit of our veterans.’

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

A special tribute was given to the late John Mason, an Army veteran and former Fairfax mayor, during last week’s Veterans Day ceremony in Fairfax City. Present were members of Mason’s family, including his wife of more than 60 years, Jeanette.

“John Mason left an incredible legacy,” said Del. David Bulova (D-11th). “And sons John Jr. and Jeff are also both Army veterans, so service runs deep in the Mason family.”

Born Jan. 27, 1935, in Springfield, Mass., John Mason had a distinguished, 20-year career in the U.S. Army before retiring as a colonel in 1976. His service included two tours in Vietnam, plus a follow-on command tour with the 5th Battalion, 68th Armor, 8th Infantry Division. His final assignment was as Assistant Director, Operations and Readiness, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, at Army Headquarters at the Pentagon.

After retiring, Mason became vice president of Science Applica-

tions International Corp. (SAIC) and director of the Transportation Policy and Analysis Center. As a politician, he served on the Fairfax City Council from 1986-1990 and was mayor from 1990-2002.

Mason was also executive director of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) and president and CEO of the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton. He also served on the boards of several organizations, including the Fairfax Symphony, Arts Council of Fairfax County, Fall for the Book Festival, and Mason Housing Inc. at George Mason University. He died Feb. 7, at age 89, after a second battle with cancer.

“I think of John often,” said Bulova. “When I pass his white, military headstone along Judicial Drive, I can still hear his voice in my head. And I often take inspiration about what he would do in a particular situation.”

“To the American Legion and VFW, as well as all of our veterans here, as all of you know, for our democracy to be strong, it needs to be both defended and nurtured,” he continued. “So thank you for allowing us to honor Col. John Mason and, in doing so, to honor all our veterans who served with distinction – and then, without being asked, gave back even more.

“What a blessing it is to have these men and women. I’m so incredibly grateful for your service. Today we wanted to recognize John because he was emblematic of the



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION  
Eric Parkhurst.

unflinching spirit of our veterans. Sen. Salim and I were pleased to introduce identical resolutions [in the Virginia General Assembly] celebrating John’s life.”

Next, Salim gave a detailed account of Mason’s military career assignments. Then Del. Dan Helmer (D-10th) joined Bulova and Salim to present the two framed resolutions to Mason’s family.

The final speaker during the Veterans Day ceremony was American Legion Post 177 Commander Eric Parkhurst. “As evidenced today by John Mason’s remembrance and our keynote speaker Frank Larkin, veterans don’t stop when they leave the military,” said Parkhurst. “They continue to serve their communities, state and nation.”

Exemplifying his point, he then explained how the local veteran

community, plus area residents and businesses, recently came together to collect and deliver desperately needed supplies for Hurricane Helene victims in Western North Carolina. (See story, “People Coming Together for Good in Time of Need” in the Oct. 30 Connection, <https://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2024/oct/30/people-coming-together-for-good-in-time-of-need/>)

“We collected \$60,000 in donations which were used to buy over 30,000 pounds of supplies,” said Parkhurst. “We also had a goal of sending 100 generators to Yancey and McDowell counties. Originally, they said they wouldn’t have power there until December – now they’re saying early spring.

“Their power plants were devastated. We put out a call for money for generators, and when we hit 100, we bumped up our goal to 177. We passed that number and filled up an entire tractor trailer with 192 generators. And that’s thanks to our neighbors, community, veterans service organizations and other organizations that all pitched in and came together as Americans helping Americans.”

Parkhurst then expressed appreciation to everyone attending the Nov. 11 ceremony “to honor the greatest men and women who served this nation with dedication and valor. Today we’ve remembered those who stood in defense of our freedoms, who shouldered the weight of protecting our democra-

cy and who sacrificed so much so that we could live in peace.”

However, he added, “Our gratitude must extend beyond this one day. Every day is an opportunity to show appreciation for our veterans – not just in words, but in actions. We can support organizations that serve veterans, reach out to those who may need companionship or a helping hand, and teach younger generations about the sacrifices that keep our country safe.

“Let us also remember our active-duty members who, even now, are stationed across the globe to protect and preserve the values we cherish. We owe them a debt of gratitude, and we honor their dedication and strength, along with that of their families.”

“As commander of this American Legion post, I’m humbled by the legacy left us by those who served before,” continued Parkhurst. “It’s our duty to carry forward that commitment to service, to stand as guardians to memory and to be advocates for every veteran who’s worn the uniform with pride. Thank you for being here, for honoring our veterans and for continuing to uphold the principles that keep our nation strong and free. God bless our veterans, our military and the United States of America.”

Monday night, the House of Representatives passed the Not Just a Number Act, bipartisan legislation introduced by U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) to require the Department of Veterans Affairs to take a more comprehensive look at the factors that best prevent veteran suicide. The legislation passed as part of the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act by a vote of 389-9.

“Veteran suicide is a complex problem that requires a holistic approach,” said Connolly. “But as it stands now, the VA is limited in the data it can use to study and ultimately prevent veteran suicide. This issue is too important for the VA to be operating with one hand tied behind its back . . . We owe our veterans a debt of gratitude that can never truly be repaid,” Connolly continued. “Let us honor our troops not just in words, but in our actions, by standing alongside them and their families and seeing this important piece of legislation signed into law.”

The Not Just a Number Act requires the Depart-

ment of Veterans Affairs to expand its scope when studying veteran suicide data. Instead of focusing solely on VA health care utilization, the bill mandates a more holistic approach, considering factors such as education, job training, housing, and other relevant socioeconomic factors. This approach will allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the complex, interconnected factors that contribute to veteran suicide and will paint a more accurate picture of the multifaceted challenges our veterans face, enabling us to develop more effective support systems and interventions.

Text of the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act, which includes the Not Just a Number Act, is available here. [https://connolly.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hr\\_8371.pdf](https://connolly.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hr_8371.pdf)

If you or a veteran you know is in crisis, please call the Veterans Crisis Line at 988 and Press 1, or text 838255. Help is available 24/7, and you don’t have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect with caring, qualified responders.

# Fairfax City Celebrates America’s Veterans

FROM PAGE 3

and we can’t take it for granted.”

With the exception of Native Americans, he said, everyone in the U.S. came from someplace else. “They escaped from oppression and restrictions that motivated them to try something new,” said Larkin. “And we benefited from their eclectic, diverse mix of ideas. We owe a lot of gratitude to the men and women who formed what this nation became.”

Two years ago, he attended a ceremony for Medal of Honor recipients. “It’s the highest military award given to someone in uniform,” said Larkin. “Nobody competes for it; you receive it, and usually for extraordinary behavior and unbelievable acts of courage. But they all said, ‘I don’t deserve this; others do more than I.’

“They were dealing with inner demons and the complex rubric of post-traumatic stress. They see, hear and experience things [in wartime] that burden them and chew them up from the inside until they come out. And that’s where my work on suicide prevention is focused. These folks with their invisible wounds – often further complicated by substance-use disorder – are all in pain.”

Larkin said many are dealing with undiagnosed traumatic brain injury “from exposure to our weapons systems, IEDs and other forces that are ripping their brain circuitry apart. But it can’t be seen with our current imaging, and there’s a serious gap where this defaults toward the mental-health side of the ledger. But we need to recognize and understand that [it’s a medical problem].”

He then shared the story of his son Ryan, a “highly decorated, top-performing Navy SEAL. He trained for combat, deployed to Iraq twice and to Afghanistan, Lebanon and elsewhere. After his fourth deployment, he came home and had trouble sleeping and had nightmares.

“He became hypervigilant and was dealing with issues of memory loss, balance and vision, and some of his cognitive functions started to change. Ryan had bouts of anxiety and became short-tempered. This once smil-

ing and jovial person had changed. He went to get help – and because we lacked the diagnostic tools, his TBI wasn’t acknowledged.”

Larkin said Ryan’s story isn’t unique to him but is unique to veterans – especially those who’ve served in the last 20 years. However, he said he’s finding “more and more” that those who served in Vietnam and Korea also sustained TBIs.

“Society doesn’t listen or understand, and people are quick to judge,” said Larkin. “That’s why, when these folks come back from their experiences, they don’t feel like they’ve got an environment where they can talk about it. This is why veterans service organizations are so important, because they create that tribal dynamic that these men and women separated from. As they become more isolated, bad things happen, so these organizations are the glue holding together a lot of our veterans.

“Ryan said, ‘There’s something wrong with my head, but nobody’s listening.’ And that still happens today when dealing with Defense Health and the VA [Veterans Administration]. Like most bureaucracies – and what we’ve witnessed with Gulf War Syndrome, Agent Orange, burn pits and so forth – we have to rub their nose in it before they start taking action to attack this head on.”

“And that’s what I’m all about; but I’m there to help them because the consequence on our force is too great,” continued Larkin. “Undiagnosed TBI is a serious, national-security issue. How can we expect our force to perform in this modern-warfare environment? But now they’re starting to understand, and I thank my SEAL community and Special Operations compatriots for helping push this [issue] into the larger Department of Defense. We’ll see where it goes.”

When Ryan could no longer perform, he was honorably discharged after 10 years of service. “But you always want to be of value and be part of the team; and being ripped away from it created a whole other wound,” said Larkin. “He felt like he’d abandoned his team, and shame went with that. He was going to be a career guy – he loved being a Navy SEAL.”

Over the two years when Ryan began manifesting symptoms, he was prescribed over 40 different medications. One night, he told his father, “If anything happens to

me, donate my brain for TBI research.” Said Larkin, “I told him I’d be there for him, and we’d get through this.”

“On the morning of April 23, 2017, my wife and I came home from an overnight trip with family and found that Ryan had taken his life in the basement. It rips your heart in half, and it never heals. He was dressed in his Navy SEAL Team 7 T-shirt and red, white and blue board shorts and was next to his Navy medals, ribbons and other insignia. He was about solutions; and when no one listened to him, he wanted to prove that something was wrong. And that’s why he took his life – not to take the easy way out.”

Honoring his son’s wishes, Larkin had his brain examined at Walter Reed Medical Center in Bethesda. “They told us he had a serious, undiagnosed, microscopic TBI,” said Larkin. “Plastic explosives from his own training, from training others and from being in combat affected his brain’s circuitry. If that’s damaged, it doesn’t work right. And we’re finding now that almost 100 percent of this exposure is coming from the training environment. Your body keeps score and there are consequences.

“Veterans struggling with invisible wounds aren’t crazy – they very well may be injured, and that’s how we have to treat and view them. They’re not getting any answers; they’re just getting labeled.” Larkin said veterans’ military units were their “connection, purpose and validation. But as they become separated and isolated from their tribes, they lose their identity and dignity.”

He then urged people to go to [warriorcall.org](http://warriorcall.org) to make and take phone calls from people who’ve served their country in the military or as a first responder. “Say, ‘How are you doing? Tell me about yourself,’” said Larkin. “Over 55 nonprofits are associated with it, including veterans service organizations, like the American Legion and VFW.

“As a firefighter/paramedic in Annapolis, I respond to calls involving veterans’ suicides on a regular basis. These folks valiantly served, and we have a responsibility to take care of those who took care of us.”

# Market Fails Affordable Housing Targets

FROM PAGE 7

that the purpose of those new units was to “advance metropolitan Washington’s livability and address housing production and affordability challenges.” The COG Board endorsed the 2030 targets at its September 2019 meeting.

Alex Orfinger, publisher of the Washington Business Journal, led the Dulles Chamber’s three-person panel: Norcross, Regina Pinkney, business development officer, Virginia Housing, and David Tarter, executive director of the Center for Real Estate Entrepreneurship at George Mason University.

“One thing that drives me nuts is to go past a Metro station and see just parking lots ... It’s such a waste of this opportunity,” said Orfinger.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published the area’s “statistically reliable” Median Family Income (MFI), previously referred to as Area Median Income (AMI), for a family of four on April 1, 2024; it is \$154,700. Affordable housing is defined as not exceeding 30 percent of gross income.

Tarter said that people who work in the region cannot afford to live here, and “ultimately, that’s going to be a big problem for the economy.” Housing intertwines with work and education. “Ultimately, the solutions are going to have to be intertwined as well,” Tarter said.

The panelists deliberated on the challenges and obstacles to affordable housing, including variables such as macroeconomics, which pertain to the overall performance, structure, behaviors and decision-making in an economy. Challenges also include high interest rates, construction costs and zoning regulations.

The panel also explored potential solutions to these challenges, including enhancing density around transit areas, expediting zoning development processes, and reducing parking requirements. Panel members emphasized the need for collaboration among governmental agencies, developers, and others to address housing and workforce development issues.

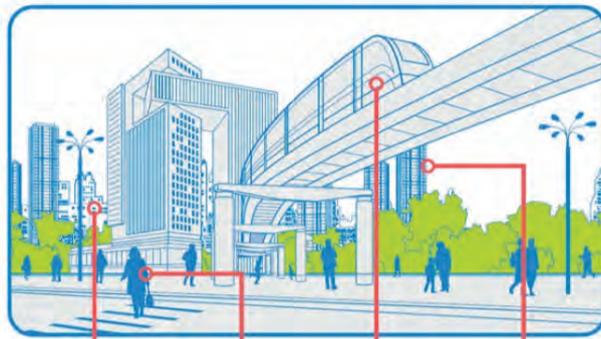
The most critical challenge was rising commercial construction interest rates. Tarter said that when interest rates went up, it became more expensive to deliver a product. “Think [about] projects that penciled out three years ago when interest rates were ‘X

SEE MARKET FAILS, PAGE 11

## What Is COG?

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is comprised of 24 jurisdictions of the National Capital Region’s local governments and their governing officials, plus area members of the Maryland and Virginia legislatures and the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. COG provides a focus for action on issues of regional concern. Source: Resolution R13-2024 - Adopting Regional Principles for Equitable Development

## Transit Oriented Communities leverage the region’s investment in HCTs



- Housing affordable at all income levels and family sizes
- Expanding opportunity by co-locating housing, jobs, and amenities
- Affordable, environmentally friendly travel options
- Housing, office options that use less energy



The creation of transit-oriented communities is also a key strategy to help achieve COG’s regional housing targets, adopted by the board in 2019.

COG staff shared that more must be done if the region is to meet its target of 75,000 additional housing units by 2030, beyond the 245,000 new units already assumed. Additionally, the 2030 Housing Targets call for 75% of the additional housing units to be located within HCTs and Activity Centers, and 75% of the units affordable to low- and middle-income households.

MWCOG.ORG/  
NEWSROOM/2023/02/16/  
Site affordable rental units at High Capacity Transit areas.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS  
Center, Supervisor Walter Alcorn; (to Alcorn’s right) Kerrie Wilson, chief executive director of Cornerstones; (to Alcorn’s left) Supervisor Jimmy Bierman.

## What, Where Are Fairfax County Affordable Rental Programs?

The Fairfax County Housing and Community Development Rental Housing website provides an overview of specific affordable housing option programs. Nearly all programs have restrictions, such as requiring vouchers, and are restricted by income, age or disability, are either currently closed or waitlisted, with the exception of some Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties-Virginia Housing.

Housing Choice Vouchers (formerly Section 8): The waiting list is currently closed.

Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Project-Based Voucher (Public Housing) Waitlist applications are currently closed.

Fairfax County Rental Program (FCRP): Waiting lists are currently closed but third parties manage other properties; check individual websites.

Senior Housing: As vacancies become available at each property, they are filled with applicants currently on the community’s waitlist.

Magnet Housing: After filling out an application, when a unit is available, the Vacancy Coordinator contacts the next waiting list applicant for screening

Privately Owned Rental Housing Options: Unknown; contact desired properties

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties-Virginia Housing; can include apartment complexes and single-family homes that are “committed affordable.” Check sites by zip code at VirginiaHousingSearch.com. Some properties might have vacancies.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS  
Alex Orfinger, market president and publisher of the Washington Business Journal, led the Dulles Chamber’s three-person panel.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS  
Jill Norcross, executive director of The Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance.



BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS  
David Tarter, executive director of the Center for Real Estate Entrepreneurship at George Mason University.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS  
Regina Pinkney, business development officer, Virginia Housing,

FY 2024 Income Limits Summary

FY 2024 Income Limit Area	Median Family Income <a href="#">Click for More Detail</a>	FY 2024 Income Limit Category	Persons in Family							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD HUD Metro FMR Area	\$154,700	Very Low (50%) Income Limits (\$) <a href="#">Click for More Detail</a>	54,150	61,900	69,650	<b>77,350</b>	83,550	89,750	95,950	102,150
		Extremely Low Income Limits (\$)* <a href="#">Click for More Detail</a>	32,500	37,150	41,800	<b>46,400</b>	50,150	53,850	57,550	61,250
		Low (80%) Income Limits (\$) <a href="#">Click for More Detail</a>	68,500	78,250	88,050	<b>97,800</b>	105,650	113,450	121,300	129,100

**NOTE:** HUD generally uses the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) area definitions in the calculation of income limit program parameters. However, to ensure that program parameters do not vary significantly due to area definition changes, HUD has used custom geographic definitions for the **Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD HUD Metro FMR Area**.

HUD

HUD FY 2024 income limit summary, the Median Family Income for a one-person household, the 'Low (80 percent) income limit is \$68,500. 'Very Low Income (50 percent), limit is \$54,150, and Extremely Low Income, limit is \$32,500.

## Market Fails Affordable Housing Targets

FROM PAGE 10

plus 40 percent higher interest carry.' They don't pencil out anymore. Construction costs went up," Tarter said.

The second factor is zoning. It determines what actions are permissible. "You can either do it 'by right,' in which case you only have to ask for permission, or you can seek a special exception rezoning," Tarter said. They are influenced by the government's willingness to grant them, according to Tarter.

Pinkney told a personal story about how zoning significantly hinders inventory. She intended to buy a dilapidated duplex as an investment property and construct a new one. Pinkney then had a conversation with the zoning office. She discovered that tearing down the dilapidated duplex would prevent her from constructing another one. "I would only be allowed to put up a single family unit," Pinkney said.

Pinkney explained that the outreach department of Virginia Housing collaborates extensively with planning district commissions and

### 2030 Housing Targets



Read more about the targets in COG's report, *The Future of Housing in Greater Washington*, and learn how COG is building on this work through its *Region United Planning Framework* for 2030.

SCREENSHOT MWCOG.ORG/NEWSROOM/2023/02/16/

### 2030 Housing Targets, COG.

provides grants. "[They] help facilitate feasibility studies as well as mitigate some of the impact and cost of asking for exceptions," she said.

Norcross elaborated on how current zoning restricts the construction of affordable housing, leaving

only a small number of "by-right" properties available for development. By-right refers to a development that meets all current regulations, including the zoning code and parking requirements and is not subject to local officials' discretion. SEE MARKET FAILS, PAGE 15

- Housing Choice Voucher +
- Rental Assistance Demonstration Program +
- The Fairfax County Rental Program +
- Senior Housing +
- Magnet Housing +
- Privately Owned Rental Housing Options +
- Project Based Voucher Program +

FAIRFAX COUNTY RENTAL HOUSING

Demand for affordable rental housing for households with low and moderate income is high in Fairfax County despite the county's affordable rental housing programs and privately owned affordable rental housing options, such as those pictured. Access Fairfax County Rental Housing for more information on each program and current vacancy status.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

**alexandria**  
REHABILITATION & HEALTHCARE CENTER

Helping you Transition from  
**Hospital to Home**

Subacute Rehab • Long Term Care • Memory Care  
Respite Care • Pulmonary Care • Urgent SNF™

900 Virginia Avenue, Alexandria, VA, 22302  
(703) 684-9100 | alexandriahc.com

## Reach your audience in 2024

Turn to the Connection Newspapers digital and print advertising options to reach customers in your community!

- EMAIL BLASTS
- DIGITAL BILLBOARDS
- FRONT PAGE SHOUTOUT
- SOCIAL MEDIA
- SPONSORED CONTENT

For Advertising: Call 703.778.9431 or Email sales@connectionnewspapers.com

**THE CONNECTION** Newspapers & Online  
**Alexandria Gazette Packet**  
**Mount Vernon Gazette**  
**Potomac ALMANAC**

www.connectionnewspapers.com/advertising

# ENTERTAINMENT

NOV. 2 TO JAN. 12, 2025

## 10th Annual Glass International.

At Workhouse Arts Center, Vulcan Gallery, 9518 workhouse Way, Lorton. Workhouse Arts Center is proud to present the 10th Annual Glass International, an exhibition highlighting the depth and breadth of contemporary functional and sculptural glass art. In celebration of Workhouse Arts' 10th year exhibiting glass from artists throughout the United States, in 2024, they opened eligibility to include artists working internationally.

## FRESH EVERGREEN WREATHS AND DECORATIONS

Assistance League of Northern Virginia (ALNV) is partnering with Lynch Creek Farm to offer a variety of fresh evergreen wreaths and decorations for your home or as holiday gifts. Lynch Creek offers a beautiful assortment of fresh wreaths, centerpieces, swags, and tabletop items, all hand-crafted from natural materials such as noble fir, pine cones, berries, and white pine. These long-lasting arrangements are perfect for autumn and Thanksgiving or the winter holidays. ALNV, a non-profit providing assistance to needy students across the region, will receive 15% of the proceeds from your order. Use the following link to place your order: <https://tinyurl.com/LynchCreekBeauty> To order by phone, call 1-800-426-0781 and mention our campaign ID #9630516. Orders will be sent directly to your selected recipients. You can specify the dates that your orders will ship, and you can include multiple recipients in the same order. Standard Ground Shipping is offered to the contiguous 48 states for all orders at a flat rate of \$4.95 per item. The deadline for submitting orders is December 15, 2024.

## POTOMAC HARMONY CHORUS IS SEEKING SINGERS

If you enjoy holiday music, this is for you. Potomac Harmony Chorus will be rehearsing holiday classics during November and December and you can sing along! No experience necessary! No cost! Just a love of music required! They sing a cappella, are an open and safe environment for women and non-binary singers, and love what they do. Singing brings joy, so come get some! Contact Jackie Bottash at [JackieBottash@gmail.com](mailto:JackieBottash@gmail.com).

THRU JAN. 12, 2025

**Winter Lantern Festival.** At Tysons Corner Center, 8025 Galleria Drive, McLean. Thursdays to Sundays, 5-9:30 p.m. The Winter Lantern Festival is a must-see display of electrifying lights made from more than 1,000 handmade Chinese lanterns. Guests will enter and wander through a wonderland of light and color inspired by Chinese myths, legends, and zodiacs. Attractions will include a bounce house, sugar paintings, dino ride, interactive light swings, see-saws, tunnels, and many majestic creatures. Guests can also enjoy live entertainment by the Zigong Acrobatic Troupe, a new treat for this year, along with food, drinks and gifts.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 20

**Senior Movie Day, featuring, "Fly Me to the Moon."** 10 a.m. At the movie theater at Reston Town Center.



The Washington Balalaika will perform a concert on Sunday, Nov. 24, 2024 at St. Stephen's United Methodist Church in Burke.

Sponsored by Reston Association. Free for 55+. Registration is not required. Just show up.

THURSDAY/NOV. 21

**Jeremy Denk Master Class.** 2-4 p.m. in Harris Theatre at GMU, Fairfax. Observe as Jeremy Denk leads a master class with four George Mason University Dewberry School of Music students, working respectively with them in 30-minute sessions. This event is free, but registration is required. Visit [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

FRIDAY/NOV. 22

**Line Dancing.** 6:30-8:30 p.m. At The Winery at Bull Run, Centreville. Boots, experience, and tickets not required when you come and join instructor Karen, with BOOM Fitness, for line dancing lessons in country, hip hop, and pop in our Main Tasting Room. Come out and enjoy wine, hard cider, and boot scootin' fun!

SATURDAY/NOV. 23

**Holiday Gingerbread House Decorating.** 10 a.m.-Noon. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingle-side Ave., McLean. Celebrate the holidays with us! Families decorate a gingerbread house to make their own one-of-kind designs. We'll supply a pre-built house, frosting and traditional and not-so-traditional toppings. Price is per gingerbread house. Note: Parental supervision is required for children ages 16 years and younger. Products may contain dairy, gluten, eggs and other allergens.

SUNDAY/NOV. 24

**Traditional Celtic Music.** 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. At the Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Ronn McFarlane on lute and Carolyn Surrick on the viola da Gamba are compelling performers who have both immersed themselves in music from the Renaissance and Baroque as well as music from the Celtic lands, adding their own compositions as they evolve. Tickets must be purchased in advance at <https://oldbrogue.com/celtic-concert-series-fall-2024> - \$21 plus tax general admission.

SUNDAY/NOV. 24

**Native American Heritage Celebration.** 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. At Centreville Regional Library, Centreville Meeting Room 1, Centreville Meeting Room 2, Centreville. Celebrate Native American Heritage Month with an authentic cultural presentation and dance demonstration by the Eastern Woodland Revital-



The Reston Town Center Holiday Parade and Tree Lighting takes place on Friday, Nov. 29, 2024 at Reston Town Center.

ization. Performances include the Harvest Dance, the Eastern Blanket Dance, and a craft for kids (while supplies last). Registration not required. All ages welcome.

SUNDAY/NOV. 24

**Holiday Vendor Market.** 12-5 p.m. At the Winery at Bull Run, Centreville. Enjoy the joyous company of friends as you get a start on your holiday shopping. Don't miss out on exclusive discounts and unique finds for everyone on your gift list! Secure a ticket now, and let the holiday cheer begin at The Winery. Tickets are only \$10 and include your first glass of wine, a raffle ticket for our All-Vendor raffle basket, and access to the fantastic artisan vendors at the Holiday Market.

SUNDAY/NOV. 24

**"My Father's Dragon."** 1 and 4 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Nine-year-old Elmer Elevator is on a mission to rescue a baby dragon held captive on Wild Island. How will he pull off such an adventurous rescue? With pure luck—plus chewing gum, lollipop sticks, and rubber bands! Visit [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

SUNDAY/NOV. 24

**Traditional Celtic Music.** 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. At the Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Featuring Ronn McFarlane and Carolyn Surrick. Both of these distinguished artists have been champions of their respective instruments for decades: McFarlane on lute and Surrick on viola da gamba. Visit the website: [www.lfcm.us/ronn-mcfarlane-and-carolyn-surrick](http://www.lfcm.us/ronn-mcfarlane-and-carolyn-surrick)

SUNDAY/NOV. 24

**Washington Balalaika Concert.** 3 p.m. At St. Stephen's United Methodist Church, 9203 Braddock Road, Burke. Fall concerts revolve around The Mystery of Romance, celebrating the joy it can bring, as well as its more sorrowful moments. The program includes Tchaikovsky's familiar "None but the Lonely Heart," the heart-rending "Adagio in 6" attributed to Albinoni, and Rachmaninov's "Harvest

of Sorrow." To purchase tickets go to [www.balalaika.org](http://www.balalaika.org).

NOV. 25, AND DEC. 2 AND 9

**Pet Nights with Santa.** 6 - 8 p.m. At Tysons Corner Center in Santa's Chalet - Lower Level near Wasabi, in McLean. Tysons Corner Center invites your furry friend to dress in their holiday best for photos with Santa - Sponsored by the Veterinary Emergency Group. This beloved event has become a signature theme night during the Tysons Holiday season. Shoppers can bring their furry friends for memorable photos with Santa, along with treats and fun giveaways. Visit the website: [www.TysonsCornerCenter.com](http://www.TysonsCornerCenter.com).

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 27

**2024 Turkey Trot 5K and 10 K.** 2 p.m. At The Winery at Bull Run, Centreville. Come celebrate the holiday early with this fun pre-Thanksgiving Turkey Trot! Enjoy this scenic 5k/10k that will run through Manassas National Battlefield. This is a new race location for the 2024 Sippin Series season. Runners Receive 1 Glass of Wine from the Winery at Bull Run, Finisher Medal, Technical (Drift) Event Shirt, & A Chip Timed Event. Benefits Manassas Battlefield Trust.

FRIDAY/NOV. 29

**Reston Town Center Holiday Parade and Tree Lighting.** 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. At Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. Tree lighting at end of Reston Holiday Parade. A day of celebration, beginning with the nationally ranked holiday parade (perennially a USA Today top 10) and ending with the tree lighting and other festivities. Train and carriage rides, a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus, ice skating, great shopping, and more throughout the day. Visit the website: <https://www.restontowncenter.com/event/3797/>

SATURDAY/NOV. 30

**Canadian Brass: Making Spirits Bright.** 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Canadian Brass kicks off the holiday season with a program of original arrangements and

signature takes on beloved classics such as "I'll Be Home for Christmas," "Christmas Time is Here," "Silver Bells," "Jingle Bell Rock," and songs of Hanukkah. Visit [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

SATURDAY/NOV. 30

**Second Annual Beaver Boogie 5K.** 10 a.m. At Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. The Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP) will host its second-annual Beaver Boogie 5K at Lake Accotink Park. More than just another fun run, the Beaver Boogie is a great opportunity to join with family, friends and neighbors in supporting one of Fairfax County's largest and most visited parks. The event runs through the park, creating a scenic and picture-perfect atmosphere for all runners and walkers to enjoy themselves while being active. Registration is \$25 for each participant for the 5K Fun Run/Walk. Additionally, racers may also purchase a \$10 pasta dinner meal deal to be hosted at Kilroy's on Friday, Nov. 29 from 5 to 7 p.m.

SATURDAY/NOV. 30

**Turkey Trot 5K.** 9 a.m. Meets at Langley High School, McLean. Join McLean Crew Club and Langley Crew Club for a Turkey Trot 5K. The friendly rivals are joining together as one team to support and strengthen rowing in the McLean and Great Falls community. Proceeds from the event will be shared equally between the two teams. In addition to a scenic 5K run, there will be a deejay with music and a coffee truck for specialty coffee and hot chocolate, starting at 8 a.m. on the day of the trot. For those who cannot join in person, consider registering for the virtual trot. Registration Fee: 5K is \$50 through Race Day. All pre-registered runners will receive a commemorative shirt. Register here: <https://potomac.enmotive.com/events/register/2024-langley-crew-turkey-trot-5k>

SATURDAY/NOV. 30

**Small Business Saturday.** 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Building 16 and Building 11, Lorton. Shop

# ENTERTAINMENT



Winterfest takes place Dec. 5-7, 2024 at Brown's Chapel Park in Reston.



Enjoy Holiday Gingerbread House Decorating on Saturday, Nov. 23, 2024 at the McLean Community Center in McLean.

Small and Support Workhouse Artists on Small Business Saturday! Save 20% on one-of-a-kind handcrafted artwork and retail merchandise. Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org>.

## SUNDAY/DEC. 1

**Take 6.** At 2 p.m. at GMU's Center for the Arts, Fairfax. The most awarded a cappella group in history, Take 6, brings its superlative vocal genius to the Center for a gospel-infused holiday concert.

## WEDNESDAY/DEC. 4

**Legislative Town Hall.** 6:30 to 8 p.m. At Lake Anne Community Center, 1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston. State Senator Jennifer B. Boysko, Delegate Irene Shin, and Delegate Karen Keys-Gamarra will host a Town Hall on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, to provide constituents with updates on legislative accomplishments, initiatives from the past year and a preview of the upcoming legislative session. The event is open to the public. Constituents are encouraged to attend and participate.

## THURSDAY/DEC. 5

**Woman's Club of McLean 54th Annual Holiday Homes Tour.**

Meet at the McLean Racquet and Health Club, 1472 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Leave at 10:30 a.m. to tour four homes decorated for the holidays. Finish the trip with lunch at the club for anyone who would like to socialize. Proceeds go to McLean Station 1, the McLean Elementary schools, McLean middle school musicians, Share, and other school programs. Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased at:

- ❖ Mesmeralda's Gifts in McLean;
- ❖ McLean Hardware;
- ❖ Great Dogs of Great Falls;
- ❖ Karin's Flowers in Vienna.

## DEC. 5-7

**Winterfest.** 5 to 9 p.m. At Brown's Chapel Park, Reston. Reston Association is proud to announce the return of Winterfest, a three-day event that's perfect to kick off the holiday season. New additions include live musical performances each night, an expanded Enchanted Forest, bigger light displays on the 'Light Up the Park' walk,

a 'Grinch's Village', and a Santa Experience -all included in one spectacular event. Returning favorites are the Vendor Village for holiday shopping from local sellers, bonfires and smores, the pop-up bar, food vendors and more. Winterfest is free for all Reston Association members; admission is \$8 for non-members ages 3-17, and \$18 for non-members 18+.

## DEC. 5-7

**Used Book Sale.** 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Preview sale, Wed., Dec. 4, 2 - 5 p.m. Entry fee \$10. General sale, Thu. - Sat., Dec. 5 - 7, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Free. Bag sale, Sun., Dec. 8, 12 - 2 p.m. \$5/bag. Choose from a wide variety of high-quality used books, CDs, and DVDs. Jump start your winter holiday gifts and by-the-fire reading at bargain prices. Thousands of like new books to choose from. The Friends of the Richard Byrd Library is a nonprofit all volunteer organization. Revenue supports library programming. For more information contact the Friends at [rbfriends@gmail.com](mailto:rbfriends@gmail.com).

## EXPERIENCE THE HOLIDAYS AT COLVIN RUN MILL

**Embrace the spirit of yesteryear with festive activities at this historic site.** Join us for lantern tours, a children's holiday shopping experience and meet Santa himself!

Holiday Lantern Tour: Dec. 6-7, 5:30 or 6:30 p.m., \$12

Children's Holiday Shopping at Historic Colvin Run: Dec. 7-8, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m., \$7

Santa at the Mill: Dec. 14 (3-5:30 p.m.) & Dec. 15 (2-4:30 p.m.), \$10  
Sensory-Friendly Santa at the Mill: Dec. 14 (12:30-2:15 p.m.) & Dec. 15 (11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.), \$40 per group (up to five in a group).

## DEC. 6-7

**Voce Chamber Singers Concert: Radiant Dawn.** Friday at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at 4 p.m. At Church of the Holy Comforter, Vienna. Rediscover the cheer of the season with Voce Chamber Singers. The most popular program returns featuring Antonio Vivaldi's Gloria for soloists, choir, and chamber orchestra. Sing along with beloved

choral works by Esmail, Rutter, and Willcocks that shine with the light of morning.

## HOLIDAY ON THE FARM AT FRYING PAN FARM PARK

**Celebrate the holidays with an evening of wagon rides, animal interactions and visits with Santa.** Enjoy food, indoor activities, and cozy campfires.

Dec. 6-7, Dec. 13-14, Dec. 20-21, 4:30-7:30 p.m., \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door.

## WINTER WONDERLAND AT BURKE LAKE PARK

**Climb aboard the Holiday Express for a train ride, spin on the Carollers Carousel, play Gingerbread Man Golf and savor s'mores by the fire.** Meet Santa, sip hot chocolate and enjoy the season's warmth.

Weekends: Dec. 7-8, Dec. 14-15, Dec. 21-22, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door.

## DEC. 5-7

**Winterfest.** At Brown's Chapel Park in Reston. This three-day event promises to be even bigger than last year's event. Don't miss your chance to walk the Light Up the Park trail, enjoy s'mores at the fire-pits, sip on local adult beverages, listen to live musical performances, visit with local vendors, or bring the kids to visit with the Grinch and Santa. Free for RA members; \$8 for non-members ages 3-17; \$18 for non-members 18+.

## DEC. 5-8

**Tyson's Library Quarterly Book & Media Sale.** At Tysons Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Dates: Thursday, 5 Dec., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Friday, 6 Dec., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Saturday, 7 Dec., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday, 8 Dec., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Bag sale. \$10 for a full grocery sack or half price if less. Large selection of books and media for all ages and interests. Visit <https://www.tysonslibrary-friends.org/>

## DEC. 6-15

**"Commedia Christmas Carol."** 8 p.m. Presented by Traveling Players in Tysons Corner Center, McLean.

Adapted from Charles Dickens' haunting and heartwarming holiday classic, Commedia Christmas Carol tells the tale of Ebenezer Scrooge, an excellent man of business. To purchase tickets, and for more information about the show, visit <https://www.travelingplayers.org/performances/>

## SATURDAY/DEC. 7

**Living Nativity.** 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. At St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, 6320 Hanover Ave., Springfield. Come meet Baby Jesus and pet Delila the Camel and other animals. Bring family and friends to enjoy the greatest story of all times and live music and refreshments. This event is free. If possible, bring a toy to donate. Donations of new or lightly used toys will be distributed to local organizations that help families in Springfield. All are welcome. Visit the website: <https://www.saintchristophers.net/>

## SATURDAY/DEC. 7

**Breakfast with Santa.** 8 - 9:30 a.m.

At Tysons Corner Center in the Food Court on Level 3, McLean. Families are invited to join us for some up-close and personal time with Santa, by continuing its long-standing 'Breakfast with Santa' tradition. A complimentary catered breakfast, child-focused entertainment, and activities make this a family favorite and must-attend event during the Tysons Corner Holiday season. Sponsored by First Steps Academy and Apple Tree School. Visit the website: [www.Tysonscornercenter.com](http://www.Tysonscornercenter.com).

## SATURDAY/DEC. 7

**Squirrel Nut Zippers Christmas Caravan.** 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Swing into the holiday season with platinum-selling jazz-rock band Squirrel Nut Zippers. Serving up a boisterous blend of Delta blues, big band, klezmer jazz, and calypso sound in its holiday program Christmas Caravan, Squirrel Nut Zippers is sure to get audiences dancing along.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 7

**Holiday Homes Tour of Herndon.** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Holiday Homes Tour of Herndon started in 1979

as one of many events held in celebration of the town's centennial and has continued as an annual event since 1985. The volunteer organized tour is a much-anticipated holiday event cultivating community to showcase all that is good, beautiful and the evolving history of Herndon. The Rotary Club of Herndon-Reston is pleased to volunteer at this year's event, showcasing "The Blue House." Volunteers are needed for shifts throughout the day. Visit [www.HerndonRestonRotary.org](http://www.HerndonRestonRotary.org).

## DEC. 7-8

**Children's Holiday Gift Shopping.** 11 a.m. Ages 5-12 years. Children are accompanied by a secret shopper to assist them with purchasing holiday gifts at the Colvin Run Mill General Store. Assistants help wrap and tag gifts. Cost of gifts not included. Adults may tour the site and visit the Miller's House exhibit while waiting. Register at Fairfax County Park Authority ParkTakes web site.

## DEC. 7-8

**Holiday Train Show.** Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday noon to 4 p.m. At the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum will host its 33rd annual holiday train show with a multitude of model trains to include N (NTRAK), HO (PMC), LEGO, and G (WVMGRS) scales. The European Train Enthusiasts (ETE) group will display on Sunday. Santa is planning a stop on both days! Adults as well as children 13 and over - \$6; children 5 to 12 - \$3; 4 and under - free; museum members - free. Information on the museum and show can be found on the web: [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org) or call 703-425-9225.

## DEC. 7 TO JAN. 12, 2025

**Disney's The Hunchback of Notre Dame.** Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. The Hunchback of Notre Dame is based on the Victor Hugo novel with songs from the Disney animated feature. Set in 15th-century

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 15

Call today and receive a  
**FREE SHOWER PACKAGE**  
**PLUS \$1600 OFF**



**SAFE STEP**  
WALK-IN TUB

**1-877-591-9950**

With purchase of a new Safe Step Walk-In Tub. Not applicable with any previous walk-in tub purchase. Offer available while supplies last. No cash value. Must present offer at time of purchase. CSLB 1082165 NSCB 0082999 0083445

Be prepared before the next power outage.



**It's not just a generator.  
It's a power move.**

Receive a free 5-year warranty with qualifying purchase\* - valued at \$535.

Call 844-947-1479 to schedule your free quote!

\*Terms and Conditions apply.

**GENERAC**

**LET THE PROS HANDLE IT!** LeafFilter GUTTER PROTECTION



Say "NO" to Cleaning Out Your Gutters. Protect Your Home With LeafFilter.

**20% OFF** + **10% OFF**  
Your Entire Purchase\* Seniors + Military

++ We offer financing that fits your budget!<sup>1</sup>

**CALL TODAY FOR A FREE INSPECTION!**  
**1-877-614-6667**

\* See Representative for full warranty details. \*One coupon per household. No obligation estimate valid for 1 year. †Subject to credit approval. Call for details. AR 366920923, AZ ROC 344027, CA 1035795, CT HIC 0671520, FL CBC056678, IA C127230, ID RCE-51604, LA 559544, MA 176447, MD MHIC111225, MI 262300173, 262300318, 262300328, 262300329, 262300330, 262300331, MN R731804, MT 226192, ND 47304, NE 50145-22, 50145-23, NJ T3VH09953900, NM 408893, NV 96990, NY H-19114, H-52229, OR 218294, PA 179645, 069383, RI GC-41354, TN 10981, UT 10783658-5501, VA 2705169445, WA LEAFFW08202, WV W056912.

**CLASSIFIED**  
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM  
TO ADVERTISE IN THIS PAPER, CALL BY MONDAY 11:00 AM 703-778-9411

The Bath or Shower You've Always Wanted  
**IN AS LITTLE AS A DAY**



**\$1000 OFF\***  
AND  
**No Payments & No Interest For 18 Months\*\***  
OFFER EXPIRES 12/31/24

**BCI BATH & SHOWER**

**CALL NOW (844) 945-1631**

\*Includes product and labor; bathtub, shower or walk-in tub and wall surround. This promotion cannot be combined with any other offer. Other restrictions may apply. This offer expires 12/31/24. Each dealership is independently owned and operated. \*\*Third party financing is available for these customers who qualify. See your dealer for details. ©2024 BCI Acrylic, Inc.

1300 TABLES! Buy! Sell! Trade! VPN

**NATION'S GUN SHOW**

**NOVEMBER 22, 23 & 24**  
**DULLES EXPO**

4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly, VA 20151

**NEW HOURS! FRI: 1-8 | SAT: 9-5 | SUN: 10-5**

VA & Utah CCW Courses | (571) 237-9138

**\$1 Off One Adult Admission**

*Last Nation's Gun Show Before Christmas!!!*



www.TheNationsGunShow.com | www.ShowmastersGunShows.com



Sign up for  
**FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION**  
to any or all of our 15 papers  
[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/SUBSCRIBE](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/SUBSCRIBE)



# Domestic Violence

FROM PAGE 5

able to leave and having no choice but to stay.

Thousands of adults flee domestic violence with nowhere to land except transitional housing. Emergency shelters are often the first step for survivors fleeing abuse, which means shelters and local programs must have the resources to keep space available for victims in need. When shelters are full, survivors are often faced with an impossible decision between returning to someone who caused them harm or risking homelessness.

Housing remains a critical unmet need for survivors. In one study, 84% of survivors in domestic violence shelters say they needed help finding affordable housing. In another nationwide study, more than half of the victims who identified a need for housing services were not able to receive them.

Housing insecurity leaves survivors vulnerable. Survivors who experienced food or housing insecurity in a 12-month period faced a significantly higher likelihood of rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner in that same time period compared to those who did not have these same vulnerabilities.

Domestic violence programs provide more than emergency shelter. The National Network to End Domestic Violence found that after receiving services from a local domestic violence program, 90% of victims of domestic violence were aware of resources and knew more ways to plan for safety. Safety planning is an important step to ensure long-term security. In Fairfax County, this vital assistance comes from the Advocacy Services team in Domestic and Sexual Violence Services. To reach them for support, call 703-246-4573.

Financial violence impacts a survivor's ability to access housing. Domestic abusers commonly sabotage a victim's economic stability, making them more vulnerable to homelessness. Many survivors can't rent an apartment because their credit, rental, and work histories have been damaged.

There's a nationwide shortage of affordable, safe housing. Only a small percentage of eligible people receive public housing, and the number of low-income households who receive housing assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development programs is often far fewer than those who need it.

If you or someone you know has experienced interpersonal violence, call the Domestic and Sexual Violence 24-Hour Hotline at 703-360-7273 for more information about resources and support.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

# ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 13

Paris, the musical tells the story of Quasimodo, the deformed bell-ringer who longs to be in the outside world. Held captive by his devious caretaker, the archdeacon Dom Claude Frollo, he escapes for the day, only to be treated cruelly by all but the beautiful Romani woman, Esmeralda. Quasimodo isn't the only one captivated by her free spirit, though – the handsome Captain Phoebus and Frollo are equally enthralled. As the three vie for her attention, Frollo embarks on a mission to destroy the Roma – and it's up to Quasimodo to save them all.



The Winter Lantern Festival takes place thru Jan. 12, 2025 at Tysons Corner Center in McLean.

ing environment for children with sensory sensitivities to enjoy a memorable visit with Santa. Visit the website: [www.TysonsCornerCenter.com](http://www.TysonsCornerCenter.com).

## SUNDAY/DEC. 8

**Traditional Celtic Music.** 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. At the Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Featuring Jody Marshall's Holiday Celebration. One of the top hammered dulcimer players in America, Jody Marshall has been performing for more than a quarter century. She is accompanied by Jim Queen on fiddle, banjo and vocals, Susan Queen on bass guitar and vocals, and Paul Nahay on piano, bringing us holiday favorites old and new. Visit [jodymarshall.net](http://jodymarshall.net)

## SUNDAY/DEC. 8

**Santa Cares: A Sensory Friendly Experience.** 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Tysons Corner Center is pleased to offer a Sensory Santa experience this Holiday season, providing a calm and welcom-

## SATURDAY/DEC. 14

**Historic House Tours.** 10:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. At Sunrise at Silas Burke House, 9619 Burke Lake Road, Burke. The Burke Historical Society will lead free tours of the historic house located on the grounds of Sunrise at Silas Burke House. Tours are free and reservations are not required.

## DEC. 14-15

**The Nutcracker.** 3 p.m. At Centreville High School, 6001 Union Mill Road, Clifton. Presented by Mia Saunders Ballet. This production is more than a performance—it's part of MSB's Season of Giving. All proceeds from the event will support the Centreville High School Drama Boosters' scholarship fund and the nonprofit CaringBridge, which connects families and caregivers with vital resources

during health challenges. Tickets: \$12 are available online at [www.MiaSaundersBallet.com](http://www.MiaSaundersBallet.com) or at the door.

## MONDAY/DEC. 16

**Legislative Town Hall.** 6:30-8 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. State Senator Jennifer B. Boyko and Delegate Rip Sullivan will host a Town Hall to provide constituents with updates on legislative accomplishments, initiatives from the past year, and the upcoming legislative session. The event is open to the public. Constituents are encouraged to attend and participate. Question and answer period will follow the update by legislators.

## Local Nonprofits

FROM PAGE 2

day-Friday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; and Saturday, 9-11 a.m. Bring items to 3160 Campbell Drive in Fairfax City.

❖ The Lamb Center is also seeking \$25 gift cards to Target, Walmart, Giant, McDonald's and Chick-fil-A. For Walmart and Giant, it's best to purchase them in the store and request that they're "restricted" so they can't be used to purchase non-grocery items like alcohol. For more information, contact Marisa Alonso at [\[alonso@thelambcenter.org\]\(mailto:alonso@thelambcenter.org\).](mailto:marisay-</a></p>
</div>
<div data-bbox=)

❖ In addition, The Lamb Center needs particular supplies for its guests: Coffee cups (no Styrofoam), sturdy 9-inch paper plates and strong 16-ounce bowls (no Styrofoam), lemonade powder and iced-tea mix (both in large canisters), family-sized boxes of cereal, 13-gallon trash bags with drawstrings (unscented only - used for laundry), small waterproof tents, men's white undershirts (all sizes, new only) and socks (black or white).

# Market Fails Affordable Housing Targets

FROM PAGE 11

tion. There is support for increased density, especially around transit areas like the Metro, but the challenge lies in the lengthy and costly entitlement process.

"I hear from our affordable housing development partners it can be a \$1 million investment risk," Norcross said. However, she responded, "We need more supply, and so that's how we're going to get there, through that increased density."

Not in My Backyard (NIMBY) opposition, which refers to individuals who are against the development of affordable or low-income housing in their neighborhoods. Tarter said there is a stigma attached to outdated affordable housing styles, defining them as public housing that lacks maintenance and is tall and large in scale.

This stigma impacts the newer affordable housing styles of today.

Tarter countered NIMBYism, saying, "In my career, both as an attorney and as a mayor, you really got to bring people together. I think that's how you solve problems like this. ... When people do get together, they spend time with each other; they understand the problems and the solutions, and you're going to get to the finish line. But it takes a lot of effort; it's not simple to get to the finish line of affordable housing or, frankly, any housing

these days," he said.

When Orfinger asked Tarter to explain how that happens, he began by explaining what doesn't work — "steamrolling" people. The best solution is to listen to people's concerns and address them, such as blocking views with trees. "At the end of the day, you represent the whole community. So your decision is not just based on what the neighbors want, although you do have an obligation to listen to them very closely, and they're among the most closely affected," Tarter said.

The NIMBY attitude hinders progress because people misunderstand what affordable housing looks like, according to Pinkney. "[Affordable housing] looks just like your home," said Pinkney. "It may look like a huge McMansion with one entrance off the street, but there are more units in it," she said.

Getting affordable housing projects approved quickly is a fourth, but if accomplished, it can cut project costs. Accelerating the project can reduce administrative overhead and finance costs by avoiding interest payments. Norcross outlined how the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors approved a 100 percent affordable housing project within an accelerated timeline of six months. The accelerated timeline covered the receipt, review and approval of the application.

"Normally, that would take 18 to 24 months, so that cut down on the time cost for the developer ... [and] from Loudoun County

government, who is putting money in the project," Norcross said. However, it requires a significant amount of intentionality and a laser-like focus from everyone involved. Norcross stated that they implemented this strategy for data centers so they could apply it to housing as well.

Orfinger inquired about potential solutions to reduce costs for affordable housing, which is always a potential project killer.

Tarter brought up the issue of parking requirements. Developers waste money if they build more underground parking than necessary, which can cost anywhere from \$30,000 to \$60,000 per space for one vehicle. "If you don't have ten extra parking spaces, you might save \$600,000 in a project," Tarter said.

In the final discussion topic of the panel, Orfinger asked them to provide a single sentence that guests could easily recall.

Norcross: "It takes partnership. It takes all of us to come together." Tarter: "Let's be creative and work together, and we can figure out something."

Pinkney: "Really original, creative collaboration."

Earlier in the panel discussion, Orfinger offered a sentence: "One thing that drives me nuts is going past a metro station and just seeing parking lots ... It's such a waste of this opportunity."

## Bar Mitzvah Boy



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

On Wednesday Nov. 20th, my former puppy/now adolescent golden retriever Burton will become a dog (meaning no longer a puppy). What I mean to say is on that day, two years, and three months after his mid-August 2022 birth – and subsequent early October arrival in my arms (given to me as a surprise birthday gift from my wife, Dina), Burton will be neutered. It is advised that larger breeds have this procedure later in their lives to allow for their normal and complete growth. Having waited, we will now be dropping him off at the spay clinic between 7:00 and 7:30 Wednesday morning and picking him up between 2:00 and 3:00 pm later that same day. If my previous experience as an owner of a golden being who was neutered is any indication, when I see Burton at the clinic, after his procedure, he will be his old/new self. Dogs' resilience is amazing. When I picked-up my last male dog, Bailey, after his being neutered, he came running over to me like nothing had happened to him. And of course, something most definitely had happened to him.

If I am to be honest, Burton's procedure seems more of a problem for me, than it does/will be for him. And so, I've taken to calling this procedure Burton's Bar Mitzvah, the day when Jewish boys, me included, become men. And even though there was no surgery with that occasion, I will admit that singing my Bar Mitzvah part (a section of the Torah) in front of a congregation of hundreds of attendees (I shared the stage with two other boys) can be painful, especially if you never sing – which I never did, and then while singing your 'part,' you voice cracks. Then you overcorrect by repeating the crack (which you were advised not to do) until you "baritone" it down to a more singable tone. Such was my life on October 20, 1967. Not exactly a day in infamy, but a day to remember for sure.

And though singing in front of a congregation was incredibly stressful for me, it was/is nonetheless, a rite of passage of sorts. "Today, you are a man" is the refrain of the day, uttered by your rabbi and is a summary of the event. There won't be much I can say to Burton on his big day since he won't understand any of it. But I will follow doctors' orders and keep him calm for two weeks and make sure he takes his medicine and wears his "e-collar" ("E" for Elizabethan) to prevent his licking at the incision. But I won't be having a party for Burton back at the house as my parents did for me. I will be happy to get him home though so he can curl up on his bed and start to recuperate.

Once Burton's recovery period is over, he'll likely lead a healthier and less complicated life. Much less wandering, less territorial, no more being attracted to females in heat, and less aggressive in general, which for a golden translates to less excitement/exuberance in all things of interests to a dog, especially greeting people. As I often joke about goldens, the only risk to someone breaking into your home, a home protected by a golden retriever, is if the thief is allergic to dog saliva. But they're loud, almost ferocious barkers so with Burton in the house, we feel safe and secure. (However, once the intruder is in the house, it might be a different story.)

Hardly a problem if you're a golden retriever owner. You don't get a golden retriever as a guard dog. You get a golden retriever as the perfect family dog: loving, affectionate and playful. And as a member of the family, he is entitled to all the benefits forthwith. One of which is to maintain his health. (As an example, I just spent \$170 yesterday on an emergency veterinary appointment because he had a loose stool two nights in a row.) And the prevailing opinion about neutering dogs is, unless you're using them to stud/breed, it's better, all things considered, to neuter/spay the animal – and that's not just Bob Barker speaking.

Nevertheless, though this procedure is a net positive, it's still surgery. I'm sure I'll have to sign some sort of waiver. But I have been down the road before, not literally (I'm using a spay specialist-type veterinarian that's a referral) so I'm not worried, exactly. I'm more anxious, as I would be about any family member having any a medical procedure, no matter how minor. Stranger things have happened on an operator table, maybe even in an examining room. I'll be glad when it's over. Identical to how I felt on the days leading up to my Bar Mitzvah. I survived that. I'm sure I'll survive this.

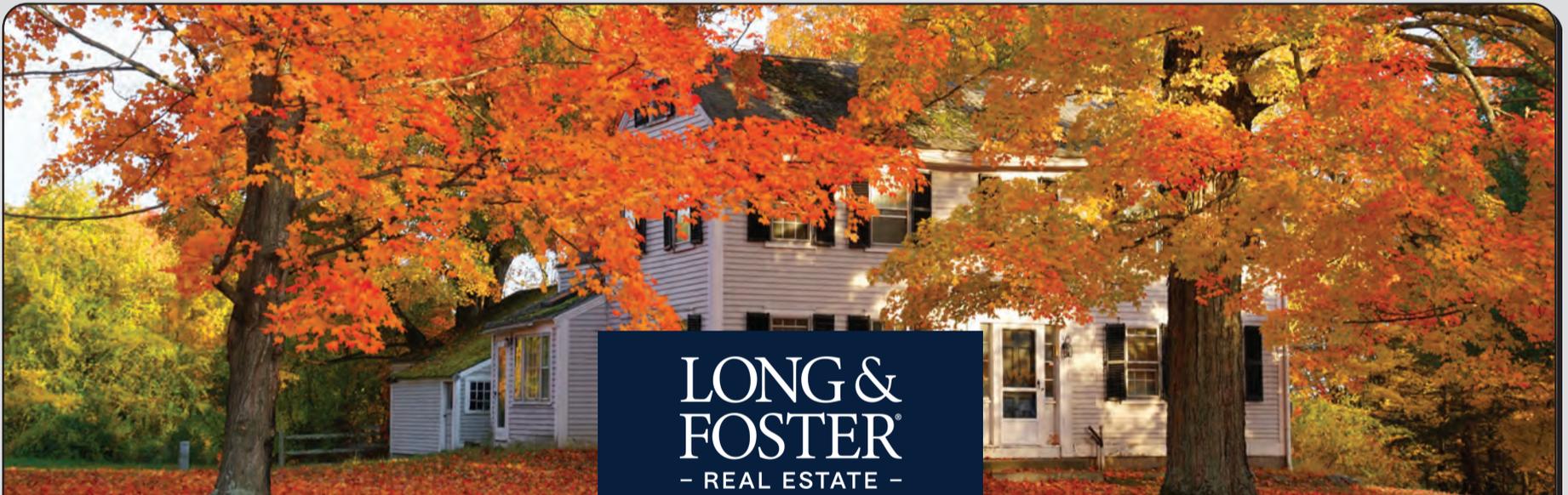
Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

## GIVE A TOY, SPREAD THE JOY

Join us in supporting  
Toys For Tots.  
You can drop off your  
new, unwrapped toys now  
thru December 6, 2024.



LONG & FOSTER<sup>®</sup>  
REAL ESTATE



LONG & FOSTER<sup>®</sup>  
- REAL ESTATE -

## EXCLUSIVE FALL SAVINGS

Save up to \$1000 with our All-Inclusive Services Team!  
Offer ends December 31st  
[longandfooster.com/falloffer](http://longandfooster.com/falloffer)

Scan for Details!



## GIVE A TOY ONLINE

