

# THE CONNECTION

CENTREVIEW ❖ Chantilly ❖ Great Falls ❖ Herndon ❖ McLean ❖ Oak Hill ❖ Oakton ❖ Reston ❖ Vienna

## Living with Wildlife

PAGE 13

Hiccup the Raccoon. "Many wild animals have learned to live with us better than we've learned to live with them," said Carolyn Wilder of the Wildlife Rescue League.

### Could a Casino Lower Property Taxes?

PAGE 3

### Who Is Mayor LeBlanc?

PAGE 4

PHOTO BY KAREN LAMB  
OPINION, PAGE 8 ❖ SENIOR LIVING, PAGE 10 ❖ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 16 ❖ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 18

JANUARY 22 - FEBRUARY 4, 2025

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Per MLS

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**SOLD!**



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**6239 Kellogg Drive, McLean**  
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**BEST WASHINGTONIAN 2024**

**SOLD!**



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 McLean, 22101  
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**SOLD!**



1940 Foxhall Road  
 McLean, VA 22101  
 \$1,425,000

**SOLD!**



311 Wrens Way  
 Falls Church City, 22046  
 \$1,080,000

**SOLD!**



6813 Tennyson Drive  
 McLean, 22101  
 \$2,550,000

**SOLD!**



1409 Layman Street  
 McLean, 22101  
 \$1,600,000

**SOLD!**



2910 Cleave Drive  
 Falls Church, 22042  
 \$910,000

**SOLD!**



1313 Merrie Ridge Rd  
 McLean, 22101  
 \$1,637,500

**Curious what your home is worth? Call to chat with JD and Ed today!**



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NO FAIRFAX CASINO COALITION

Members of the No Fairfax Casino Coalition exit their chartered bus in Richmond on Wednesday, Jan. 15, to lobby against SB982 and attend a press conference hosted by Sen. Jennifer Boysko, who is opposed to SB982.

# Bill Paves Way for Fairfax Casino Referendum

**Coalition seeks to ‘kill the bill;’ sponsors say Fairfax County needs the money for schools and property tax relief.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

David Marsden (D-35) “put a bulls-eye for a casino directly over Tysons.”

Last year, the Virginia Senate subcommittee voted on Feb. 2 to “continue” Senate Bill 675 until 2025, essentially killing the bill. The reasoning was to allow for more in-depth projections regarding a potential casino in Northern Virginia.

SB982| 2025 does not explicitly name Fairfax County as “the eligible host locality.” Still, the land use description in subdivision A 6 can only refer to Fairfax County, specifically Tysons.

SEE CASINO, PAGE 14

A 50,000-member Facebook group called the No Fairfax Casino Coalition is out to “kill the bill,” SB982 — Casino gaming; eligible host localities in the Virginia Senate.

Prefiled Jan. 7 and offered Jan. 8, SB982 as of Saturday, Jan. 18 is referred to the Committee on General Laws and Technology, subcommittee gaming.

The bill would authorize a process by which voters in Fairfax County could eventually vote on a local ballot referendum on a casino development. The bill does not authorize a casino development.

The chairperson of the “No Fairfax Casino Coalition, Lynne Mulston said on Saturday, Jan. 18, that a previous Senate Bill, 675 in 2024 Casino gaming; eligible host localities by Da-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NO FAIRFAX CASINO COALITION

**Which way do we go in the Virginia General Assembly Building? Lynne Mulston, chair of the No Fairfax Casino Coalition, with (left) Linda Colbert, mayor of the Town of Vienna, Supervisor Walter Alcorn, (D-Hunter Mill) and Supervisor Jimmy Bierman, (D-Dranesville)**

## Comments by the Chief Co-Patrons of the “Entertainment District Bill”

Comments from the Jan. 14, 2025 Release: Senate of Virginia, Scott A. Surovell. Comments may be edited for space.

**Sen. Stella Pekarsky (D-Fairfax):** “My constituents are tired of rising property taxes hitting their pocketbooks, while our schools remain chronically underfunded and our teachers are underpaid. An entertainment district will generate hundreds of millions of tax revenue, dollars that can be used to relieve the pressure being felt by homeowners in Fairfax County, while also generating thousands of jobs.”



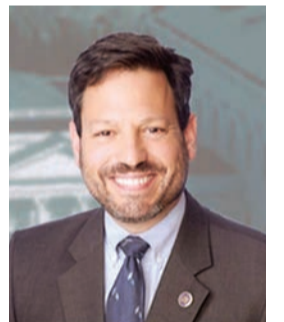
SCREENSHOT FACEBOOK

**Sen. Stella Pekarsky (D-39)**

**Sen. Lamont Bagby (D-Richmond):** “I’m proud to join this effort to amend the historic legislation patron by Senator Lucas in 2020 to include a casino in Northern Virginia. These projects have delivered huge revenues across the Commonwealth to repair aging school facilities.” Bagby serves as the Chairman of the Black Caucus

**Sen. Todd Pillion (R-Abington):** “Virginia cannot continue to lose hundreds of millions in tax revenue to Maryland. The positive impacts of this bill will reach far and wide across the Commonwealth helping to fund our important priorities in keeping our taxes low.”

**Majority Leader Sen. Scott Surovell (D):** “We are excited to get this bill passed and for the board of supervisors to begin a transparent process that will select the operator and site for this historic opportunity.”



SCREENSHOT FACEBOOK

**Sen. Scott Surovell (D-34)**

## What Happened to Two Other Casino Bills?

SB675 in 2024 and SB1543 in 2023

On Feb. 1, 2024, Supervisor Walter Alcorn and others testified opposing SB675, Casino gaming; eligible host localities, introduced by Sen. David Marsden (D-35). Marsden’s bill provided a path forward for a casino in Fairfax County through a referendum.

On Feb. 6, 2024, the Senate subcommittee continued SB675 to 2025 in Finance and Appropriations voting (13-Y 2-N), essentially killing the bill for the year. Developer Comstock targeted Fairfax County as a site for its vision of a casino establishment with a hotel, conference center, and arts venue.

A year earlier, in 2023, Marsden introduced similar legislation, SB1543, allowing casino gaming along the Metro Silver Line. Assigned to the Senate’s Committee on General Laws and Technology (GL&T) subcommittee: Gaming on Jan. 24, 2023, and on Jan. 25, 2023, at the request of the bill’s patron, SB1543 was “Stricken in General Laws and Technology in a vote o (15-Y 0-N),” according to LIS, Virginia’s Legislative Information System.

# New Life for Affordable Housing in Reston?

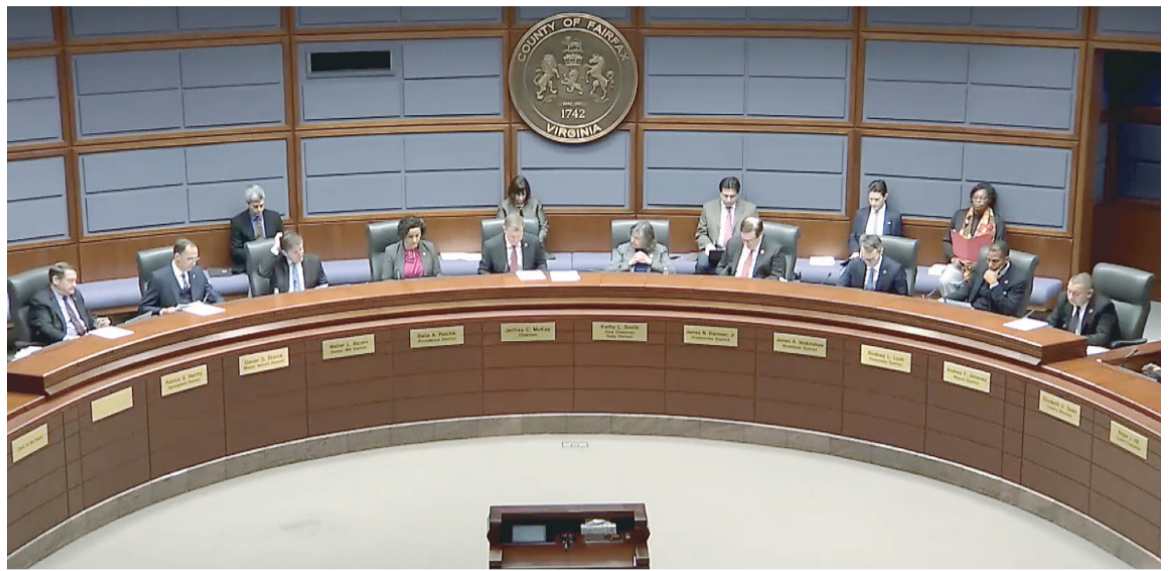
Future of Crescent apartments property gets a hand up.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION



SCREENSHOT FxCo.GOV-VIDEO

**Supervisor Walter Alcorn reads his board matter regarding the Crescent Property.**



SCREENSHOT FxCo.GOV-VIDEO

**Fairfax County Board of Supervisors unanimously approves the Board Matter regarding the Crescent Property.**

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors authorized the redevelopment of the 1960s Crescent Apartments in Reston on Tuesday, Jan. 14. This could signal the possible end of a nearly two-decade-old affordable housing saga that beamed bright and transformational in 2012 for The Crescent, collapsed in 2015, and is resurfacing with learned lessons in 2025.

Hunter Mill Supervisor Walter Alcorn read his related board matter aloud during the regular meeting. “In short, it is now time to move toward realizing the future of the Crescent,” Alcorn said. “The residential units at the Crescent are now nearly 60 years old, and in need of renovation or replacement. The adopted Comprehensive Plan guidance supports additional density on the Crescent Property, thereby creating an opportunity to replace the 181 existing homes by leveraging development of additional new affordable and market residential units,” Alcorn said.

In March of 2023, the Board

doubled its strategic goal to provide a minimum of 10,000 new affordable housing units by 2034, according to Alcorn. The Crescent could be numbered in the unit count. The Board owns the approximately 16.49 acres of land in the Hunter Mill District known as the Crescent Property.

“The adopted Comprehensive Plan Guidance supports additional density on the Crescent Property, thereby creating an opportunity to replace the 181 existing homes by leveraging the development of additional new affordable and market residential units,” Alcorn said.

The Crescent Apartments were originally constructed from 1964 through 1966. The Crescent complex consists of five garden-style, 3-story apartment buildings. It cur-

rently offers 181 affordable workforce housing units to households earning up to 60 percent of the area median income (AMI) as defined and published by HUD. One unit serves as the property’s management office. The Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority manages the property.

Alcorn noted that the Crescent is within walking distance of bus stops, retail, offices and health-care. It offers convenient access to schools, parks, transit routes, and recreational amenities. Such is consistent with the Board’s equity goals as described in its One Fairfax Policy. He reminded the board that the new economic visioning

SEE NEW LIFE, PAGE 8

## Do Lessons Learned Increase Odds of Success?

Key challenges impacting redevelopment in 2025 and how to best create affordable housing at the Crescent are known. The deal killers are rising construction costs, increased interest rates on loans and the need for zoning changes to allow for increased density which could offset increased construction costs.

Key players of the Crescent Project, the redevelopment firm, and the county will know through experience that they face significant challenges offset by potential.

This is the second time in over a decade that residents of the aging Crescent apartment complex, which the county purchased for \$49.5 million in 2006 for use as affordable housing, are seeing a county-level, authorized step toward a viable path forward in replacing their units.

— MERCIA HOBSON

## Act Three: Crescent Apartments, 2025

The initial plan and mission looked solid until...

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Supervisor Walter Alcorn’s reading of his board matter marks what could be defined as Act Three of the Crescent Property saga. Like any storytelling tool, Act One is the setup; Act Two is confrontation, challenges, and conflict; and Act Three is the resolution, meaning achievement of the goal or failure. Time will tell for the Crescent.

Act One, February 2006-2012: The Board of Supervisors purchased the Crescent Property in 2006 to further the county’s mission of preserving and pro-

ducing affordable workforce housing and to catalyze the revitalization of the Lake Anne Village Center.

According to the Feb. 9, 2012, Request For Proposal (RFP2000000125) released by the Department of Housing and Community Development and Office of Community Revitalization & Reinvestment, the county aims to do so through the Crescent Property redevelopment.

The 2012-issued RFP seeks a qualified firm to redevelop the 16.5-acre County of Fairfax-owned Crescent Apartments, located in Reston and within walking distance of Lake Anne Plaza, the historic heart of Reston.

Act Two, 2013-2015: In 2013, the county chose Lake Anne Development Partners (LARP), a division of Republic Land Development, to redevelop the Crescent Apartments and Lake Anne Plaza area.

LARP received final approval in March 2015 from the Board of Supervisors for its

ambitious 1.7-million-square-foot revitalization project plan for Crescent Apartments and the Lake Anne Plaza area. According to a staff report, the plan called for a central outdoor amphitheater, office and retail space, a grocery store, and a realignment of Village Road.

The developer was required to provide 185 replacement affordable apartments and designate 20 percent of the other units as affordable and workforce housing.

In December 2015, Lake Anne Development Partner informed the county that their redevelopment project was “no longer considered economically viable,” according to a Reston Association announcement. Cathy Hudgins, the Hunter Mill Supervisor at the time, sent Crescent Apartments residents a letter advising them of the developer’s action and added, “The county is not prepared to predict when or how we will proceed with redevelopment of the project.” The project collapsed as a significant blow to the county,

Crescent Property residents, and the local community.

Act Three (2016-TBA): In 2021, the Supervisors adopted the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan Policy Plan Housing Section. It states, “The county should increase the supply of affordable housing units each year by an amount equal to at least 12 percent of the total housing production in the county for the previous year. These units should serve the full range of incomes of households needing affordable housing and include units for the disabled and handicapped.” [Source: Housing and Community Development]

On Jan. 14, 2025, Supervisor Alcorn read his board matter aloud, saying, “Preserving and increasing the supply of affordable housing continues to be a high priority in Fairfax County.” He then set strict directives to achieve the goal of a positive future for the Crescent.

# Two Men Drown After Vehicle Driven into Pond

Detectives from FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit are investigating the drowning of two men after their vehicle was driven into a pond in Chantilly.

Thursday, Jan. 9, at 7:25 a.m., officers responded to a drowning in the 3900 block of Centerview Drive in Chantilly. Officers located a vehicle submerged in a pond. Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department responded and recovered two adult males from the vehicle. The driver, Karna Khadka, 55, and passenger, Nischal Bhatta, 20, both of Chantilly, were de-

clared deceased at the scene.

Preliminarily, detectives believe the vehicle was being operated in a private parking lot when it went over the curb and down a hill into the pond. The circumstances surrounding the crash are still being investigated.

Detectives would like to speak to anyone who may have information about this case. Please call our Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone – 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477)

# Driver Charged in Fatal Crash with Pedestrian

Detectives from FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit have charged the driver from the Dec. 23 fatal pedestrian crash in Chantilly with Failure to Maintain Control.

Detectives determined that Allen Sheler, 44, of Maryland, was traveling northbound on Sully Road in the far-right lane when he drifted over the solid white line and struck Amin Emad-Eldin Hammoud, 33, of Centerville, who was standing

outside his disabled vehicle on the shoulder. Hammoud was declared deceased at the scene.

Sheler was charged with Failure to Maintain Control of his vehicle. He was served a summons and released.

Detectives would like to speak to anyone who may have information about this case. Those with information are asked to please call our Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543.

## BULLETIN BOARD

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

## GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE

The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia is starting the new year with exciting news for nonprofits and students throughout the region. As of January 8th, applications are now open for the Foundation's 2025 grants and scholarship cycles. Nonprofits are encouraged to apply for funding to support their community-focused initiatives, while students can apply for scholarships to advance their educational goals. Applications for grants will be accepted through February 5, 2025. Visit the Foundation's website at [www.cfnova.org](http://www.cfnova.org).

## HOMELESS SHELTER LIST

During the winter months when low temperatures pose a greater risk for homeless people living outdoors, additional sheltering resources are available. NVRC's information on regional hypothermia shelters was updated on December 3, 2024.

NVRC's annual update to the Suburban Virginia Homeless Shelter List describes the shelters throughout the region and the requirements for participation in their programs. Visit the website: <https://www.novaregion.org/DocumentCenter/View/11735/Suburban-Virginia-Winter-Shelters-December-3-2024-PDF>

## NEW YEAR! NEW UNDERWEAR!

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer organization that partners with several Title 1 elementary schools across the region. These schools have a high percentage of low-income students whose families have a difficult time providing basic necessities. Assistance League helps fulfill basic needs by providing food and clothing. A series of monthly wish lists helps Assistance League expand the scope of what can be provided.

## From Despair to Hope: Conquering Peripheral Neuropathy with AcuPoint Wellness Clinic

"It's as though I'm stepping from razor blade to razor blade."

"It feels like my feet are under attack by fire ants."

"Like I'm walking on wet paint with rolled up socks."

And you're in this kind of pain all the time. "It's relentless, keeping you up at night and preventing you from doing even the most mundane tasks, things that I used to take for granted, like wearing shoes and going grocery shopping.

Two of my three children were getting married last year, and I wasn't even sure I was going to be able to attend their weddings," shares Rose W.



Rose was diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy in 2015, a degenerative condition affecting almost 5% of people over the age of 55. "My doctor sat me down and said, 'Rose, I'm so sorry to tell you this, but you have peripheral neuropathy. I'm going to prescribe Gabapentin to manage the discomfort, but overall, neuropathy is untreatable.' My first thought was, 'we can cure cancer but you can't stop my feet from hurting?' It felt like a cruel joke."

While neuropathy can be caused by a number of things, including diabetes and chemotherapy, over 23% of neuropathy cases are classified as idiopathic. In layman's terms, the cause is unknown. This was the case with Rose.

"Basically every question I had was met with an 'I don't know.' It was depressing to say the least." Eventually, Rose was forced to quit her job because the numbness had started to set in and prevented her from driving.

Fortunately for Rose, she read an article about integrative treatments for neuropathy.

"I was so relieved. After so many doctors told me there was no hope, here were scientists saying that acupuncture and Asian medicine could actually help."

Dr. Teresa McFarland, founder of AcuPoint Wellness Clinic, says that cases like Rose's are incredibly common. "Almost all of my neuropathy patients have been told, at one point or another, that there is no hope. I like to think I specialize in offering hope." To quote the *New York Times*, "Chinese medicine proves itself where Western medicine fails."

Acupuncture has been treating complicated, chronic conditions like neuropathy for thousands of years," shares Dr. McFarland. "I start with a foundation based on this time-tested science. I then tailor treatments based on a number of factors, including the severity of your neuropathy, how long you've had it, whether or not there are any underlying factors, things of that nature. It's because of these personalized treatments that we're seeing such incredible results."

Four months after treatment, Rose is back at work and thriving. "Being back at work isn't even the most exciting part," exclaims Rose. "Not only was I able to attend my sons' weddings, but I could walk down the aisle! It was the most magical moment and I have Dr. McFarland to thank for it. To think, I might've missed that." Rose held back tears.

If you've recently been diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy, regardless of its cause, it's time to call Dr. McFarland and the staff at AcuPoint. Call **703-459-9544** to schedule your very own comprehensive consultation, and visit [AcuPointClinic.com](http://AcuPointClinic.com) to take advantage of their new patient offer, a **\$40 consult (normally \$240)**.

# Notorious Norovirus Stalks Region

Frequent handwashing with soap and water could help avoid the scourge.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

It is winter, and a new strain of norovirus called GII.17[P17] is spreading across the U.S. including the northeast.

MedStar Health Urgent Care in our region is experiencing an uptick in norovirus across its 33 clinics, says its spokesperson. Norovirus is highly contagious, spreading easily from person to person on contaminated surfaces, in food and water, and can be airborne.

The CDC reports that most norovirus outbreaks occur because people do not wash their hands after going to the bathroom. Also, the CDC reports that foods commonly involved in norovirus outbreaks are leafy greens, fresh fruits, and shellfish (such as oysters).

See <https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/outbreak-basics/> to learn more about norovirus the geographical source of certain oysters that the FDA is currently warning restaurants and retailers about not serving or selling and consumers not eating.

The virus can cause sudden and severe vomiting and diarrhea, known as "acute gastroenteritis." While not everyone who presents with symptoms is tested, MedStar Health Urgent Care data shows norovirus

cases are up 5-10 percent over last year as of Jan. 13, according to its spokesperson.

Jon Gonella, a MedStar physician's assistant, has 25 years of experience treating patients with vomiting and diarrhea and diagnosing and managing viral illnesses, particularly norovirus.

Gonella shared details about the incubation period for norovirus, symptoms, duration, virus transmission, and how to prevent exposure. This is important because hand sanitizer alone will not prevent norovirus from spreading. It lives on "fomites," inanimate objects that can transmit disease-causing viruses and germs from one person to another. Examples are doorknobs, countertops, furniture, school desks, phones, clothing, toys and eating utensils.

Gonella explained that norovirus most commonly spreads to these surfaces through the fecal-oral route. "An infected person sheds the virus through their feces," Gonella said. "An example would be someone who has the virus and uses the bathroom, then touches the door on their way out of the bathroom. The next person who comes in touches that door or touches a counter where the virus is, and then they acquire it that way. Then that whole process starts over again."

Norovirus can be airborne to some degree.

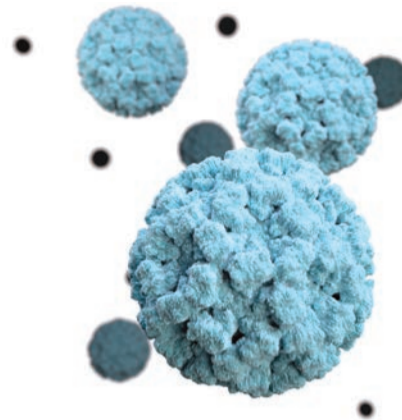


PHOTO CREDIT ILLUSTRATOR: ALISSA ECKERT, MS  
Based on electron microscopic (EM) imagery, this illustration provides a three-dimensional (3D) graphical representation of a number of norovirus virions, set against a white background.

Gonella said that when an infected person is vomiting, the viral particles can spread through the air. For example, a parent holds the basin for the child to vomit. Understanding the airborne spread is important because only a tiny viral particle burden is necessary to transmit the virus.

According to Gonella, the concern with norovirus, or any of the viruses that cause vomiting, is dehydration. The impact can differ among age groups, with children and older people more susceptible to dehydration.

Any changes in mental status, such as the patient becoming lethargic or less alert, are

red flags to take the sick person to a medical office or emergency care. "If someone's had repeated vomiting or diarrhea, they may become more pale, more what we call pallor. Their skin color may change," said Gonella.

Asked how people clean up the vomiting and diarrhea mess, Gonella said, "Norovirus is somewhat resistant to our typical alcohol-or chlorine-based sanitizer. A lot of the hand sanitizers that we use are alcohol-based, and norovirus is resistant to that. We recommend washing hands with good old soap and water. We recommend a chlorine bleach water mix to clean up a norovirus vomiting episode." He added that contaminated surfaces should be disinfected with bleach, 5-25 tablespoons of household bleach per gallon of water.

He added the virus's incubation period, is 24 to 48 hours, and symptoms typically last 2 to 4 days. There is no antiviral treatment for norovirus, and the focus should be maintaining hydration and a bland diet.

Gonella emphasizes the importance of washing fruits and vegetables to prevent norovirus transmission, as well as hand washing.

Individuals suspected of having norovirus should not prepare food for others until at least two days after their symptoms resolve.

The CDC reports infecting someone can take as few as 10 viral particles. Norovirus causes an average of 900 deaths annually mostly among older adults, 109,000 hospitalizations, and 19 million to 21 million cases in the U.S. each year.

## Water Main Break In Reston at Lake Anne

It's a dirty job.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax Water responded to gushing water at 11459 Washington Plaza, Lake Anne, Reston, on Jan. 13. According to eyewitness and impacted customer John Lovaas, who lives in a townhouse nearby, seven Fairfax Water vehicles responded to the break, and it took crews "major work" to locate it.

"Crews dug mostly with shovels because underground pipes and conduits were in close proximity to the suspected leaking water pipe," Lovaas said.

According to Lovaas's estimate, excavation through the asphalt road surface and ground ultimately was 20 feet long, five feet wide, and up to 10 feet deep. Fairfax Water located the leak at approximately 5 p.m. and repaired the pipe. About an hour later, Fairfax Water restored service.



PHOTOS BY JOHN LOVAAS/RESTON CONNECTION

Fairfax Water crew member helps his fellow crew member out of the trench after digging.



A hand grabs a shovel and it is down in the trench for more shoveling to find the leak.

Lovaas estimated the number of impacted townhouses to be 23 including his own, and the number

of impacted condo apartments including the 15-story Heron House to be 72. He said his estimate is

"low." Fairfax Water reported 40 customers out of service on its website.

"The crews deserve some praise and a pat on the back," Lovaas said.



The Madeira School [Photo Oct. 2024].

# Anonymous \$60 Million Gift to Madeira School

Stands as the 'largest gift given to an independent all-girls school ever.'

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

An alumna's desire to support the mission of her McLean, Va. school without seeking personal recognition is the key motivator behind her \$60 million donation. "This is the largest gift given to an independent girls' school ever. So historical," said Christina Kyong, head of The Madeira School, on Jan. 14 in an interview with The Connection.

Kyong, eleventh head of The Madeira School, said the donation's impact will empower future student generations. The all-girls independent school received the anonymous and landmark gift in earlier in January.

Kyong said that the donor wished for the gift to garner more attention than the donor's identity. The alumna's gift was made to give back to the school that shaped her. Madeira "impacted her life" through "great education" and "great experiences."

Kyong said the donation is structured with a five-year restriction on spending the funds, thereby giving Madeira's leadership time to "thoughtfully determine" how to maximize the impact of "the transformative gift" in alignment with its strategic priorities. She added that Madeira will place the funds in an endowment.

Kyong emphasized that Madeira adheres to the principle of "Festina lente," which in Latin translates to "make haste slowly." The donor "definitely modeled that in her gift," said Kyong.

The donor wants the school "to take time and space to be able to name what we want to do in the future." Kyong said they would take the time to name their strategic priorities and see what to do next.

At the school's community meeting on Jan. 14, where students and faculty staff

routinely gather, Kyong said she told them about the historic donation. "It was welcomed with lots of cheering and lots of congratulations from students, faculty, and staff," Kyong said.

"The reaction really brought many of us to tears, because, moments like this, we just don't know what to expect in terms of how much the students might understand the impact of such a great gift. But they really understood it, and they celebrated in the right ways. It was amazing. It was a great community moment," Kyong said.

Kyong emphasized the donor had similar experiences and felt strongly about her connection to the school. They tried "very hard to remind students that the alum stood in their shoes at some point." It made sense for the students to hear previous people in the school — parents, alum, and others — contribute to the student's experience now. Kyong told the students that the donor "felt very strongly about her experience and the love she had for the school" and "the connections she's maintained throughout her life."

"None of us in the room were here when this wonderful person was at the school," Kyong told the students and staff.

"She walked in the library, she walked in the hall, she walked over the grounds they are walking on now."

Kyong said that helped the student understand that the donor was someone who "had such a love for Madeira that she really wanted to make sure and guarantee that that experience that she had would be guaranteed for generations to come."

Established in 1906 and originally located on 19th Street near Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C., the school moved to McLean in 1931. The Madeira School is a day and boarding college-preparatory school for girls, grades 9 through 12 located on a 376-acre campus.

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# Virginia Legislature Begins Work

## One of the more bizarre starts ever

By SENATOR SCOTT A. SUROVELL

The first week of the 2025 regular session of the General Assembly which began on Jan. 7 was one of the more bizarre starts I have ever experienced.

While Fairfax County got around eight inches of snow, Richmond had three inches, but the snow managed to take down the entire public water system for six days. Two backup systems failed along with a switch and several pumps. This forced General Assembly leaders to gavel in on the first day of the session and then recess until Jan. 13.

While the lack of water meant a slow start, we have plenty to do. I am carrying approximately 25 bills and about 30 budget amendments, and have responsibilities as Senate Majority Leader, Chairman of the Courts of Justice Committee, the General Government Subcommittee of the Finance and Appropriations Committee and the Cannabis Subcommittee of the Rehabilitation and Social Services Committee.

For now, I'll single out several of my bills that have directly impact our area. First, we continue to see many collisions on the south George Washington Memorial Parkway ("the Parkway") at Belle Haven Road and Belleview Boulevard. I have received numerous complaints about excessive speeds and a lack of enforcement by the United States Park Police, especially in the wake



of the Bijan Ghaisar shooting. I have introduced a bill to authorize the Virginia State Police and Fairfax County Police Department to conduct traffic enforcement on the Parkway and to allow those agencies to install photo speed monitoring devices.

A second bill I have proposed addresses access to health care facilities. People entering and leaving a women's health clinic in our community have experienced significant harassment. My bill requires anyone picketing a health-care facility to stay at least 40 feet away from the main entrance and to refrain from obstructing access or leafleting patients in that zone.

This is similar to the state's rules for polling places.

### Holding the Line on Property Taxes

In 2016, MGM opened a new casino at National Harbor and announced that one-third of their revenue would come from Virginia customers. I wrote a column in the Richmond Times Dispatch arguing that Virginia needs to embrace casino gaming or else we would be exporting hundreds of millions of Virginia tax dollars to Maryland, West Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee, states that have casinos. Last year, the National Harbor casino grossed \$850 million in tax revenue for Maryland and Prince George's County. One-third of those dollars came from Virginia.

I have introduced legislation to authorize the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to put a referendum on the ballot to allow Fairfax County voters to vote on a casino in Tysons Corner.

Experts estimate that it could generate at least \$100 million for Fairfax County which equals about three percent of Fairfax County's current real estate taxes or about \$300 per year Fairfax County household.

For too long, Fairfax County has relied on real estate taxes for revenue and since at least 1970, the county has attempted to diversify its tax base by attracting more commercial office space, but commercial space valuations are cratering due to remote work. This is in part why Fairfax County now has the highest real estate tax rate in all of Virginia (except for Falls Church). This project would take pressure off your real estate taxes.

A casino would be only five percent of the entire floor space because the bill also requires the project to include a 1.5-million-square-foot entertainment complex and convention center. Fairfax County is larger than eight states and does not have a place to host 1,000+ person conventions, events that can also generate significant revenue.

The project will create 2,000 union construction jobs and 5,000 permanent union casino jobs, opening doors for non-college-educated and other workers to both live and work in Fairfax County.

Every year since I was elected in 2009, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has asked for authority to diversify their revenue sources. Two years ago, the General Assembly gave the county the same taxing authority as cities. This bill is one more step to help keep your taxes down.

Please email me at [scott@scottsurovell.org](mailto:scott@scottsurovell.org) if you have any feedback. It is an honor to serve as your state senator.

# New Life for Affordable Housing in Reston?

FROM PAGE 4

study for the Lake Anne Village Center had been completed, and the anticipated redevelopment of the property would complement the revitalization and economic development needs of "the historic heart of Reston," referencing the Lake Anne Village Center Historic Overlay District, which includes Lake Anne Plaza.

Alcorn motioned that the Board direct staff to: "Initiate steps to formally authorize and schedule a public hearing to consider conveyance of approximately 16.49 acres of the Board-owned Crescent Property located at Tax Map Parcels 0172 16 0001A and 0172 14010002G to the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) for the development of affordable housing, complementary market-rate housing and associated uses consistent with the Lake Anne Economic Visioning Study, subject to the stipulations."

Two stipulations are: (1) "(If the FCRHA no longer pursues the project, it will transfer ownership of the property back to the Board;"

and (2) "the FCRHA will provide the county with access to, and use of, the site until development activities begin."

Alcorn added that the Board directs the Housing and Community Development staff to conduct outreach with two groups. The first group is the existing residents of the Crescent Property. The purpose would be "to inform them about the redevelopment and receive their feedback about the community's needs relative to the replacement of their existing affordable homes." The second group is "the broader community and County to understand additional opportunities and challenges that should be considered in the context of a redevelopment."

Alcorn said that the Crescent has already received much community discussion: "I look forward to working with HCD (Housing and Community Development) and FCRA (Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority) to make this happen," Alcorn said.

The 16.495-acre Crescent Property the Board owns is located in



PHOTO BY JOHN LOVAAS/RESTON CONNECTION  
Crescent Apartments, Tuesday, January 14, 2025.

a portion of the northeast of the approximately 41-acre Lake Anne Village Center in Reston. It is bounded by Baron Cameron Ave-

nue (Rte 606) to the north, Lake Anne to the south, North Shore Drive to the west, and Moorings Drive to the east.





Katherine Kelly

## McLean Student Excels Through Grad School

Even as a student at McLean High School six years ago, Katherine Kelly demonstrated a strong commitment to the well-being of others. She took on leadership roles in McLean's chapters of Sources of Strength and Our Minds Matter, mental health organizations dedicated to supporting peers, and designed a journaling initiative for wellness that earned her the 2019 Strength in Our Voices Positive Change Scholarship. Now, with a brand-new master's degree in hand from the University of Michigan's School of Social Work, Katherine is committed to continuing that dedication to the welfare of others as she explores professional opportunities in the clinical social work field.

After graduating from McLean High in 2019, she received a double major from William & Mary in psychology and kinesiology in 2023, as she and her classmates overcame not just the academic rigors of college, but also the disruptions that emerged from COVID. In keeping with her concern for others, during college she also served as a resident assistant and spent a semester in Dublin,

Ireland interning at a disability services organization.

Upon graduating college in 2023, she was thrilled to be accepted to the University of Michigan's graduate school of social work – rated as the top social work program in the country. While there, she focused on dialectical behavior therapy, an evidence-based treatment approach in the field of mental health. The school was enthused with her work, selecting Katherine to serve as student speaker at the graduate program's commencement ceremony.

After a few weeks of well-deserved rest and relaxation since graduating in December, Katherine is now looking forward to finding the right position to use her professional skills to serve others. "Mental health has always been a deeply important part of my life, and I'm excited to now address critical issues in a professional capacity," Katherine said. "I can finally pursue what I've been passionate about since high school: walking alongside individuals through their challenges and supporting them in building the lives they aspire to live."

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### 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 Struc Id | Route # | Route Name           | Crossing                | Posted Date |
|--------------|--------------|---------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| DINWIDDIE    | 6050         | 624     | HILLS DRIVE          | WHITE OAK CREEK         | 1/3/2025    |
| DINWIDDIE    | 6025         | 613     | SQUIRREL LEVEL ROAD  | HATCHERS RUN            | 1/2/2025    |
| POWHATAN     | 13837        | 603     | ROCKY FORD ROAD      | BRANCH ROCKY FORD CREEK | 12/17/2024  |
| WYTHE        | 19757        | 681     | BRUSHY MOUNTAIN ROAD | BR REED CREEK           | 12/10/2024  |

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

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit [vdot.virginia.gov](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 at 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).

## SENIOR LIVING



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Martha Wescoat-Andes and dad Jim Wescoat with his Quilt of Valor.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

From left, Martha Wescoat-Andes photographs her dad receiving his quilt from Madonna Rabatin.

# Local Marine Veteran Receives Quilt of Valor

**Jim Wescoat, 103, is honored before friends and family.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**J**im Wescoat was born on Dec. 7, 1921, in Atlantic City, N.J. Exactly 20 years later, after Pearl Harbor was bombed on Dec. 7, 1941, he joined the Marine Corps.

Now 103, he's the only Marine WWII veteran living at The Woodlands, a retirement community in Fairfax. And on Jan. 10, he received a patriotic quilt there from the Quilts of Valor Foundation (QOV), which makes quilts for military veterans.

"He's given a lot to his country, and we believe he's most deserving of this award," said Madonna Rabatin, the foundation's Virginia coordinator. "It's an expression of gratitude from a grateful nation."

She was among the women who together made his quilt. And her sister, Toni Rabatin, also with the foundation, explained its origin and purpose. A national organization, it was founded in 2003 by a Blue Star mom, Catherine Roberts.

"With a son deployed in Iraq as a gunner atop a Humvee, she had a vision of a post-deployed warrior in the middle of the night, struggling with his war demons, while sitting on his bed, wrapped in a quilt," said Toni Rabatin. "The quilt not only comfort-



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTHA WESCOAT-ANDES  
Jim Wescoat in his 20s, as a WWII Marine.

ed the soldier but warded off the demons. [Thus], Quilts of Valor was founded with the message, 'Quilts Equal Healing.'"

"The foundation's mission is to cover active-duty service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor," she continued. "While many bear the physical scars of battle, many others have been [affected] in less-visible ways by conflicts past and present." Then,



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTHA WESCOAT-ANDES  
The Wescoats on their wedding day, June 30, 1951.

addressing Wescoat directly, she said they'd come to honor "your service, sacrifice and commitment to our Constitution. We're indebted and thankful to you for taking the oath to defend our freedom."

Since its inception, Quilts of Valor has garnered more than 11,000 volunteer quilt-makers and awarded more than 400,000 quilts worldwide. Rabatin said each quilt is created with love, care and gratitude. And

she told Wescoat, "Your Quilt of Valor comes from the hearts of many thankful women and men. Through this quilt, you'll forever be in our hearts."

Noting that a quilt has three layers, she said the top features many colors, shapes and fabrics representing the many communities and individuals in the organization.

SEE JIM WESCOAT, PAGE 11  
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# Jim Wescoat, 103, Is Honored

FROM PAGE 10

The batting – the filling in the center – provides warmth. “It represents our hope that this quilt will bring warmth, comfort, peace and healing to you who receive it,” said Rabatin. “The backing is the strength supporting the other layers and represents the recipient’s strength and the support of your family, our community and our nation. And each stitch holding the layers together represents love, gratitude and, sometimes, the tears of the maker.”

Then, as her sister Madonna wrapped Wescoat’s quilt around him, Rabatin said, “With our deepest appreciation, we say, ‘Thank you for your service and welcome home.’”

Next, fellow Woodlands resident Ron Gallier read a poem he’d written about Wescoat, calling him “Woodlands’ pride and joy and every resident’s friend. It’s not to his age that I raise my glass, but to his incomparable touch of class.”

All the residents were gathered for the ceremony, and the guests included one of Wescoat’s daughters, Martha Wescoat-Andes of Fairfax. With her beaming proudly beside him, he told everyone, “This is incredible. I am so very, very thankful. The thoughtfulness and effort you put into this is outstanding and very much appreciated.

“I must tell you, though – in the service, I got more than I gave. I was a high-school dropout when I enlisted in the Marine Corps. In the military, I acquired a little bit of self-confidence. And when I got out [in 1945], I went back to high school and they said, ‘Yeah, we remember you, but we’ll try it again.’ They said if I did all my courses, they’d give me a diploma – the lack of which cost me dearly during my service.”

Besides being grateful to finally obtain his diploma, Wescoat said he was also thankful for that experience because, while on campus, he met “the gal who became my wife, the mother of my four children and my wonderful inspiration every day, still today. I appreciate all that’s been done for me and helped me, but I can’t find the words, except to say, thank you and God bless.”

A pianist then played the Marine Corps Hymn, and Army Col. (ret.) Jim Miller, also a resident, spoke about Wescoat. He said Wescoat served aboard the USS Denver during WWII.

“As the Marines landed and took the Japanese islands, one by one, and Guadalcanal, the Navy provided an armada of ships – including the Denver – that shelled these islands before the Marines landed,” explained Miller. “I was a little boy then. But Jim [Wescoat] was a fighter, and I’m awful proud of him. Jim, thank you so much for your service, and I’m so happy you’re here with us and we can be friends.”

After the ceremony, Wescoat and his daughter told the Connection further details about his life. On the Denver, he said, he was a buck sergeant directing the ship’s 40-millimeter, anti-aircraft guns. He operated the equipment that lined them up to shoot at the enemy.

But his ship was eventually torpedoed. “I



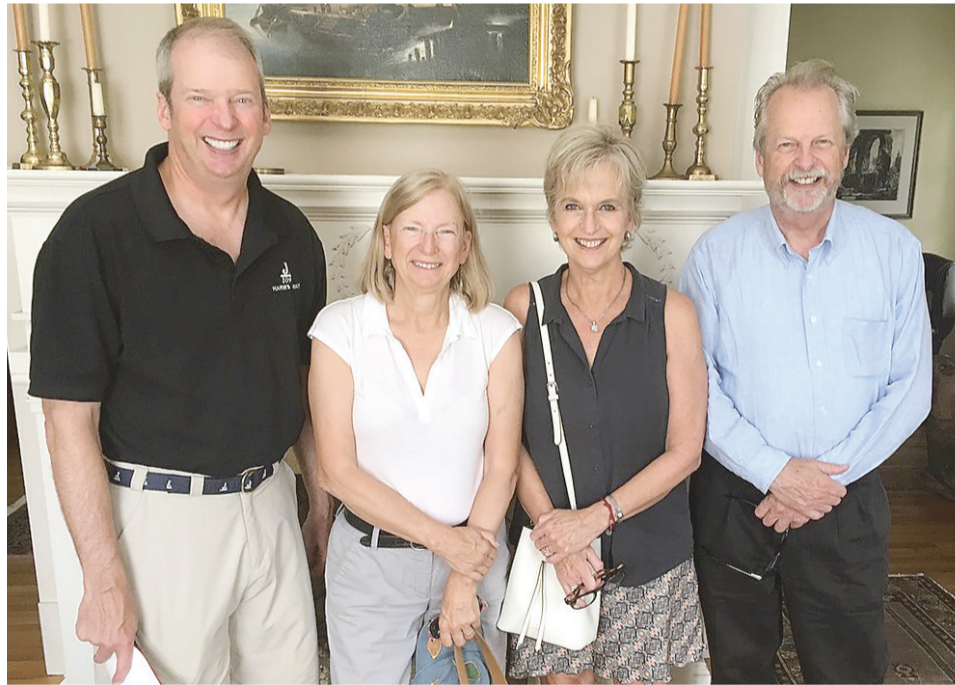
BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

WWII Marine veteran Jim Wescoat wearing his Quilt of Valor.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTHA WESCOAT-ANDES

Jim and Bonna Wescoat celebrating his 100th birthday on Dec. 7, 2021.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

The Wescoat siblings in September 2018 (from left) Andy, Bonna, Martha and Jim.

was in the boiler room, and we were in Japanese waters and vulnerable,” said Wescoat. “They could have sunk us but didn’t. We were towed back to Guadalcanal and then to the States for repairs and then returned to the war.”

He left the Marines in November 1945, two months after the war ended. And while getting his high-school diploma, he met his future wife, Bonna – then a college student – when she returned to the school to visit a former mentor, who introduced them. He later attended UVA on the GI Bill, graduating around 1950 with a degree in engineering.

Wescoat then worked for Esso, Hess and Mobil in their oil refineries. “I was a safety and security inspector and went to all the

refineries around the world that Mobil had,” he said. Afterward, he was with Mobil for decades as an engineer.

Along the way, he and Bonna married and had four children – Jim, Bonna, Martha and Andy – raising them in both Texas and New Jersey. After the children were grown, Mobil moved its headquarters to Fairfax in the late 1980s, so the Wescoats spent the next 30 years in Oakton. They eventually had eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild and were married for more than 70 years until Bonna died, two years ago, at age 93.

After retiring from Mobil, Wescoat served his community as a volunteer. In Fairfax City, he helped the homeless by working for several years in The Lamb Center’s kitchen.

And at Waple’s Mill Elementary in Oakton, he taught children how to build bridges out of cardboard during recess.

He’s also remained close with his family members. “He’s important to everyone in our family and is very much in touch with his grandchildren,” said Wescoat-Andes. “He and my mother were a team, and he’s a central figure in our family.” Re what she believes contributed to his longevity, she replied, “He’s a good and thoughtful person, led a good life and did good things for people.”

As for her dad’s Quilt of Valor, she said, “It’s such an honor. I quilt, so I know the amount of work and effort that goes into it.” Pleased with the ceremony at The Woodlands – which included a luncheon and cake – Wescoat-Andes said, “The Marines and other military veterans here have a strong community, which he really enjoys. They get together and support each other. And The Woodlands put on a beautiful event today – they really celebrate their residents.”

“I’ve lived here about six years,” said Wescoat. “It’s a nice place with friendly staff and residents. I also like the concerts and other entertainment we have here.” Regarding the quilt, he said, “So many people are much more deserving than I am, in terms of their contribution to the war effort.”

Still, he was happy to be recognized with such a special ceremony. “I’m overwhelmed,” said Wescoat. “It was a wonderful effort by some very thoughtful people, and I’ll treasure the memories and the quilt.”



*Jim Sullivan nominated Wescoat to receive his Quilt of Valor. To make a nomination, go to <https://www.govf.org/nominations-awards/>.*



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Keven LeBlanc holds a signed letter from President Jimmy Carter on the 100th anniversary of the town that occurred in 1979.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Keven LeBlanc, the newly sworn-in mayor of the Town of Herndon, poses for the portrait outside the Herndon Council Chambers building in the Town of Herndon, Friday, Jan. 17, 2025.

# Learn Why Herndon's New Mayor Has a Purple Gavel

**Mayor Keven LeBlanc forecasts Herndon Festival returns; shares new tagline for the town.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he newly sworn-in first-term mayor of Virginia's third-largest town does not underestimate the importance of being out in the community nor the value of transparency in governance. He embraces symbolism, his true self and inclusivity, and takes immense pride in the town's diversity and his purple blazer and gavel.

So who is Keven LeBlanc, the new mayor of Herndon who served his first term on the Herndon Town Council from Jan. 1, 2023-Dec. 31, 2024? In his professional career, he is CEO/President of 4A Consulting, LLC. LeBlanc has "over twenty years experience leading systems engineering, software engineering, and IT organizations for federal and state government clients," according to his LinkedIn page. [Source: LinkedIn, Keven LeBlanc, CEO/President of 4A Consulting, LLC]

A little over one week into his two-year term, LeBlanc said he puts "a lot of attention and thought" into everything he does. Officially sworn into office as mayor on Tuesday, Jan. 7, LeBlanc said he refused a former mayor's gift of her gavel to use during council meetings. He asserts that his term as mayor and that of the six council members represent a fresh start, a new beginning for the town, hence a new gavel, a purple one.

"Purple is the color of inclusion. It also represents New Orleans, my home. But it's meant to show that I'm working for everyone, that I'm crossing Republican and Democrat barriers," LeBlanc said.

In Virginia, city and town council elections are required by state Code to be non-

partisan; there is no indication of party affiliation next to the names of candidates for city and town council seats on official Virginia election ballots. Sample ballots by party lines and state and federal legislator endorsements are allowed, thus inherently tying party affiliation to candidate names running for city and town council seats.

LeBlanc's willingness to change course upon listening to staff recommendations became evident in the days before the swearing-in ceremony. LeBlanc said that upon learning that he desired to have a friend read Howard Schnauber's poem, 'My Name is Old Glory,' and present a flag from the Pentagon at the swearing-in ceremony, staff expressed their desire to keep the ceremony "de minimis."

So instead, "The Old Glory reading I'm going to do on Veterans Day, and the flag that's presented to me will fly over the Pentagon on Memorial Day," LeBlanc said.

Wanting to highlight inclusion at the ceremony, LeBlanc said that he decided to show "subliminally" that "the town council represents our entire community." He described the various items included in first-time-ever diversity display exhibited in Council Chambers during the swearing-in ceremony.

"I got things that represent the different civic organizations, the major ones, like the Women's Club, The Historical Society, Fortnightly ... and I wanted to represent all cultures."

According to the United States Census Bureau, English is spoken in 82.2 percent of homes in Virginia but only 46.4 percent in the Town of Herndon. Spanish is spoken in 33.4 percent of the town's homes, other Indo-European languages in 10.6 percent, Asian and Pacific Islander languages in 5.9 percent, and other languages in 3.6 percent.

"There were items that represented the

subcontinent Asian, East Asians, and Hispanic Americans. The New Virginia Majority did a painting that had all the flags of Latin America. I had something from the Muslim, Pakistani, Jewish and Christian communities," LeBlanc said. He added that someone from Palestine gave him "a protective piece of the Quran (the holy book of the Islam) in a pouch."

The town's Black, arts, and literary communities offered items, LeBlanc said. He received autographed books by children's author Kwame Alexander, written when he lived in the town. The town's police department presented LeBlanc with a poster depicting the after-school program Project Hope, which unites the local police with immigrant students.

LeBlanc is taking a more proactive approach to governance. He is switching up longtime traditional procedures during work sessions, such as removing formality. LeBlanc will address councilmembers by first name during the every other work sessions and hold meetings again in the Hoover Room at the Municipal Center rather than at the police station. He is committed to creating a more friendly union and said he is opting out of reading the council behavior policy before public hearing sessions.

LeBlanc highlighted his upcoming plans for the town, beginning by holding regular meetings between him and the town manager and staff, presenting the inaugural State of the Town Address and committing to overall greater transparency.

LeBlanc announced he anticipates the Herndon Festival returning in 2026, coinciding with the nation's 250th anniversary. In December 2023, the town manager announced the cancellation of the Festival that started in 1981 due to fewer volunteers and concerns with logistics and safety. Traditionally held in the historic downtown, the Festival moved to the Northwest Federal Credit Union campus in 2019, to make way for developer Comstock's mixed use redevelop-

ment project on 4.675-acre in the historic downtown. The firm ultimately backed out of that plan as announced on Dec. 6, 2024.

"My expectation is to bring back the Herndon Festival next June," LeBlanc said. He described a different Festival format, one focused more on community events and celebrations extended throughout the first part of summer.

"We won't necessarily have the carnival parts, [but] it'll be downtown. I want something done each weekend through the Fourth of July, not necessarily festival-wise. It could be community picnics one weekend, a walk, a run, or something that goes from the Herndon Festival to the Fourth of July and is about celebrating the nation."

LeBlanc announced that the town is rebranding and he plans to present it along with a resolution for approval at the work session on Jan. 21, he said. "The new tagline is 'Live Differently,'" LeBlanc said. He explained they can play with that, proposing Love Differently, Connect Differently and Eat Differently, and they "refreshed" the color palette.

The Old Town Hall's picnic table umbrellas are coming back, as are new branding flags on the light poles throughout the town.

LeBlanc said he directed staff to learn how the town can become part of Virginia's The LOVEworks. Program, an extension of the iconic Virginia Is for Lovers brand, designed to promote tourism throughout the Commonwealth. LeBlanc would like the town to have the newest LOVE sculpture.

On Thursday, Jan. 16, LeBlanc joined the fun at Clearview Elementary School in the town where representatives of the Commanders were visiting. On Friday, he met with Jeff McKay, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

LeBlanc's new gavel, which he uses when running town council meetings, matches running town council meetings, matches purple heart wood. Purple is the color of inclusivity, a mix of blue and pink and celebrates diversity.



PHOTO BY MADELINE LIBRE



Migratory Bird Day-Arlington: Wildlife Rescue League provides information to the public about wildlife.

Even vultures need our help.

# Living Harmoniously with Our Wild Neighbors

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Squirrels, foxes, raccoons, turtles, snakes, deer, bats, birds, they are all around us all the time and we must learn to live with them, Carolyn Wilder with the Wildlife Rescue League told “Zoomers” at the Jan. 11 green breakfast talk sponsored by the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District. Bats in your chimney? Foxes denning under your deck? “Many wild animals have learned to live with us better than we’ve learned to live with them,” she offered.

Wilder discussed how and when to help wild animals and urged much caution and restraint when dealing with sick, injured or “nuisance” wildlife. She discouraged people from habituating an animal, especially. Animals should not lose their fear of people so she urged, don’t feed them, secure garbage cans and don’t leave pet food out at night.

If you find injured or orphaned wildlife, the first thing to do is call the Wildlife Rescue League’s wildlife helpline, 703-440-0800, or Virginia’s, 855-571-9003.

The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources website says that usually, handling wildlife “can do more harm than good” and offers detailed advice here: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/injured/>.

If you handle an injured or orphaned animal, wear gloves or use a towel, Wilder stressed. The animal may have fleas or mites and can bite. Put it in a box so it cannot get out and put a heat source under the box, like a sock filled with rice and heated in a microwave oven. Put the box in a quiet dark place and leave it alone. Contact a wildlife rehabilitator and follow their instructions.

## Obey Laws

State and federal laws generally require permits to handle wildlife and clearly pre-  
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### More Information

- ❖ Wildlife Rescue League, <https://www.wildliferescueleague.org/>, 703-440-0800
- ❖ Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources, including licensed rehabilitators, <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife>, 855-571-9003
- ❖ Fairfax County Animal Protection Police, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/specializedunits/animal-protectionpolice> ; 703-691-2131

scribe what people can and cannot legally do. For example, it is unlawful to have, sell or trap wildlife or keep wildlife as pets without a permit. It is unlawful to destroy a nest or den that has eggs or babies.

If you find injured wildlife, you can capture the animal temporarily and keep it as long as it takes to get the animal to a veterinarian or rehabilitator, Wilder said. She recommended trying to keep the animal warm, dry and quiet. “Do not feed it or give it water,” she advised, “unless a rehabilitator tells you that you should.”

On orphaned wildlife, she said that mammals have a good sense of smell and mothers almost always come back to their young. For baby squirrels, she recommended that if you find a baby on the ground, do not feed it; put it in a box under the tree where you found it. If the mother hears her offspring, she’ll retrieve it.

Some people consider the ubiquitous gray squirrel in Northern Virginia a problem, but Wilder said, “We do not know any way to get rid of squirrels. They are way too smart for us. They adapt to anything and everything.”

On rabbits she said, “They are predator to nothing and prey to many.” Their nest is shallow on the ground and covered with

SEE LIVING HARMONIOUSLY, PAGE 15



Jane Copeland teaches students about turtles at Flint Hill School.



PHOTO BY FELICIA SCHWENK

Ducklings, learning to swim before they can fly.

# Bill Paves Way for Fairfax Casino Referendum

FROM PAGE 3

In the last five days, beginning on Wednesday, Jan. 14, with a press conference in Richmond concerning SB 982 hosted by Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D), the bill elicited bombshell statements by state and county elected officials opposed to it. It strengthened calls for action by the No Fairfax Casino Coalition.

“The developer (Comstock) has made some eye-popping political contributions, over a million dollars,” Sen. Jennifer Boysko said at the press conference. “Arm twisting has begun in full force to build political support.”

Boysko said she is an avid union supporter but warned that there are “no guarantees” to developer claims that its casino will bring 5,000 union jobs.

“The developer doesn’t have the authority to make this guarantee to the potential worker,” she said.

Boysko pointed out that the developer proposing the casino project (Comstock) breaks promises. “The developer pulled out of a commitment in the Town of Herndon despite signing an MOU in 2017. As recently as this past August, they met with the town and reported that everything was on track and good to start the redevelopment. But then, after the election, they pulled the plug and said, ‘Nope, we’re backing out of the deal.’”

Boysko clarified that SB982 is written for Tysons and one specific area in Tysons. The legislation “ties the hands of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and infringes on their land use authority.”

“Every local official in the Commonwealth of Virginia needs to worry about this bill, because this is a new and frightening development in terms of state involvement in land use,” Supervisor Walter Alcorn said at the press conference.

“Anybody that tries to tell you that Tysons is failing, they don’t know what they’re talking about. This is not a failing community. This is a community, as Sen. Boysko mentioned, is part of the economic engine driving Fairfax County and driving the Commonwealth,” Alcorn said.

Supervisor James Bierman (D-Dranesville) said, “I know a bad deal when I see it.” Linda Colbert, mayor of the Town of Vienna, said, “Not a casino. ... It will hurt families. It will hurt individuals. It’s addictive.”

On Jan. 7, 2025, the Senate referred SB 982 to the Committee on General Laws and Technology (GL&T). On Jan. 20, 2025, the Senate assigned it to a subcommittee: Gaming.

The Chief Patron of SB 982 is Scott Surovell (D-34), who represents portions of Fairfax County roughly following U.S. Route 1, Mount Vernon, Kingstowne and Lorton. The Chief Co-Patrons are Sen. Lamont Bagby (D-14), who represents parts of Henrico County and Richmond City; Todd Pillion (R-6), whose district is in southwest Virginia and parts of Henrico County; and Sen.

**Tuesday, February 4**

Crossover (last day for each house to act on its own legislation, except Budget Bills) Amendments to Budget Bills available

**Thursday, February 6**

Houses of origin to complete action on Budget Bills

**Wednesday, February 12**

Last day to act on Budget Bills and revenue bills of other house and appoint conferees

**Monday, February 17**

Last day for committee action on remaining bills

**Thursday, February 20**

Last day to act on remaining bills and appoint conferees

**Saturday, February 22**

Session adjourns sine die

SCREENSHOT: UVA STATE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

**Key Dates Remaining for the 2025 General Assembly**



SCREENSHOT FACEBOOK  
**Sen. Jennifer B. Boysko (D-38)**

Stella Pekarsky (D-39), who represents western Fairfax County. Pekarsky served as Chair of the Fairfax County School Board before being elected to the Senate in 2023.

None of the patrons of SB982 represent Tysons, a census-designated place in Fairfax County located in Northern Virginia. It is minutes from Washington, D.C., and has direct access to Metro’s Silver Line. The county sees it as its future downtown.

According to Virginia.gov, “SB982 adds Fairfax County to the list of localities eligible to host a casino in the Commonwealth and provides that any proposed site for a casino gaming establishment considered by Fairfax County shall be (i) located within one-quarter of a mile of an existing station on the Metro Silver Line, (ii) part of a coordinated mixed-use project development consisting of no less than 1.5 million square feet, (iii) within two miles of a regional enclosed mall containing not less than 1.5 million square feet of gross building area, and (iv) outside of the Interstate 495 Beltway.”

The No Fairfax Casino Coalition is an advocacy group fueled by the determination of its volunteer members and supporters.

The group’s online petition reads, “Rather than help us, a casino would hurt the county’s economic bottom line, harm local businesses, increase gridlock and public safety problems, lower property values, and encourage risky behaviors, while forever changing the character of our community.”

The coalition succeeded through lobbying and action to stop two recent casino gaming eligible host legislation. They are SB675 2024 — continued to 2025 in Finance and Appropriations (13-Y 2-N); and SB1543 2023, — stricken at request of Patron in General Laws and Technology (15-Y 0-N).

Monday, Jan. 20, at 4 p.m. is the sole opportunity for people to testify advocating for or against SB982. No Fairfax Casino Coalition is marshaling allies for its planned 2025 assault operation against Surovell’s



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NO FAIRFAX CASINO COALITION

**Lobbying at the 2025 Regular Session Senate General Laws and Technology meeting, Wednesday, Jan. 15, in the General Assembly Building**



SCREENSHOT

**Sen. Jennifer B. Boysko speaks to the audience assembled for the press conference she is hosting on Wednesday, Jan. 15, in Richmond.**

bill, SB982 casino gaming, eligible host localities.

Time matters because Crossover 2025 is on Tuesday, Feb. 4. Crossover is the last day for each house to act on legislation, including SB982; however, each house can act on

budget bills after that date.

Jan. 18, one of the allies of the No Fairfax Casino Coalition, Fairfax County Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill), posted on X @WalterAlcornFFX, “My cards are all on the table: NO CASINO.”

# Living Harmoniously with Our Wild Neighbors



PHOTO BY KAREN LAMB

**Hiccup the Raccoon.** Orphaned baby raccoons grow up to be rambunctious teenagers before release.



PHOTO BY KAREN LAMB

Owls have sharp beaks and talons-hence the gloves.

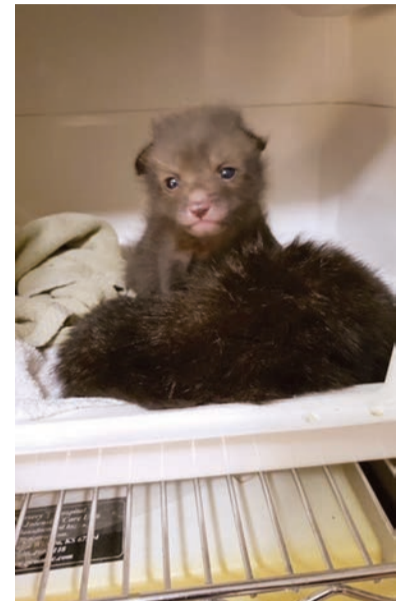


PHOTO BY DR. BELINDA BURWELL

**This baby fox was surprised to find out his fur hat wasn't his mother!**

FROM PAGE 13

grass. Mother cottontails only feed their young at dawn and at dusk. Then she covers them up in the nest and “does not hang around.” She urged people who find a nest to put twigs over it and return later. If the twigs were moved, the mother probably came back. If a dog is carrying a bunny, try to put the bunny back in the nest, but the baby rabbit likely has puncture wounds and

will need a rehabilitator. Check for rabbit nests before mowing your lawn, she urged.

Some mammals (not opossums) are rabies vector species. Raccoons, foxes, groundhogs, skunks, bats and beavers transmit rabies through their saliva. Symptoms of rabies include lethargy, stupor, walking in tight circles, aimless wandering, unexplained aggression, eye or nose discharge, biting and convulsions. If you suspect a ra-

bid animal, she recommended calling your local government’s animal control officers who can conduct a test.

## Wildlife Rehabilitators

Wildlife rehabilitators are trained and licensed to rescue, rehabilitate and release injured, orphaned and sick wild animals back to their natural habitats and help people learn to coexist with wildlife.

The Wildlife Rescue League, incorporated in 1984, is an all-volunteer group with 140 volunteers and 30 rehabilitators who work out of their homes. They have no building.

Many species of wildlife in our area adapt quickly to living around people. They are resourceful and self-sufficient. It is important to understand when they need human help and when people should leave them alone, Wilder summarized.

## Oakton Doctor Pleads Guilty to Running Pill Mill

**A**n Oakton doctor pled guilty Jan. 15 to conspiracy to distribute oxycodone and amphetamines, maintaining drug premises, and false statements relating to health care matters, said United States Attorney Jessica D. Aber, Eastern District of Virginia in a release, which included the following details:

According to court documents, Virginia pharmacies filled approximately 7,330 prescriptions for oxycodone prescribed by Allingham, totaling approximately 405,164 pills. Multiple of Allingham’s patients died of drug overdoses within hours, days, or weeks of receiving an oxycodone prescription from Allingham.

According to court documents, David Allingham, 64, was the owner of and sole medically licensed practitioner at Oakton Primacy Care Center, an urgent care center. Between at least April 2019 and January 2024, Allingham wrote prescriptions for opioids and amphetamines for numerous patients without properly as-

sessing the individual needs of those patients.

These actions were outside the usual course of professional practice and regulations and without legitimate medical purpose. During that time, Virginia pharmacies filled approximately 7,330 prescriptions for oxycodone prescribed by Allingham, totaling approximately 405,164 pills.

All of Allingham’s patients were instructed to pay out of pocket for office visits at Allingham’s practice, which cost \$300-\$550 per patient, typically paid via cash, credit card, or Venmo. An extra \$700 was required if the patient wanted a doctor’s letter.

Allingham required his chronic pain patients to pay for an office visit at least every 21 days, though he allowed a significant number of these “office visits” to be conducted via a phone call to employees who were not medically trained. Allingham authorized renewals of medication without physically examining patients or without medical indication other than the uncorroborated information the patients provided.

Multiple pharmacies investigat-

ed Allingham’s opioid prescribing practices and thereafter refused to fill prescriptions for controlled substances issued by Allingham. After a national pharmacy chain informed Allingham that its stores would no longer fill prescriptions written by him, Allingham instructed his employees to phase out all brand pharmacies in favor of “mom and pop” pharmacies to avoid further scrutiny of his patients and so he could continue to prescribe high-dose opioids for them.

Allingham authorized and directed untrained medical staff to issue prescriptions for controlled substances for his patients in his absence and without a proper medical exam. Allingham directed untrained staff to issue his prescriptions for opioids or amphetamines on at least 487 occasions, generating at least \$168,000 in proceeds.

Allingham typically required a urine drug screen at each in office appointment but failed to act on them in a medically appropriate way. Allingham consistently excused or ignored failed urine drug screens, which were then withheld

from patient files or falsely documented in his medical records. One patient failed 40 drug tests between 2019 and 2023. Allingham’s medical record falsely documented that the patient had tested positive for cocaine in his urine merely from handling currency contaminated with cocaine residue. Allingham nevertheless continued to prescribe oxycodone to the patient.

Allingham also prescribed amphetamines to multiple chronic pain patients to assist them in weight loss in a way that was against regulations. Allingham prescribed amphetamines for weight loss purposes regardless of whether the patient was obese. Allingham distributed at least 527 prescriptions for amphetamines for this purpose, totaling over 13,500 pills.

Allingham also unlawfully used and directed his employees to use another doctor’s identity without authorization to prescribe medications for himself and his family. Allingham instructed his employees to provide the Oakton Primacy Care Center phone number for prescriptions purportedly written by

that doctor and directed them how to respond if pharmacists called inquiring about the prescriptions, because at that time the doctor was not an employee of Oakton Primacy Care Center.

Multiple of Allingham’s patients died of drug overdoses within hours, days, or weeks of receiving an oxycodone prescription from Allingham.

In July 2023, law enforcement conducted a search of Allingham’s residence and medical practice. When interviewed by law enforcement, Allingham made false statements regarding his prescribing practices and directed at least one of his employees to delete records of her text message communications with him.

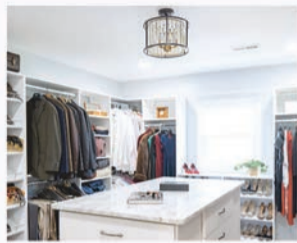
Allingham is scheduled to be sentenced on April 30 and faces up to 20 years in prison. Actual sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties.

A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

# ENTERTAINMENT

AKG Design Studio presents

## THE ART OF LIVING WELL *A Curated Design Experience*



An evening of closet space design, the latest men's and women's fashion, and a gourmet appetizer demo!

**JANUARY 23, 2025 6PM-8PM \$25**

A Curated Design Event sponsored by AKG Design Studio will be held on Thursday, Jan. 23, 2025 in Reston.

### NOW THRU MAY 2025

**"Magic Boots"** by local artist **Jinho Kim**. At Tysons Corner Center, located on the upper level between Lucid and Michael Kors. Experience the vibrant, abstract boot sculptures by South Korea artist, Jean Kim. The artworks represent the complexities of life's choices and challenges while honoring the resilience of women, particularly inspired by her mother.

### WEDNESDAY/JAN. 22

**Senior Movie Day** featuring, **"Nyad."** 10 a.m. At Movie theater at Reston Town Center. Reston Association presents Senior Movie Day. Join us on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Coffee, donuts and OJ are provided, and door prizes are distributed prior to the movie. Free for 55-plus.

### THURSDAY/JAN. 23

**Lunar New Year Celebration.** 5:30-7 p.m. At the Jim Scott Community Center, 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax. Supervisor Palchik is delighted to invite you to her inaugural Lunar New Year Open House. It will be a joyous event honoring the cultural heritage of our Asian communities! In addition to delicious food, the event will feature an orchestral performance by Oakton High School and a Chinese calligraphy demonstration from our community members.

### THURSDAY/JAN. 23

**Silkroad Ensemble Lecture/Demonstration.** 2 p.m. At Center for the Arts at George Mason University, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. This special event, co-hosted by the Center for the Arts and the Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution, features a musical demonstration by Silkroad Ensemble musicians, followed by a panel discussion moderated by Dewberry School of Music Professor June Huang. Topics include cultural understanding along the Silk Road, cross-cultural collaboration, and music as a tool for social impact. The event concludes with a Q&A.

### THURSDAY/JAN. 23

**Curated Design Event.** 6-8 p.m. At AKG Design Studio, 1801 Old

Reston Ave., Suite 102, Reston. Start your year in style with AKG Design Studio! The event features enhanced closet designs, the latest trends in men's and women's fashion, and a gourmet appetizer demo! It's all about the art of living well. AKG Design Studio will also hold a drawing for a free design consultation and closet audit during the event. Tickets are \$25, and proceeds benefit the charitable organization Second Story. Space is limited, so secure your spot today! RSVP at <https://akgdesignstudio.com/.../enthe-art-of-living-well.../>

### THURSDAY/JAN. 23

**Performing Arts Movie.** 1 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Learn a little about the performing arts through these one-hour (or so) documentaries. Program subject to change.

### JAN. 24-25, 31, FEB. 1

**"Rumors"** by Neil Simon. 8 p.m. Matinee at 2 p.m. on Sundays, Jan. 26 and Feb. 2. Presented by Vienna Theatre Company. This comedy intertwines mystery, deception and gossip that'll have you on the edge your seat and laughing the whole time. Tickets are \$16 each and can be purchased online at [www.viennatheatre.com/register](http://www.viennatheatre.com/register) or in person at Vienna Community Center, located at 120 Cherry St. SE, Vienna, Va.

### FRIDAY/JAN. 24

**America at a Global Crossroads.** 1-3 p.m. Reston Regional Library. Discussion of the U.S. foreign policy debate led by Deborah McCarthy, former U.S. ambassador to Lithuania. Great Decisions: America at a Global Crossroads - Fairfax Library Calendar - Library Home

### FRIDAY/JAN. 24

**Friday Night Flights: Petit Verdot.** 7-8:30 p.m. At The Winery at Bull Run, Centreville. Take a "flight" around the globe during this guided tasting experience of Petit Verdot, led by General Manager & Virginia Winemaker, Dean Gruenburg. Your ticket includes the curated six-wine tasting with a wine educator, a tasting passport with detailed descriptions of the



Improvicon of Northern Virginia will take place on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025 at the McLean Community Center.



The Village of Leesburg Ice Festival takes place on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025 off Route 7 in Leesburg.

wines and their origin, and small bites to enjoy during the event.

### FRIDAY/JAN. 24

**Italian Food and Live Music.** 6:30-9:30 p.m. At Maggiano's Little Italy Restaurant in Tysons Galleria. Hosted by Assistance League of Northern Virginia. In addition to enjoying a wonderful family-style Italian dinner, you will be entertained by a live vocalist and instrumentalist. It will be an evening of fun and a night to remember! Tickets for the event are \$100 each and can be purchased by copying the link: <https://givebutter.com/hYFtdc> Your participation in this fundraiser will help Assistance

League of Northern Virginia continue to provide programs that support local children in need, with food, clothing and books. Visit the website: [aln.v.org](http://aln.v.org)

### JAN. 24-26

**Jurassic Quest.** At Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. Hours: Friday, Jan 24: Noon-6 p.m.; Saturday, Jan 25: 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; and Sunday, Jan 26: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Jurassic Quest provides unforgettable adventure, transporting families through 165 million years of the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods to roam among true-to-life versions of the creatures that once ruled the Earth.

Loved by millions, Jurassic Quest is filled with the most hands-on activities, educational and fun event for families of all ages.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 25

**Give Together, MLK Jr. Week of Service.** At James Lee Community Center, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the spirit of service he represented, Volunteer Fairfax presents Give Together, an in-person day of service for families, businesses, and youth. Service projects completed will benefit local nonprofits and community members in the Northern Virginia region. This experience allows children and teens to witness firsthand how impactful and valuable volunteering can be. Give Together is a free event and open event to the public. Visit [www.volunteerfairfax.org](http://www.volunteerfairfax.org) for more information.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 25

**AIA Competition: South County High School Combined Drumline and Winterguard.** 11 a.m. At South Lakes High School, 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. First performance at 12 pm. Cost is \$15/adults; \$10/children; under age 5 free. Admission supports the SOCO HS Band Program.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 25

**Ice Festival.** Noon to 4 p.m. At Village of Leesburg, Route 7. Award-winning ice carvers will be on the property on Saturday morning to begin working on their creations with official festivities kicking off at noon. The public will be allowed to watch the carvers work and then vote on their favorite carvings. The best time to see the carvers in action is between noon and 2 p.m. The event will feature free ice skating (skates provided) and great photo opportunities around the center. Other activities include a s'mores station, a face painter, and more. Grab a drink to go through Village at Leesburg's Drink in the Good Life program and enjoy exclusive deals and promotions throughout the Village. Visit [www.villageatleesburg.com](http://www.villageatleesburg.com).

### SATURDAY/JAN. 25

**Benefit Magic Show.** 5:45 to 9 p.m. At Centreville Moose Lodge #2168, [www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



# ENTERTAINMENT



A Concert of Broadway Favorites will be held on Sunday, Jan. 26, 2025 at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center in Fairfax.



An Orleans Express Concert will take place on Sunday, Jan. 26, 2025 at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Burke.

3529 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. The Society of American Magicians (S.A.M 252) presents "A Night of Magic," fundraiser to benefit the Centreville Moose charities. Tickets include a taco bar from 5:45 to 6:45; performance begins at 7 p.m. Features 12 professional and amateur magicians in a full-length performance. Cost: \$20 in advance until January 22, \$25 at the door

## SATURDAY/JAN. 25

### Improvicon of Northern Virginia 6.

7 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. The best of the best improv groups in Northern Virginia (& DC, LOL) go head-to-head, toe-to-toe and joke-to-joke to see who walks away with the coveted Improvicon Trophy and a year's worth of bragging rights! It's like "Whose Line is it Anyway?" but with your screwball suggestions!

## SATURDAY/JAN. 25

### Silkroad Ensemble. 8 p.m. At GMU

Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Returning for a third year as a Mason Artist-in-Residence, GRAMMY Award-winning music collective Silkroad Ensemble presents this showcase of all-star percussionists and musical storytelling through the exchange of rhythm, pulse, and melody from different musical traditions around the world including India, Africa, Japan, Cuba, Middle East, Europe and beyond. The program showcases virtuoso performances representing each artist's instruments, culture and artistry with their original compositions, alongside a performance of GRAMMY-winning bassist, Silkroad member, and composer Edward Perez's And The Walls Became The World All Around, inspired by the children's picture book "Where the Wild Things Are" by Maurice Sendak.

## SUNDAY/JAN. 26

### Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey Siegel: Dances for the Ears.

7 p.m. Enjoy the rhythmically captivating music of Bach, Chopin, Gershwin, and Spanish composers Enrique Granados and Manuel de Falla, in Jeffrey Siegel's next program of Keyboard Conversations.

## SUNDAY/JAN. 26

### 13th Annual Chocolate Festival.

11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At McLean

Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. The Rotary Club of McLean is hosting the 13th Annual Chocolate Festival featuring 12 regional chocolate vendors. Admission is \$3 for individuals aged 4 and up, which includes a tote bag. The proceeds generated from this festival will contribute to various community projects championed by the Rotary Club of McLean. The projects supported by the festival include scholarships for graduating high school seniors, books for Timber Lane Elementary School, McLean Project for the Arts, playground equipment at the Fairfax Children's Center, hygiene products for school-age girls, medical equipment and clean water initiatives in several African countries. The funds will also support global initiatives such as eradicating Polio abroad, medical needs in Central America, food insecurity across the globe, helping find abused single moms a safe place to live, and many other community projects. More information at [www.mclean-chocolatefestival.org](http://www.mclean-chocolatefestival.org)

## SUNDAY/JAN. 26

### Charcuterie Building Workshop.

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. At The Winery at Bull Run, Centreville. Learn to create a charcuterie display just in time for your Super Bowl Party! Sip on delicious wines and mimosas while learning to craft a beautiful charcuterie board with private instructor, Naomi (The Grazing Board VA). Your ticket includes one glass of mimosa or wine from our tasting menu upon arrival.

## SUNDAY/JAN. 26

### Orleans Express Concert. 7-8:15

p.m. At St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Orleans Express (formerly Dixieland Express) has been delighting audiences since it was founded in 1999 to continue the creative sounds of early and mid-twentieth-century jazz. Known as traditional jazz or just plain "Dixieland", the music is straight from the heart of the New Orleans melting pot where immortals such as Louis Armstrong took it to new heights around the world. You will be transported to the fun and magic that is the spirit of the Mardi Gras, and will leave smiling and humming familiar melodies. There is no charge to attend. Visit the website: [www.standrews.net](http://www.standrews.net)



A virtual Conflict Resolution Workshop will take place on Saturday, Feb. 1, 2025 at Reston Library.

## SUNDAY/JAN. 26

### Concert of Broadway Favorites. 4

p.m. At Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd, Fairfax, VA. The Reston Chorale is bringing a bit of Broadway to Fairfax this month with acclaimed singers/actors Jacqueline Fontaine-Isaac and Alan Naylor. General admission tickets are \$35 each and available online only up to 4 p.m. on Saturday, January 25, or when sold out. Tickets will not be sold at the door. For tickets and more information, visit [RestonChorale.org](http://RestonChorale.org).

## SUNDAY/JAN. 26

### Burke Historical Society Meeting.

3-4:30 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Shawn and Susan Dilles will discuss their book The Jewish Community of Northern Virginia. They have been active members of the Northern Virginia Jewish community for almost 40 years.

## JAN. 28-29

### Auditions for The Alden's 2025

#### Youth Production "Stuart Little."

7 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. It's the 80th anniversary of E.B. White's beloved classic about a mouse born into an ordinary New York family. This one-hour version will see Stuart through adventures, life lessons and funny moments of a mild-mannered mouse trying to survive in a "real people's" world. For youth ages 10-16 who are residents of Dranesville Small District 1A. There is no charge to audition, but participation in the production

is \$150 for each actor who is cast. Most actors in the ensemble will play several characters, including both human and animal. Previous theatrical experience is preferred, but not required.

## JAN. 30 TO FEB. 16

"The Lake Effect." At 1st Stage in Tysons Corner. A drama of family secrets by Pulitzer Prize finalist Rajiv Joseph. During a fierce Cleveland mid-winter storm, estranged siblings are reunited by their father's sudden death. In the midst of closing his failing Indian restaurant, they must confront the painful memories and secrets that drove them apart. Show times are Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. General admission tickets are priced at \$25, \$40, and \$55. Student, educator, and military tickets are \$15. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.1ststage.org](http://www.1ststage.org) or by calling the 1st Stage box office at 703-854-1856.

## FRIDAY/JAN. 31

### Memoir Writing With Shabnam Curtis. 2:00-3:30 p.m. At Reston Library.

Series of memoir writing workshops led by Shabnam Curtis, author of My Persian Paradox: Memories of an Iranian Girl. Memoir Writing With Shabnam Curtis - Fairfax Library Calendar - Library Home

## SATURDAY/FEB. 1

### Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra with

Branford Marsalis. 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax.

Grammy Award-winning saxophonist Branford Marsalis joins the Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra in this special concert. An exceptionally versatile musician, Marsalis is a band leader, featured classical soloist, and composer, winning three Grammy Awards, Tony, and Drama Desk Award nominations for his work as a composer on Broadway, a citation by the National Endowment for the Arts as a Jazz Master, and a Primetime Emmy nomination for best original score.

## SATURDAY/FEB. 1

Virtual Conflict Resolution Workshop. 2:00-3:30 p.m. At Reston Library. Workshop with life coach Shabnam Curtis to learn methods that help find peaceful resolutions to disagreements and misunderstandings.

Conflict Resolution Workshop - Fairfax Library Calendar - Library Home

## SATURDAY/FEB. 1

Kiwanis Polar Dip. 2 p.m. At Lake Anne Village Plaza, Reston. The Kiwanis Club of Tysons is hosting its annual Kiwanis Polar Dip to raise money for organizations that benefit youth. The goal of the Kiwanis Polar Dip is to raise \$30,000 for Food for Neighbors and a variety of Kiwanis Youth Programs in the Fairfax County area. A portion will also benefit Camp Sunshine, a retreat for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. Visit [kiwanispolarip.org](http://kiwanispolarip.org).

## SUNDAY/FEB. 2

Traditional Celtic Music. 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. At the Old Brogue Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Featuring Beth Patterson and Sean Heely. Tickets must be purchased in advance at <https://oldbrogue.com/winter-celtic-concert-2025> - \$21 general admission. A season ticket for all 6 concerts is available for \$110. For info: [www.oldbrogue.com](http://www.oldbrogue.com) or call the Old Brogue at 703-759-3309

## SUNDAY/FEB. 2

Chamber Music - Ars Gratia Populi. 2 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Ars Gratia Populi (Latin for "art for the people's sake") is a vocal ensemble that explores the interplay between art music and folk music in a cappella setting.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 19

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Legals

Legals

## CareNow Urgent Care® Clinic Closure

We have closed our Centreville location at 4995 Westone Plaza, Chantilly, VA 20151 as of December 21, 2024.

The following providers were working at this location, but will now be providing services at nearby CareNow locations:

- Ashley Rose, MD
- Kayla Marie Huber, PA
- Alyssa Paik, PA
- Bezawit Abebe, NP
- Charlotte Lane, NP
- Kristen Marie Green, PA
- Nancy Perez Ramirez, NP
- Mark Rugarber, NP
- Brittany Ann McPartland, PA

Please visit our sister locations for high quality healthcare:

- CareNow Chantilly, 3456 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly, VA 20151
- CareNow Sterling at Cascades, 46200 Potomac Run Plaza, Sterling, VA 20164

To obtain medical records or have them sent to another physician practice, please email [uccmedicalrecords@hcahealthcare.com](mailto:uccmedicalrecords@hcahealthcare.com), or fax your request to 855-874-5286.

For hours, services and more locations, visit [CareNow.com](http://CareNow.com).

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## NATION'S GUN SHOW

JAN. 31, FEB. 1 & 2

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# BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 5

The January Wish List focuses on new underwear, a basic clothing item that is greatly needed and frequently requested by the schools the organization serves.

As the New Year starts the community is invited to make a contribution from this month's New Year! New Underwear! wish list. There is a variety of colorful multi-pair underwear packages for boys and girls in all sizes. Use this link: <https://tiny.alnv.org/undies> to make your selection and help the schools replenish their supply of this important necessity that many children need. Please select Assistance League of Northern Virginia as the mailing address to assure timely delivery.

### VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME

Would you like to help a neighbor feel less lonely? Will you help someone get much-needed groceries? Form new connections and make a meaningful difference. Older adults in the Annandale, Falls Church, and Alexandria regions are waiting for volunteer social visitors and grocery shoppers. If you can give the gift of your time, consider providing invaluable support to someone in your community. Learn more about Volunteer Solutions at [bit.ly/FXVSVOL](http://bit.ly/FXVSVOL) or email [VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov](mailto:VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov) or call 703-324-5406.

### SUPPORT GROUPS

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

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia Caregivers' Support Group takes place the first and third Tuesdays of each month, 10-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. This group is for caregivers of family members with dementia. Meetings are gently facilitated. For more information and to get the Zoom link, contact Jack Tarr at [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net) or 703-821-6838.

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, [www.havenofnova.org](http://www.havenofnova.org) or [havenofnova@verizon.net](mailto:havenofnova@verizon.net).

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

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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

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# Commanders Watch Parties Planned for the NFC Championship on Sunday

Football fans can still cheer in unison at spots around the area.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE CONNECTION

When the Washington Commanders meet the Philadelphia Eagles in the NFC championship game on Sunday, there's nothing like being at a crowded bar, cheering your team on with a cold one in hand. Sure, it could be loud but fun to many and in southern Fairfax County there's plenty of spots to watch this landmark game.

Things start off at 1 p.m. on Sunday at the Verizon store in Springfield Plaza where they are having the "Commanders Official Verizon Pep Rally with mascot Major Teddy, the Commanders dance team and other legends.

There are a nearly infinite number of options for seeing the game, the first time the Washington football team has been in the NFC Championship game in more than 30 years.

- ❖ **NFC Championship:**  
Washington Commanders vs Philadelphia Eagles  
Sunday, Jan. 26 at 3 pm
- ❖ **AFC Championship:**  
Kansas City Chiefs vs Buffalo Bills  
Sunday, Jan. 26 at 6:30 pm

**Crystal City Sports Pub, 529 23rd Street, Arlington**

With over 200 television screens including a big screen, fans will catch every minute of the action at this Arlington location. Appetizers are \$7.99 and beer specials throughout the afternoon.

**Kalypso's Sports Tavern, 1617 Washington Plaza North, Reston**

Fans will enjoy free barbecue wings with entrees.

**Glory Days, 9459 Lorton Market Street, Lorton**

The televisions will be tuned in and the fans cheering to their regularly priced beers and food. The real fun begins on Super Bowl Sunday where there is a \$35 entry fee to a party that includes drinks, food and more. "We have one every year," said the host.

**Burtons, Kingstowne, 6452A Old Beulah St, Alexandria**

Six televisions will be on behind the bar tuned to sports, and the Super Bowl, if requested.

**Chili's Grill & Bar, 6601 Richmond Highway, Alexandria**

Football fans are expected as usual for the Sunday afternoon festivities.

**Theismann's Restaurant, 1800A Diagonal Rd, Alexandria, VA 22314**

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 17

The six unaccompanied voices of the ensemble bring purity and intricacy to everything from Renaissance madrigals to Scottish Gaelic ballads to maybe even some modern standards.

**FEB. 4 TO MARCH 2**

**Exhibition: The Creative Quest: Three Generations of Intuitive Painting.** At Reston Community Center's Jo Ann Rose Gallery, 1609-A Washington Plaza North Reston. Featuring 30 works by intuitive painter Judith Forst and many of her students, and their students. Inspired by the teachings of Michele Cassou who founded the Painting Experience in San Francisco, CA, Reston resident Judith Forst transformed her traditional painting practice from an academic based approach to one focused on painting without inhibition. Focusing on the process rather than a product or desired result led to a freedom of expression and the discovery of a compelling authentic voice. Ms. Forst began sharing this technique in her home studio in 2001, and dozens of local artists have been exposed to this innovative practice. A selection of Judith's paintings will be featured along with works by 17 other intuitive painters.

**FEB. 7-9 AND 14-16**

**"The Last Five Years."** 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. At the Theatre at Seneca Ridge Middle School, Sterling. Presented by Sterling Playmakers. This intimate show juxtaposes the love story of two New Yorkers

over the course of five years - Cathy, the female, tells their story backwards while Jamie, the male, tells their story chronologically. They line up only once, half-way through the show at their wedding. Tickets can be purchased in advance at [www.sterlingplaymakers.org/](http://www.sterlingplaymakers.org/) tickets or at the door.

**SATURDAY/FEB. 8  
2025 CBA Ping Pong Tournament.**

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Clifton Town Hall, 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton. No fee to enter. All ages and levels of experience welcome. To register, visit <https://C25K.redpodium.com/clifton-annual-ping-pong-tournament-2025>. Registration closes at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2025.

**TUESDAY/FEB. 11  
Versa-Style Street Dance Company Lecture/Demonstration.**

7 p.m. At Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Boulevard, Fairfax. In this lecture demonstration, Mason Artist-in-Residence Versa-Style Street Dance Company introduces the audience to the electrifying world of Hip Hop and street dance culture. The session integrates both movement and discussion to explore the intersectionality between the arts, culture, and education using the lens of street dance.

**SATURDAY/FEB. 15  
Crys Matthews.** 7:30 p.m. At The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Sterling, 22135 Davis Dr Suite 104, Sterling. A troubadour of truth, Nashville

resident Crys Matthews is among the brightest stars of the new generation of social justice music-makers. An award-winning, prolific lyricist and composer, Matthews blends Country, Americana, Folk, Blues, and Bluegrass into a bold, complex performance steeped in traditional melodies punctuated by honest, original lyrics. Info and tickets at <https://focusmusic.org/shows#sat-2-15-crys-matthews-sterling-and-virtual>

**SATURDAY/FEB. 22  
Ron Kowalski Real Estate Group's Monopoly Tournament.**

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Moose Lodge, 9612 Fernedge Lane, Lorton. To benefit the Lorton Community Action Center. They'll play 3 timed rounds of Monopoly - those with the most assets advance. Players of any / all skill levels are encouraged to play. Cash prizes: 1st-\$500; 2nd-\$250; 3rd-\$100. Trophies & door prizes too! Continental breakfast will be provided by South County Cares Church and lunch will be catered by Antonelli's Pizza & Subs. The registration fee is \$35 in advance/online; \$50 at the door. Ages 8+. A flyer is attached.

**SUNDAY/MARCH 9  
Aurora Dance Fest.** 4:30 p.m. At Capital One Hall, Tysons Corner.

Aurora Dance Fest will feature a vibrant evening of dance performances hosted by Gin Dance Company and featuring works by 10 companies and 16 talented choreographers. This event promises to be a delightful mix of contemporary ballet, modern dance, and the fiery passion of Flamenco from Southern Spain.

**SATURDAY/MAY 10  
44th Annual Spring Civil War Mosby Bus Tour, "Mosby and the End of the War."**

Sponsored by the Stuart - Mosby Historical Society. Tour Leaders will be Kevin Pawlak and Rob Orrison. Follow Mosby's Rangers during the closing acts of the Civil War, from the final fights to the disbandment at Salem. Cost is \$80 members of the Stuart-Mosby Historical Society \$90 for non-members. Tour does not include lunch. To sign up contact Rob Orrison at 703-431-2869 or email [mosbytours@gmail.com](mailto:mosbytours@gmail.com) or send your check to Rob Orrison (make checks payable to Rob) at 102 Melody Lane Stafford, VA 22554. Venmo: @Robert-Orrison. No refunds after May 1, 2025.

## End of an Era



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Sitting at my desk at home with my golden retriever Burton lying at my feet, unwrapping Christmas-colors-wrapped milk Chocolate Hershey's Kisses, I feel compelled to make an admission (not that any of you should care): I don't like Mars M&Ms anymore. And considering I've been eating them my entire life, Mars is losing one of their best customers.

To put this loss in some context, though it's impossible to quantify; let's just say for the sake of this column, I've consumed over a million M&Ms. Almost exclusively the plain M&Ms until the "peanut butter (orange bag) came along. Peanut M&Ms despite their lofty position atop various "most eaten candies" lists never appealed to me. Neither did any of the newer varieties which have appeared on the shelves over the last decade or two except the mint M&Ms. Whenever I see that green bag, I'm buyin'. Delicious but hard to find for some reason. To summarize then the percentages eaten over the years: 97% plain, 2.5% peanut butter, .5% mint. (As the peanut butter and mint flavors are somewhat new creations, comparatively speaking, their newness is reflected in these percentages.)

As to the reason for this rather drastic change in my candy consumption, I can't really remember the "Oh no"-moment when I took a handful, which had not melted in my hand, and tossed them into my mouth where they indeed melted (after I had crunched them all down to more eatable size). Nevertheless, me and my tastebuds have come to the same conclusion: our love affair with M&Ms was over. Though I finished whatever bag I had started, we parted as friends. Never again will I eat M&Ms unless there are extenuating circumstances ("extenuations" you might call them) as in the M&Ms are in plain sight, within arm's length and relatively unguarded. But my days as an intentional buyer are over.

I've had a similar falling out, though not nearly as definitive/life changing, with 3 Musketeers and Milky Way bars. For years, make that decades/half centuries even, these two bars were my go-to preferences (along with the M&Ms); now they're merely memories of a recent past. Unlike my M&M stoppage for which I had no specific event, I do indeed have one sort of, for the end of my similar love affair for 3 Musketeers/Milky Way bars. It was Halloween a few years back. Naturally, I had prepared a bowl of snack-size candies for the year's lucky participants: 3 Musketeers, Milky Way and Snickers. But few trick-or-treaters showed that year, so I was left with an ample-sized bowl brimming with chocolate goodies. And needless to say, or I wouldn't be writing this column, I overwhelmed their defenses and over the next few days (not weeks), rapidly (not slowly) and surely, I emptied that bowl. By week's end, the bowl was a shell of its former holiday self. I wouldn't say I was proud of myself, but other than my brother who could have accomplished what I did? (This was a rhetorical question. Those that know me, know the answer: no one.) To invoke curly Howard of The Three Stooges: "I seen my duty and I done it." However, my overeating had a consequence that overindulging often has: swearing off of the presumptive cause. For me, it was most definitely the 3 Musketeers and Milky Way snack/fun size bars originally meant for the neighborhood kids. In lieu thereof, I picked up the slack and haven't had a 3 Musketeers or Milky Way bar since. Added to the M&M loss, Mars must be feeling the pinch. One that a smaller company might not have survived.

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

# OVER \$117 Million Bought and Sold in 2024



1154 Holly Briar Ln, Great Falls \$1,650,000



935 Welham Green Rd, Great Falls \$1,470,000



10005 Robindale Ct, Great Falls \$2,315,000



411 Springvale Rd, Great Falls \$1,450,000



10030 Windy Hollow Rd, Great Falls \$2,675,000



11529 Buttonwood Ct, Reston \$676,000



1054 Bellview Pl, McLean \$2,350,000



6924 Hector Rd, McLean \$3,285,000



11212 W Montpelier Rd, Great Falls \$2,260,000



11234 South Shore Rd, Reston \$1,450,000



2211 Halcyon Ln, Vienna \$1,700,000



11577 Greenwich Point Rd, Reston \$2,000,000



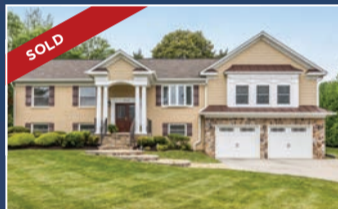
10614 Calvalcade St, Great Falls \$1,000,000



347 Springvale Rd, Great Falls \$2,900,000



709 Ellsworth Ave, Great Falls \$975,000



816 Constellation Dr, Great Falls \$1,350,000



11304 Seneca Cir, Great Falls \$2,550,000



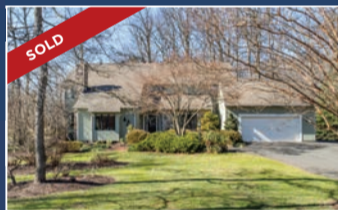
11602 Rolling Meadow Dr, Great Falls \$1,820,500



754 Ellsworth Ave, Great Falls \$2,225,000



11103 Glade Dr, Reston \$1,775,000



902 Falls Bridge Ln, Great Falls \$1,505,000



502 Old Saybrook Way, Great Falls \$1,665,000



9903 Hessick Ct, Great Falls \$2,260,000



11136 Rich Meadow Dr, Great Falls \$1,650,000



321 Springvale Rd, Great Falls \$1,425,000



925 Leigh Mill Rd, Great Falls \$1,700,000



10302 Elizabeth St, Great Falls \$1,405,124



10402 Van Patten Ln, Great Falls \$2,600,000



9427 Brian Jac Ln, Great Falls \$1,670,000



398 Patowmack Ct, Great Falls \$1,500,000

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