

CONNECTION

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City of Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read (second from left) with Fairfax City's female Councilmembers (from left) Stacey Hardy-Chandler, Stacy Hall and Rachel McQuillen.



ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 12 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 14

BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

What About the Turtles?

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Women Tell Tales

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Celebrating Women

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Options Set for Real Estate, Meals Taxes

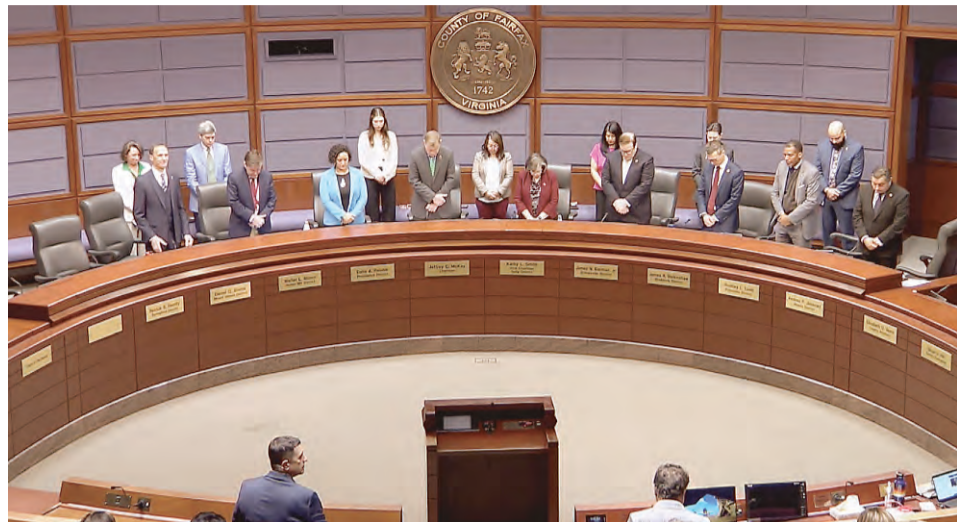
Advertised rates are a cap on options; actual rates can be less or equal but not more.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

At the March 18 meeting of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Chairman Jeff McKay stressed that the board was building in some flexibility by advertising a possible increase in the Real Estate Tax rate of \$1.14 per \$100 of assessed value. That is an increase of \$0.015 over the current rate for FY 2025. Also advertised is a meals tax of up to 4 percent. These advertised rates act as a ceiling.

The Board of Supervisors adopts the FY 2026 Budget on May 13. The actual rates can be less than advertised but not more.

“We have extensive public hearings, town halls, and a number of meetings with a number of groups that take place every budget season where we can discuss the pros and cons of the actions that we must take to balance our budget when it comes time for budget adoption,” McKay said.



Fairfax County Board of Supervisors at its March 18 meeting.

The Board unanimously (with Pat Herryry absent) approved authorizing staff to advertise a public hearing to be held on April 22, 2025, at 3 p.m. to consider the adoption of an ordinance to amend Chapter Four of the Fairfax County code by adding a new Article 31 food and beverage tax. It is sometimes called a meals tax. It does not apply to groceries.

The proposed amendment states a maximum tax rate of 4 percent at implementation and the option to provide a seller’s commission of up to 3 percent of the tax

collected, as outlined in the draft ordinance. The supervisors approved the action at their March 18 meeting. Chairman McKay said the board had held an “entire budget committee meeting dedicated to a conversation on this subject.”

Wanting to ensure the public’s understanding, McKay explained that they were authorizing the implementation of a potential food and beverage tax for consideration through a public hearing. He clarified that the Commonwealth of Virginia allows juris-

dictions to implement a meal tax of up to 6 percent. His motion asked the board to consider implementing a potential meal tax at a cap of 4 percent.

“And just to be clear for folks, when we authorize this, we are authorizing the maximum amount that can be implemented. So, anything below that number is still permissible within the span of this motion,” McKay said.

“We want to make sure that we have a public hearing on a potential meals tax for full transparency and disclosure, in concert with the annual adoption of the Fairfax County budget and related financial documents so that folks can understand the choices.”

McKay asked the board to approve the publication of the FY 2026 advertised budget, the effective tax rate increase, the advertised capital improvement program, and the required tax rates outlined in administrative Item 8. The board voted unanimously (with Herryry absent) to give notice of the public hearings that would be happening as a result.

This includes the advertisement of a real estate tax rate of \$1.14 per \$100 of assessed value, which reflects a potential one-and-a-half cent increase over the current real estate tax rate of \$1.125 per \$100 of assessed value.

The county executive used this figure as the recommended tax rate in his budget presentation, echoing the meals tax discussion.

Million Dollar Initiative To Help Recently Unemployed Federal Workers

Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) has launched NOVAnext, a \$1 million initiative to help recently unemployed federal workers and contractors transition into new careers.

Approved participants can enroll in one of 14 courses for free, covering IT certifications, program management, HR, entrepreneurship, and a new Generative AI class. NOVA also offers resume-writing and job search workshops.

Eligible individuals must have been laid off after Feb. 1, 2025, reside in the NOVA service area, and apply through Virginia Career Works.

NEWS BRIEFS

Women Educators Will Share Experiences on March 23

The Fairfax City Commission for Women will host a panel discussion in Fairfax City Hall council chambers, 10455 Armstrong St., this Sunday, March 23, from 1-3 p.m. Moderated by Councilmember Stacey Hardy-Chandler, this free event’s theme is “Moving Forward Together: Women Educating and Inspiring Generations.” Local women educators will share personal experiences and lessons learned, while highlighting the contributions of women educators in shaping communities, fostering mentorship and leading with purpose.

Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration on March 29

A ceremony commemorating Vietnam Veterans Day will be held Saturday, March 29, at 11 a.m., at the Veterans Amphitheater outside Fairfax City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St., in Fairfax. This community program will honor all Vietnam veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, and their families, and individually remember the Fairfax County residents who died in Vietnam by reading their names.

Hosting this event are the Fairfax Resolves Chapter of the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution; the Fairfax County Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution; VFW Post 8469; and American Legion Post 177. It’s free and open to the public.

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, PAGE 15



MARCH 21, 22, 23

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Celebrating Women's History Month in Fairfax City are (from left) Councilmember Stacey Hardy-Chandler, Mayor Catherine Read and Councilmembers Stacy Hall and Rachel McQuillen



Flanking Catherine Read (in center, with plaque) are Fairfax City Commission for Women members (from left) Lisa Whetzel, Brenda Kuhlman, Heidi Tirjan, Johnelle Brown and Mena Crawford.

Fairfax City Celebrates Women's History Month

Recognizes past achievements and hope for the future.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City kicked off Women's History Month in style last week with speeches, a proclamation and a reception in the City Hall atrium. Catering the event were three, women-owned, businesses in Fairfax.

Bisnonna Bakeshop brought cannoli, Liberty Baking offered cupcakes and brownies, and Fair City Cookies brought cookies decorated with the month's logo. In addition, a fashion student from the Fairfax Academy (see sidebar) displayed a dress she made.

Speaking during the March 11 reception was Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read. "Here in Fairfax City, we like to recognize people, and that includes women," she said. "I'm the first woman mayor of the City of Fairfax, and Councilwoman Stacey Hardy-Chandler was the first Black woman we've ever elected." Read also pointed out former Councilmembers in attendance, Janice Miller and Ellie Schmidt.

"You know, all of us stand on the shoulders of the women who came before us," said Read. "Starting back when we became a city in 1961, there were women who served, over a number of years, on the dais. And this [current] dais is the first that's majority women."

However, she said it's also important to acknowledge that women haven't always had the same access and opportunity as



Councilmembers pose with the mayor: (Back row, from left) Billy Bates, Stacey Hardy-Chandler, Stacy Hall and Tom Peterson, and (front row, from left) Anthony Amos, Mayor Catherine Read and Rachel McQuillen.

men. She and Councilmembers Anthony Amos and Rachel McQuillen recently spoke to some eighth-graders at Katherine Johnson Middle School and told them about the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, giving women the right to vote.

"That was in 1920, and it's only 2025," said Read. "We've only had access for 105 years out of a history that started back in 1619. That's not a lot of representation or access to government that women have had." She then told a story about Harry Burns, a 23-year-old from Tennessee – which was the last state to ratify the 19th Amendment.

Read said, "His mother wrote him a letter and said, 'Remember the ladies.' And Harry Burns voted yes – and then ran [from his fellow congressmen] for his life. But God bless Harry Burns and his mother for giving women the right to vote. I think that's important for people to know."

Noting how much she loves stories about history, Read said she also told the students about Barbara Johns and that her statue is slated to come from Virginia to stand inside the U.S. Capitol and replace one of Robert E. Lee. She then explained why Johns is so significant to the country.

Commission for Women's Panel Discussion

Commission for Women's panel discussion in City Hall council chambers, 10455 Armstrong St., on Sunday, March 23, from 1-3 p.m. Moderated by Councilmember Stacey Hardy-Chandler, this free event's theme is "Moving Forward Together: Women Educating and Inspiring Generations."

Johns attended Moton High, an all-Black school in Farmville, Va. And in 1951, at age 16, she led a student walkout from Moton to protest its overcrowded, substandard conditions. This action helped set in motion events laying the groundwork for the Supreme Court's historic, *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling declaring segregation unconstitutional.

The students' lawsuit, *Prince Edward County vs. Virginia*, was supported by two NAACP lawyers and became part of four other lawsuits comprising *Brown v. Board of Education*. It was called "Brown" because that suit was first alphabetically.

"The plaintiffs for Prince Edward County were the students who walked out of Moton High School," said Read. "So I told these eighth-graders that young people have power because – if it hadn't been for Barbara Johns leading that walkout – those students wouldn't have been the largest number of plaintiffs in *Brown v. Board of Education*."

Basically, said Read, "Whatever your age, women have been doing remarkable things since Joan of Arc. And it's about time we truly celebrated that history." She then singled

SEE WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH, PAGE 8



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

In March 2023, officials broke ground for the new government center in Franconia.

Progress at the New Franconia District Government Center Building

Intersection expands at Beulah Street and the Springfield-Franconia Parkway.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The intersection of Beulah Street and the Springfield-Franconia Parkway has expanded in recent months. Three construction cranes fill the skyline for a new hospital across the intersection from a building project that will be the new home of Franconia District Supervisor

Rodney Lusk as well as a library and area museum. This new combined government facility will be approximately 90,000 square feet with better parking and access. The 28,000-square-foot Police Station and the 4,200-square-foot Franconia District Supervisor's Office will share a space with the Franconia Museum and a 7,200 square-foot Active Adult Center. It will also have a new Childcare Center for infants to pre-kindergarten children and the Kingstowne Community Library will be expanded to a Regional Library. The current Kingstowne Library is in a bottom level space in the shopping center where Beulah Street meets Telegraph Road but it is not a "regional" library.

SEE FRANCONIA CONSTRUCTION. PAGE 14



Original site design.



PHOTOS BY FCPS

Illegally Passing School Buses About to Get Expensive

New cameras on school bus arms will catch violators; \$250 fines start May 12.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The law about passing school buses is sometimes ignored these days, so much so that the Fairfax County school bus fleet recorded 1,453 violations in one day. The bus drivers try waving their arms or looking at the license plate, but more had to be done for students' safety. This month, FCPS launched the "School Bus Arm Camera Program," to boost safety.

The camera is mounted on the stop-arm that comes out of the side of the bus when students are getting on or off the bus. When the bus stops, the arm comes out and the camera detects vehicles that pass the bus on the side.

The camera will get the license plate and the violators will get a ticket in the mail, similar to the speed cameras that have been used for years.

"Our new stop arm camera initiative will remind motorists of their responsibility to drive responsibly and keep students safe," said School Board Chair Karl Frisch, in their press release.

Starting April 9, 50 Fairfax County school buses will be outfitted with the cameras

across the county but for the first month, there will just be warnings sent out. May 12 the county will start fining each driver \$250 for these violations. It's not all automatic though. Violation videos and license plate images are reviewed by law enforcement for approval before a warning or Notice of Infraction is issued, FCPS said.

Comments online seemed to vary. Some are against the one-month grace period that comes with the new camera rule, others are pointing out instances where the buses are speeding while others are happy with the cameras.

"Glad to see this as no one hardly ever stops on Guinea Rd in the mornings for the school bus," said one Burke area driver.

Despite some drivers passing against a flashing light, school buses are still a safe route to school, said the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Between 2013-2022, 111 occupants were killed in school transportation vehicles, and 50 were drivers and 61 were passengers. More than 20 million school students ride school buses.

"However, children are more at risk when approaching or leaving a school bus," NHTSA said.

Fairfax City Advertises Even Higher Tax Rate

Surprise move proposes real-estate tax of \$1.15.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

In February, Fairfax City's Acting City Manager Bryan Foster presented his FY 26 budget proposing a residential real-estate tax hike of 9.5 cents – increasing it from its current \$1.03 per \$100 assessed valuation to \$1.125. But during a March 11 City Council meeting, Council decided to set its advertised tax rate at 2.5 cents higher.

Usually, Fairfax adopts a residential real-estate tax rate at or below what its city manager recommends. But with all the current uncertainty and instability regarding federal funding, City officials determined it would be better to not shortchange the City and, instead, advertise a tax rate of \$1.15 per \$100 assessed valuation.

However, it doesn't mean that this will actually be the tax rate City homeowners will pay in FY 26. It's simply the maximum tax rate Council is advertising. Indeed, after a series of upcoming, budget public hearings and work sessions, it could decide to adopt a lower rate.

Meanwhile, residents already reeling from increases in their residential real-estate assessments are not happy. And during last week's Council meeting, they made their feelings known.

Longtime resident David Geller said he's liked the way the City spends its money,

noting that, most of the time, "Our taxes would go up a few percent a year. It was mostly due to rising assessments, not the tax rate, which has been very small. But the total amount I'll end up paying in 2025, if this is approved, would go up 20 percent in one, single year – and I'm just flabbergasted."

"Until now, nothing like this has ever happened," he continued. "To think of raising the rate to \$1.12 or even – there's talk about raising it to \$1.15 – I just don't understand. I'm completely against raising the rate."

Linda Hoyer has lived here since 1998 and, she said, "When I got my real-estate assessment, I was shocked. It's increased 40 percent in two years. I love this City and would really like to stay, but I don't think we're being encouraged to do so."

Don Pitchford said that, over the past two years, his property tax has increased by 32 percent. "Many of my neighbors are over 40 percent," he added. "These are significant increases that place immense financial pressure on families, seniors and retirees – the very people who built this City and have spent their lives here."

"Historically, Fairfax City has had one of the lowest tax rates in Northern Virginia, making our City attractive and affordable. However, now isn't the time to emulate our neighboring jurisdictions whose property taxes have steadily increased – and whose residents are now experiencing greater financial burdens. Instead, the City should strengthen its central business district with significant commercial development and limit its reliance on expensive, external consultants."

Havon Abdi, a 14-year City resident, speaking on behalf of her neighbors, said she loves her home and life here. But, she stressed, "We're all dealing with inflation, but our incomes aren't going up to support this [tax increase]. We live on a private road. Aside from recycling and trash pickup, we're independent and maintain our own road."

"We don't use any other City services, including snow removal. We even cut our own trees when they fall, so I feel we're actually taking things off your plate. Please reconsider this [increase]. A \$1,300 tax bill is untenable. It's difficult to support, and I feel as if I'm getting pushed out."

Later, during their work session, Councilmembers asked questions of both Foster and Chief Financial Officer JC Martinez. Before voting on it, they sought more detailed answers to justify advertising a higher tax rate.

Martinez explained the many unknowns Fairfax City is facing. "If we don't do the George Snyder Trail, we'd have to give back the \$3.7 million we've received [for it from VDOT]," he said. "And that would reduce our unassigned fund balance in the budget."

There are also unknowns with the federal government right now and federal funds. We have some indirect exposure to that through the county and some of our other partners."

"There's also the school-tuition contract [with Fairfax County]," he continued. "We won't know where it'll come in at [dollar-wise] until September-October. And the state's proposed budget proposes a \$1,000 bonus to all teachers in the state. The state doesn't pay that directly; usually, the localities have to pick up the majority of that tab. And that [expense] wasn't accounted for in the development of our FY 25 or FY 26 budgets. And if the economy starts pulling back because of higher unemployment or inflation, those are things we'll have to address."

Therefore, said Councilmember Stacey Hardy-Chandler, "The \$1.15 advertised rate isn't something we're committing to – it's insurance. And if it's lower, it's lower. I think, if this were our personal financing, we'd build in that cushion for unknowns. It's a buffer for things we can't accurately predict that could unfold."

Councilmember Tom Peterson then asked

City of Fairfax Budget Town Hall

City of Fairfax Budget Town Hall on Wednesday, April 2, from 4-7 p.m., at the Sherwood Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd. in Fairfax. It's an open-house format, so attendees may drop in anytime.



Chief Financial Officer JC Martinez



Acting City Manager Bryan Foster

how a recession might impact the City. And Martinez replied that it would depend on its severity. "If there's significant unemployment, particularly in the federal workforce – which is my biggest fear right now, given what's transpiring – that's going to impact Northern Virginia tremendously," he said. "It'll impact the meals tax, the sales tax, a lot of things, including, potentially, real-estate revenue, if there's a downturn in that."

"We'll be monitoring that to make sure we're meeting our projections and targets," added Martinez. "And we'll advise the city manager, senior leadership and Council of what we're seeing [in case] we have to do a corrective action as soon as possible. I do think there's a potential for a recession happening, given what's going on right now – or, at least, a downturn."

After further questions from other Councilmembers, asking if more budget cuts could be made to avoid raising the tax rate so much, Foster

reiterated what he told them when he first presented his proposed budget in February.

"This budget doesn't add anything," he said. "There are no new positions or programs. It funds all the City services at their current levels." Basically, he warned, if the City's revenue drops below what's needed to maintain these things, "We're going to be cutting people and programs." Foster said the City could do that, but the residents probably wouldn't like the results.

Then Mayor Catherine Read ended the work session and reconvened the regular meeting so Council could vote on what tax rate to formally advertise. Ultimately, by a

4-2 vote – with Peterson and Stacy Hall voting no – the members went with \$1.15.

Later, knowing residents would want more details, on Sunday morning, Councilmember Rachel McQuillen addressed them on the "Fairfax City 411" Facebook page. She explained that all but one of the Councilmembers are new and have only been in office for a couple months.

"In that time, a new president moved into the White House and started making unprecedented policy changes," she wrote. "Meanwhile, our previous City Manager's departure left us in a lurch, prompting a swift search for an acting replacement. On top of all that, Fairfax County Public Schools hit us with a

historic, tuition-bill increase due to the statewide, education-funding shortfall.

"And if that wasn't enough, property values are up, inflation is doing its best impression of a rollercoaster (2.8 percent as of February) and we have several, critical in-

frastructure projects on the horizon.

"With all this in mind, let me be crystal clear: Advertising a higher tax rate wasn't some secret plot – it was a way to get you engaged. I wanted overwhelming feedback from residents, so we could understand what you want prioritized in the budget."

McQuillen then urged City residents to join the Councilmembers and City staff at a Budget Town Hall on Wednesday, April 2, from 4-7 p.m., at the Sherwood Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd. in Fairfax, and tell their leaders what matters most to them in this budget. It's an open-house format, so attendees may drop in anytime.

"The total amount I'll end up paying in 2025, if this is approved, would go up 20 percent in one, single year – and I'm just flabbergasted."

— David Geller, longtime resident

"I do think there's a potential for a recession happening, given what's going on right now – or, at least, a downturn."

— Fairfax City Chief Financial Officer JC Martinez

Arson Charged in Fairfax City House Fire

Local man arrested in connection with this crime.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

City of Fairfax police have arrested and charged a Fairfax City man on suspicion of arson. He is Emanuel Morales-Galvan, 32, and officials believe he deliberately set a fire outside a house in the City. People were inside the home at the time but were able to evacuate safely.

The incident occurred last Tuesday, March 11, in the 3900 block of Fairview Drive. According to City Fire Chief John O'Neal, the Fire Department received a call about the blaze around 9:45 p.m. and arrived about 3 minutes later.

First-arriving units discovered a car on fire in the driveway of an enclosed carport/garage, which was also in flames. "We're not sure whether it started in the car or in the carport/garage," said O'Neal. "That's still under investigation."

He also said no one was injured and the fire was "quickly extinguished," but it caused an estimated \$55,000 damage. It was also reported that a cat was rescued from the one-story, detached home.

Although it was a single-alarm fire, several firefight-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF FAIRFAX CITY FIRE DEPT.
Flames greeted first-arriving units when they reached the home.

ing units and personnel rushed to the scene, since it was in a residential area. Both Fairfax City Stations 3 and 33 responded, as did multiple units from Fairfax County. They came from West Annandale Station 23, Oakton Station 34 and Fairfax Center Station 40.

A ladder truck already on loan from the county to the City was used to battle the fire, as was a tow-



Firefighters at work at the Fairview Drive house.

SEE LOCAL MAN ARRESTED, PAGE 7

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF FAIRFAX CITY FIRE DEPT.

The burned carport/garage.



Firefighters on the scene. The carport/garage is to the left.

Local Man Arrested

FROM PAGE 6

er-ladder truck from Station 40. Stations 3 and 33 brought four fire engines total, in addition to a medic unit from Station 3 and an ambulance from Station 23. Also responding were the City and county battalion chiefs, plus a safety officer and an EMS supervisor.

Police arrived about a minute after the firefighters. “We were there partly because our fire apparatus were partially in the road

on Main Street, so we needed to do traffic control,” explained Fairfax City police spokesman, Sgt. James Lewis. “But, also, because we were given information that [the fire] might be arson.”

“A person called 911 – which went to Fairfax County – and told the county that it could have been intentional, and the county relayed that information to us,” continued

Lewis. He also said Morales-Galvin was not related to the home’s occupants but “does have ties to them. He didn’t live there, but his last known address was in the City.”

Considering Morales-Galvin a “person of interest,” a police officer detained him that night after finding him “in the immediate area” of the home. A joint press release issued by the City police and fire departments

states that, “With the help of the City of Fairfax Fire Marshal’s Office, the investigation [allegedly] revealed that Morales-Galvan intentionally set the home on fire.”

As a result, he was taken to the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center where he was charged with burning or destroying a dwelling. He was held without bond, pending his June 11 court date.

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Movie Star Inspires Fairfax Student's Dress

As part of the Women's History Month celebration, March 11 at Fairfax City Hall, Annaliese Gonzalez – a senior in the Fairfax Academy's fashion program at Fairfax High – displayed a dress she created and designed. "The dress was inspired by Audrey Hepburn," explained Gonzalez. "I researched her and learned that, after her acting career, she was an advocate for children's rights and an ambassador to the U.N."

Gonzalez started designing clothes and making costumes when she was in the eighth grade. She made her latest creation out of sustainable material from a tablecloth and a curtain.

She and other Fashion Careers students will participate in the academy's annual fashion show, "Fashion in Motion." It's set for Saturday, May 3, at 4 p.m., at the Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd. in Fairfax. It's part of the City's Spotlight on the Arts event; for ticket information, go to <https://www.fairfaxspotlight.org/event/fashion-in-motion/>.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION
Annaliese Gonzalez stands beside the dress she made.

— BONNIE HOBBS

Women's History Month

FROM PAGE 3

out two more people in the audience – former Planning Commissioner Janet Jaworski and former Parks and Rec Advisory Board member Evie Ifantides – as deserving of acknowledgement.

"There are people in this community who have given as volunteers and community leaders," said Read. "And sometimes we don't always know their names, but they, too, should be recognized. The point is, this community has benefited from the commitment and the investment of women in our City for so many years. And all of us stand on their shoulders. I am grateful; so thank you, women, for everything you've done."

The Proclamation

Following the reception, at the start of the City Council meeting, Read read a Women's History Month proclamation before presenting a plaque to the Fairfax City Commission for Women.

"Each March, we commemorate Women's History Month by reflecting upon the numerous achievements of women who have improved and strengthened our community



Women's History Month logo.

and our nation with special recognition of those voices who have been historically marginalized, including Black, Indigenous, other women of color, LGBTQ+ women, immigrant women and women with disabilities.

"The 2025 Theme for National Women's History Month is 'Moving Forward Together! Women Educating and Inspiring Generations.' "We recognize women, past and present, who have dedicated their lives to education, mentorship and leadership. We acknowledge women who have been at the forefront of movements for equality, racial justice and social change.

SEE WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH, PAGE 9

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WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

FROM PAGE 8

We honor women from all walks of life who have used their platforms to foster collective growth, empowerment and transformation.

"From classrooms to boardrooms, and from grassroots movements to global initiatives, women educators and leaders have played a pivotal role in nurturing minds and inspiring transformative action, and the 2025 theme spotlights the contributions women have made to the American educational system, the free marketplace of ideas and the very fabric of our democracy. [They have] faced numerous challenges while continuing to pave the way for future generations of women ... and changemakers in a multitude of fields ranging from business and medicine to government and the arts.

"Women made significant scientific contributions to the early space program, the modernization of computer programming, and served in positions of power in boardrooms, the education system, medicine, politics and the military. As we honor women this month, we celebrate their perseverance, courage and determination as the backbone of progress in this nation."

Next, to commemorate the "spirit, courage and contributions of women in the City of Fairfax," Read proclaimed March 2025 as Women's History Month. She also encouraged everyone to attend the Commission for Women's panel discussion in City Hall council chambers, 10455 Armstrong St., on Sunday, March 23, from 1-3 p.m.

Moderated by Councilmember Stacey Hardy-Chandler, this free event's theme is "Moving Forward Together: Women Educating and Inspiring Generations." Local women educators will share personal experiences and lessons learned, while highlighting the contributions of women educators in shaping communities, fostering mentorship and leading with purpose.

Commission for Women

Accepting the plaque, Commission for Women Chair Johnelle Brown said she was honored to receive it. "Women's History Month is a time to reflect on the tremendous contributions women have made to our personal lives, the local community, our nation and the world," said Brown. "Generations of all kinds of women have fought for equality, justice and the freedom to lead.

"This month, we not only honor their achievements and sacrifice but also commit to uplifting the voices and experiences of women from all walks of life and every corner of the community," she continued. "We're deeply grateful to those who continue to advocate for equal opportunities, and we recognize the strength and resilience of women everywhere."

Thanking Read and the Councilmembers for their ongoing support, Brown said her organization is excited to move forward together with them in "celebrating and advancing the work of women in our City."

Turn Down the Lights to Help Migrating Birds

Twice a year, billions of birds travel hundreds of miles between their winter and summer homes, mostly at night, using the stars to navigate. In Northern Virginia alone, an estimated 100 to 160 million birds migrate through our skies each spring and fall.

Artificial lights can turn their journey into a confusing and dangerous trek. Bright lights on tall buildings and city skyglow attract the feathered travelers, leading to window collisions or exhaustion from circling illuminated structures.

As birds begin their migration this spring, the county is supporting the "Lights Out for Birds" campaign led by the Northern Virginia Bird Alliance. The alliance, in partnership with local organizations such as Nature Forward, Friends of Huntley Meadows and DarkSky NOVA, encourages residents and businesses to reduce excessive outdoor nighttime lighting from 11 p.m. through 6 a.m., March 15 to May 31 — the peak of spring bird migration.

Simple changes to lighting can make a difference. A Chicago study found that reducing nighttime lights in a single high-rise building decreased bird deaths by 80%, while also saving energy and lowering costs.

Residents do not need to surround themselves in total darkness to support bird-friendly lighting. Motion sensors, shielded lights and warm-colored bulbs

can help reduce excess light while still providing enough outdoor illumination. Keeping lights directed downward and using lower-intensity bulbs can also make areas safer for both people and wildlife.

Here's how you can support migrating birds:

- ❖ Dim interior lights or close blinds. Prevent indoor lighting from escaping and disorienting birds.
- ❖ Use motion sensors or timers. Install lighting that only turns on when needed.
- ❖ Use warm, downward-facing lights. Outdoor lights should be shielded, aimed downward, and have a warm (amber) color instead of blue-white light.
- ❖ Install window decals or protective film. Help prevent birds from flying into glass by using patterns or films that make windows more visible to them.
- ❖ Reduce decorative and upper-floor lighting. High-rise buildings can turn off or reduce lighting on upper floors and exterior decorative lights.
- ❖ Follow DarkSky International's Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting. Ensure lighting is useful, low-level, targeted, controlled and warm-colored.
- ❖ Spread the Word. Tell neighbors, friends and local businesses about the "Lights Out for Birds" campaign.
- ❖ Sign the Lights Out Pledge hosted by the Northern Virginia Bird Alliance and show your commitment. <https://www.nvbirdalliance.org/lights-out-for-birds>

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George Mason University's Potomac Science Center's campus retention pond was the scene of the most recent rescue by Tanya's Turtle Project



Volunteers, mostly George Mason students, tackled knee-deep mud to net or hand-grab turtles and fish.



Volunteers Colleen Lester of Fairfax and Tyler Kirkland, a junior in the university's environment and science policy program, transfer turtles into buckets to be hauled up from the mud

What About the Turtles?

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Volunteers rescue turtles from construction site.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

It is common for those near development and construction sites to be unhappy about the disruption the work causes. Some might call their county supervisor or congressman. Wildlife habitats of many kinds also might be impacted or destroyed.

And what about the turtles?

That's a question rescue organizer Tanya Finch asked. Finch started "Tanya's Turtle Project" (TTP) in March of 2021, to raise awareness and actively rescue box turtles that get trapped within the perimeter fencing in construction sites. Since then TTP has become an official 501(c)(3) organization. The Project has succeeded in moving over 200 turtles out of construction sites and harms way between 2021 and February 2025.

Recently, on March 2, the volunteer group significantly added to their turtle rescue count by rescuing about 58 turtles from a retention pond at the George Mason Potomac Science Center on Mason Ferry Road in Woodbridge. The site, on the Occoquan River near its confluence with Belmont Bay, is reconstructing their spillway system to comply with current drainage regulations, according to Cindy Smith of the university's research and education center. The existing large pond next to the center is being drained to accommodate the upgrading work. The contractor, Total Development Solutions, was willing to work with rescuers by giving access to the site when most of the water was pumped out. What remained were a few water birds, some fish, many freshwater turtles, and mud — lots and lots of mud.

Intrepid volunteers, mostly George Mason University environmental students, along with Finch and her volunteers, and wildlife rehabber Olivia LoBalbo of



Muddied mother-daughter turtle rescue volunteers, Colleen Lester and Abby Stevens of Fairfax hold turtles on their way to release

Animal Rescue and Education Organization, braved the mud. Finch dubbed the effort "the most successful one-day-turtle saving mission in TTP/WATT's history." They have plans to return to the site to rescue a few more as the pond is drained further.

Their captures were mostly Pond Sliders (*Trachemys scripta*), Eastern Painted Turtles (*Dhrysemys picta picta*), and a few Eastern Musk (*Sternotherus odoratus*). They did rescue one small Southeastern Mud Turtle (*Kinosternon subrubrum subrubrum*),



Walking carefully across the muddy river bank, volunteer Ali Reams (foreground), of Clifton, looks as if she could be delivering an a fancy meal on a domed tray, instead of a turtle

SEE VOLUNTEERS RESCUE TURTLES, PAGE 11

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Professor Gad Perry demonstrates that field work often includes getting dirty, and even department chairmen are not immune from mud falls but do not lose their turtles in the process



Rylee Ledlux, an Air Force veteran, current student in the Mason environmental science program, and acknowledged mud warrior, poses with the rescue of the day, a large snapping turtle



Tyler Kirkland, mud caked from head to foot, holds one of his many rescues



Olivia LoBalbo, President & Founder of A.E.R.O., prepares to release the rescued Snapping Turtle

Volunteers Rescue Turtles

FROM PAGE 10

and one very large, and unhappy Snapping Turtle (*Cheludra serpentina*). The prospect of reaching beneath the mud clouded water to find and retrieve a large Snapping Turtle with the ability to strike quickly, may sound unnerving. But with cooler temperatures this time of year, the turtles were not moving as fast, giving the rescuers a one-up.

The rescued turtles were initially placed in plastic bins and buckets, then checked for injuries. Those in good health were released within hours to a semi-sheltered portion of the Occoquan River within close distance to their retention pond. A few showed

evidence of health issues, such as to damage to mandibles, eyes, and legs; or rot on their shells. They were held by A.E.R.O. for further evaluation and possible treatment.

Past rescue efforts, at construction sites like this one, were possible through partnerships with area construction companies; Van Meter, S.W. Rodgers, Total Development Solutions, Miller & Smith, and W.A. Hazel Inc. Two volunteers from Hazel participated at the Mason Neck effort.

Tanya's Turtle Project's vision "is to help create a world where urban development and biodiversity

SEE VOLUNTEERS RESCUE TURTLES, PAGE 12

BURKE / FAIRFAX / FAIRFAX STATION/CLIFTON/LORTON / SPRINGFIELD ❖ MARCH 20 - APRIL 2, 2025 ❖ 11



I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study City of Alexandria and Fairfax County, VA Prince George's County, MD

In-person Public Information Meetings
Meeting times: 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Meeting format: Open house with a presentation at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, April 1, 2025
West Potomac High School (Cafeteria)
6500 Quander Rd., Alexandria, VA 22307

Wednesday, April 2, 2025
Oxon Hill High School (Auditorium)
6701 Leyte Dr., Oxon Hill, MD 20745

Monday, April 7, 2025
Thomas A. Edison High School (Cafeteria)
5801 Franconia Rd., Alexandria, VA 22310

Wednesday, April 9, 2025
Nannie J. Lee Memorial Recreation Center
1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria, VA 22314

Virtual Public Information Room available starting on April 1, 2025, at www.vdot.virginia.gov/495southside

Learn about and provide input on the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study, an environmental study evaluating the potential extension of the express lanes system on the southern section of the Capital Beltway (I-495) by 11 miles from the Springfield Interchange (I-95/I-395/I-495) in Fairfax County, Virginia, across the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge, to the MD 210 interchange in Prince George's County, Maryland. VDOT, in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other federal, state, and local agencies in Virginia and Maryland, is conducting an Environmental Assessment in compliance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR Part 771.

VDOT will provide information at upcoming public meetings on the three alternatives under study to address identified transportation needs within the study area. These needs include extending and providing continuity of the express lanes system on I-495, providing additional travel choices, reducing congestion and improving travel reliability, improving safety, and providing consistency with local and regional plans. VDOT will also provide preliminary traffic analysis data and updates on study progress and ongoing coordination.

The in-person meetings will be held from 6:30- 8:30 p.m. The meeting format will include an open house with a presentation at 7 p.m. VDOT representatives will be present at various stations to answer questions.

The virtual public information room will contain the meeting presentation and boards, and opportunities to provide input.

Review information on the study webpage (www.vdot.virginia.gov/495southside), during the in-person public information meetings, or during business hours at VDOT Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-691-6044 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions.

Provide your input by submitting oral and/or written comments at the meetings, or via the online comment form at www.vdot.virginia.gov/495southside, email to 495southsideexpresslanes@vdot.virginia.gov, or mail to Michelle Shropshire, P.E., VDOT Northern Virginia Megaprojects Director, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030, by Monday, April 21, 2025.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775 or TTY/TDD 711.

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Snapping and other turtles do not have teeth, using their hard, beak-like structure, similar to beaks of birds, to cut, tear, and grind their food



A rescued turtle waits quietly to be taken to a holding container before being released out of harm's way



A.E.R.O.

Turtle project founder Tanya Finch, using a creative cardboard solution to reach turtles on an earlier rescue

Volunteers Rescue Turtles from Construction Site

FROM PAGE 11

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

thrive in harmony, protecting local ecosystems and wildlife while fostering sustainable growth.” The project operates under the auspices of certified wildlife rescue organization A.E.R.O. To learn more about their efforts or how you can help, see

<https://aeroanimalrescue.org/programs/tanyasturtleproject/>

George Mason University’s Potomac Science Center is a 50,000 square-foot research facility housing lecture rooms, event space rentals, laboratories for teaching and research, outdoor trails, and a library/resource center. The facility supports educational outreach to local schools and opportunities for collaboration with government agencies and private industry.



The rescued snapping turtle makes its own representation of the effort's day end



Released to a larger space, the rescued turtles waste no time in moving into their new river home



Not absent all dangers, the rescued turtles and fish fall under the interested eyes of Eagles and other marine life predators



Jessica Robinson



Carol Moore



Miriam Nadel



Sarah Snyder

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JESSICA ROBINSON

Laughter, Joy, Discovery, Wonder, Empathy and Healing

Women's Storytelling Festival is March 20-23 in Fairfax City.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

It's always satisfying to sit down and read a good book or hear an engrossing story via podcast. But it's also special to see and hear those stories come to life from the mouths of the people who wrote them.

Toward that end, the sixth annual Women's Storytelling Festival is slated for this Thursday through Sunday, March 20-23. It kicks off March 20, at 8 p.m., with a virtual showcase, followed by in-person performances, March 21-23, at the Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd. in Fairfax City. The entire festival will also be live streamed online.

Showcasing a wide range of storytelling styles, the festival spotlights 19 storytellers who'll perform spoken-word stories. They'll share personal stories and folk tales, as well as tales of adventure and magic. This event is intended for mature audiences; and all ticket holders – whether in-person or virtual – will be able to watch the festival videos for one month after the event concludes.

Hosting the event is the nonprofit Better Said Than Done. Fairfax's Jessica Robinson, Women's Storytelling Festival producer, founded it in 2011 to bring the art of storytelling to Northern Virginia. And she's proud of and excited about this year's festival.

"The stories go deep, the performances are amazing and the audience is rapt," she explained. "The WSF is truly one of the best festivals of any performance-art I've ever seen. It features many of the best storytellers in the country and gives them a space to let loose and tell stories they might not share on other stages."

"You might think, 'I'll only go for one showcase,'" continued Robinson. "But once you start to watch, you're not going to want to miss a second of the rest of the weekend. Plan to come and stay – you won't regret it."

Virtual tickets for the entire event are \$45, and in-person tickets, \$70. In addition, one-day, in-person passes will be available at the www.connectionnewspapers.com

door for \$35. For schedules and further information, to learn more about the 2025 storytellers, and to purchase tickets, go to <https://betersaidthandone.org/womens-festival/>

The storytellers span a wide range of experience, with relative newcomers telling alongside veterans of more than two decades. Among the festival performers are authors, poets, podcasters, teaching artists and contributors to various storytelling shows and festivals across the country, including the National Storytelling Festival.

And they're coming here from across the nation – from Alaska to Colorado, Minnesota to Virginia. "A festival is a celebration, so dedicating a weekend to celebrate the voices and stories of women shows their perspectives are valued," said storyteller Jennifer Hillery of Massachusetts.

This year's in-person storytellers are: Laura Deal, Swapna Deshpande, Linda Gorham, Jennifer Hillery, Tobey Ishii Anderson, Andrea Kamens, Amanda Lawrence, Carol Moore, Miriam Nadel, Ingrid Nixon, Laura Packer, Jessica Robinson, Aimee Snow, and Sarah Snyder.

"Honestly, it's one of the best emotional vacations you could take."

— Carol Moore, storyteller from Herndon

Karin Amano, Sarah Brady, Sarah Beth Nelson, Shani Womack and Janel Woodland will perform virtually only; but everyone who buys a ticket will be able to see and hear their stories.

Besides Robinson, three local women will be among the storytellers. They are Miriam Nadel of Vienna, plus Carol Moore and Sarah Snyder of Herndon.

Storyteller Miriam Nadel (Vienna, VA) goes on to say,

"[This festival] is more interactive than most forms of entertainment you can experience," said Nadel. "Everyone in the audience ends up nodding their heads in understanding and agreement. It always impresses me what a variety of experiences women have had. We may come from different places and cultures, but our experiences can bring us



Logo of the Women's Storytelling Festival.

"It features many of the best storytellers in the country and gives them a space to let loose and tell stories they might not share on other stages."

— Jessica Robinson, Women's Storytelling Festival producer

together across the generations."

Moore, a returning storyteller, said the festival "feels like an escape into an entirely different world for days. Somehow, you're constantly comforted by camaraderie but also guaranteed to hear, learn or experience something new. There's laughter and joy, discovery and wonder, empathy and healing. Honestly, it's one of the best emotional vacations you could take."

Snyder described it as "like hanging out in the living room of someone's house, whom you may or may not know. But one thing you [learn] is that everyone is welcome, and you get to meet and befriend so many amazing women."

Furthermore, she said, "Women aren't afraid of getting raw and personal. We aren't afraid of being vulnerable, once we're together and realize this is a safe place to be who you are. Having attended just about every WSF so far, I feel totally comfortable letting loose, going deep and trusting that the listeners will hold me and honor me."

Agreeing, storyteller Aimee Snow of Manassas, added, "So many women from different backgrounds and ages in one place makes for an amazing experience."

And storyteller Amanda Lawrence stressed that "Now, more than ever, the world needs

to hear women's stories."

"Women's voices matter, our lived experiences are real – and yet, those voices and experiences are often dismissed," explained storyteller Laura Packer. "This festival gives women a chance to share their personal stories, their interpretations of traditional material, and to be heard without apology or fight."

As for Robinson, she's also pleased that, "For the many people across the country who cannot make it, for one reason or another, to the in-person event in Fairfax, we continue to offer a livestream and the recordings, for one month afterward. And we welcome people of all gender identities to attend."

Overall, said Packer, "The festival will exceed your expectations. Each story is powerful, and the stories heard together become a celebration and exploration of what it is to be human. Be prepared to feel feelings, to laugh and to connect powerfully with everyone there."

To learn more about the festival's storytellers, go to

<https://betersaidthandone.org/womens-festival/2025-festival-storytellers/>

— BONNIE GARDNER CONTRIBUTED TO THIS STORY.

Franconia Construction

FROM PAGE 4

The total project estimate for the consolidated facility including the two associated parking garages is \$79.5 million. Funding was approved in the 2015 Public Safety Bond Referendum. Funding for the library, to include the Active Adult Center, was approved in the 2020 Library Bond referendum. It is scheduled to be open in the summer of 2025.

Inova Franconia-Springfield Hospital

Across the intersection of Beulah and the Springfield-Franconia Parkway is the site of the new In-

ova Hospital. Currently there are three large cranes for the construction, and cranes this size are new to this part of the county so this gives a feeling for how big this hospital will be.

According to the Inova plans, the new Inova Franconia-Springfield Hospital will consist of a full-service hospital, inpatient hospital, outpatient center, expansion space, a parking garage and a walkway to the existing Inova Healthplex that has been in use for years. It will be bordered by Walker Lane, the Franconia-Springfield Parkway and Beulah Street. Construction is underway and is scheduled to be completed in 2028.



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

Construction continues at the new Franconia District Government Center building just off Beulah Street.

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNews-papers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event. Or via email calendar@connectionnews.com

ASSISTANCE LEAGUE WISH LIST

Assistance League of Northern Virginia has been serving at-risk children for over 20 years with multiple programs to help meet basic needs. Assistance League invites the public to join its efforts by making a purchase from our current monthly wish list to augment the nonprofit's ability to serve even more elementary students at local Title 1 schools. The March wish list features the short-sleeve T-shirts that children will need for spring and summer. Use this link <https://tiny.alnv.org/wish-short-sleeves> to make your selection. Visit the website www.alnv.org.

MCC GOVERNING BOARD'S PUBLIC HEARING

McLean Community Center's (MCC) Governing Board is holding a Public Hearing on FY2027 Programs at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 26. The hearing offers residents of Dranesville Small District 1-A, who pay a real estate tax surcharge to support the center, an opportunity to share their ideas for programs and activities they would like to see offered and/or improved upon as the center plans for the 2027 fiscal year. The hearing will be held in person at MCC, which is located at 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean.

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 or email 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/healthymindsfairfax or www.nami-north-ernvirginia.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 or 703-821-6838.

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, www.havenofnova.org or 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, or visit www.alnv.org.

Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed. Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil

at Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-4547.

Operation Paws for Homes, a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See www.ophrescue.org for information and all volunteer opportunities.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean continues to have an urgent need for new volunteers to help area senior citizens get to and from their medical and therapy appointments. To find out more about the Shepherd's Center and how you can volunteer to provide transportation and other services, call the Center at 703-506-2199 or e-mail the Center at info@scmaf.org. The Center's website is www.scmaf.org.

Master Gardener Training. The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit fairfaxgardening.org or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

Volunteers Needed. PRS is looking for empathetic and caring volunteers to make phone calls to older adults who may be feeling socially isolated. The commitment is one 3-hour shift per week for one year. Located in Arlington. Ages 21 & up. Intensive training provided. Learn more and apply: prsinc.org/caring-volunteering/. Questions? Email lpadgett@prsinc.org.

The Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email

Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov. Also visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltcombudsman/.

Fairfax County needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Respite Care volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The Lewinsville Senior Center in McLean needs a Certified Arthritis Exercise Instructor. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Volunteers for Change. A program for adults which offers more than 50 weekend and evening volunteer opportunities per month. www.volunteerfairfax.org.

Great Falls Hike or Bike Volunteers. Bike or Hike Patrol volunteers assist park rangers by riding on accessible trails in Great Falls Park. To assist park staff in providing info and services to park visitors, maintain good public relations as a representative of the National Park Service, and monitor park resources, visitor usage, and emergency needs. Skills and Experience Desired: Excellent communication skills. Ability to work with culturally, socially, and economically diversified people. Knowledge of the park and local resources, or the desire to learn. Knowledge of basic bike maintenance or willingness to learn. Willingness to provide basic first aid. Ability to demonstrate skill in basic operation of a bicycle. Call Volunteer Coordinator 703-285-2965 ext. 225

Potomac Paddlers Volunteer Corps. The Potomac Paddlers Corps is a volunteer group with the National Park Service under shared management between Great Falls Park and the C&O Canal National Historical

Park. The primary mission of the Corps is to have trained, uniformed park volunteers on the Potomac River to assist the park in identifying and reporting incidents, watch out for risky park visitor behavior, and to deliver safety messages to the public about the dangers of the Potomac River in the Potomac Gorge. Contact: Volunteer Coordinator 703-285-2965 ext. 225 or visit www.nps.gov

ONGOING

1 Million Cups. Wednesdays, 8:30 a.m. networking; 9-10 a.m. program at Make Offices at Tysons, 1751 Pinnacle Drive, Suite 600, McLean. Each week a different business owner gives a brief six-minute presentation about where they are in their business. They then offer up a challenge question about a new idea, product, expansion or something they are facing in their business. The group then masterminds solutions. Free and open to the public. Visit www.1millioncups.com/.

Great Falls Friends and Neighbors (GFFN) invites women living in the Langley High School District or The Estates of Lowes Island to learn more about the group. The purpose of GFFN is to establish and foster an atmosphere in which new and current residents can develop new friendships and community contacts through social, educational and cultural activities. In addition, the club provides service, support and donations to philanthropic and civic organizations in and around the Great Falls community. Email info@gffnva.org or visit www.gffnva.org.

Vienna Toastmasters. 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 7:30-9 p.m., at the Vienna Community Center on the 2nd floor room opposite the elevator, 120 Cherry St., S.E., Vienna. A friendly place to get comfortable with public speaking and impromptu speaking for new and experienced speakers. Open to the public.

Run With the Doctor. Every other Saturday at 7 a.m. 8230 Boone Blvd., Tysons Corner. The Center for Orthopedics and Sports Medicine offers its services in a convenient format to runners at this running event. Free. facebook.com/run-withthedoctor.

PEOPLE

Fairfax County Man Ran Away to the Circus

The John Lewis High School alum found his calling with The Greatest Show on Earth.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

As teenagers approach high school, running away to join the circus comes up as a last resort, but for Brandon Glass it became a reality.

After graduating from John R. Lewis High School in 2010 he dabbled in work with the people who were hearing impaired, as a stunt man in show business and is now part of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum Bailey Circus.

Joining the circus may be something to say jokingly but “now it’s actually my life,” Glass said.

The journey there is as roundabout as a three-ring circus. “The story is quite an adventure,” he said. Out of Lewis High School, where he played the trumpet, Glass ended up at Towson University studying deaf studies and sign language. From there he went to being a stuntman in Los Angeles where he did a lot of stunt fighting with pyrotechnics. Glass described it as “basically fireworks coming out of my shoes,” he said.

The circus found him out in L.A., and now he’s the touring public relations manager, working with many of the city and town officials where the circus is performing. When they need performers, he sometimes finds people in gyms working out and they end up applying for jobs that demand physical traits and talents in the circus.

When mentioning a job with the circus,



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

Brandon Glass



The circus is a great spectacle, even without animals.

thoughts may involve elephants and tiger tamers but those days are over. In about 2017, the treatment of animals became a focus and the Ringling Brothers and Barnum Bailey Circus moved away from animal acts.

“We’ve shifted the focus,” Glass said, “we have no animals in the show now.” Some of the newer acts feature BMX bikes or a robo dog.

Instead, they have high-wire and acrobatic shows, and parts where the audience gets involved as well. Picture the audience joining in when a well-known rock star sings one of their hits. This year they have a triangular high-wire act with people going everywhere.

“It’s some things you’ve never seen before,” he said.

Travelling around the country with a group of people, especially entertainers can be colorful. Everyone gets to know everyone else from the many different cultures at the circus. Connecting with people is one of the positives he’s gained from the experience. The antics of the performers are “always fun to me,” he said.

Next up for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum Bailey Circus aka “The Greatest Show on Earth,” is scheduled to be at the EagleBank Arena in Fairfax, from March 28 to April 6, 2025, showcasing an all-new production with over 50 acts.

NEWS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 2

Attention Seniors: Home for Life Expo is April 4

The third annual Home for Life 2025 Expo will be held Friday, April 4, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd. in Fairfax. This free event will provide valuable information to senior citizens in both Fairfax City and County.

There’ll be 36 exhibitors, plus speakers on four topics – decluttering, technology support, estate planning and dementia care. The Welcome Café will offer refreshments and a place to catch up with friends and neighbors. And the City of Fairfax Fire Department will have its fire-simulator trailer in the parking lot.

Supplies Are Needed at The Lamb Center

The Lamb Center, a nonprofit, daytime drop-in center for the homeless, is in urgent need of men’s clothing, as well as food and supplies. Any donations would be greatly appreciated. Here are the most-needed items:

❖ Food - Disposable coffee cups, 12-oz.; sturdy, 9-inch paper plates; and sturdy, disposable 16-oz. bowls (no Sty-

rofoam for any of these items); lemonade powder mix and iced-tea mix (large canisters only); family-sized boxes of cereal; Pop Tarts; granulated sugar (10-lb. bags); and coffee creamer (large containers).

❖ Clothing - Men’s boxer briefs, new, (S-XXXL); ladies’ underwear, small sizes; hoodies (unisex); and men’s white undershirts (all sizes), new.

❖ Supplies - Paper towels; and liquid bleach.

All items may be brought to The Lamb Center at 3160 Campbell Drive in Fairfax City. Hours are Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; and Saturday, from 9-11 a.m.

911 Focus Groups

Fairfax County’s Department of Public Safety Communications (the 9-1-1 Center), in partnership with George Mason University, is seeking your help to improve emergency services.

Focus groups are being formed to talk about how community members and first responders work together. Your input will help: Spot challenges in emergency response; Identify what communities need; Find ways to make services better; Share your thoughts on how AI tools could support emergency services

Why It Matters

These meetings will help emergency teams better understand what you need during a crisis and help you feel more

prepared if an emergency happens.

Three upcoming sessions are scheduled:

❖ Culmore Library

Saturday, March 22

3-6 p.m.

Meeting Room 2

6101 Knollwood Dr., Falls Church

❖ Centreville Regional Library

Friday, April 4 (Updated date/time)

4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Meeting Room 1

14200 St Germain Dr., Centreville

❖ Richard Byrd Library

Saturday, April 5

3-6 p.m.

Meeting Room 2

7250 Commerce St., Springfield

What to Expect

Each focus group lasts about 2-3 hours; Food and refreshments will be provided; Your ideas will help shape the future of emergency services

If you’re interested in being part of a focus group to help improve emergency communications in Fairfax County, you can register online.

Your voice matters in making emergency services work better for everyone in Fairfax County.

ENTERTAINMENT



RCC's Diva Central Dress Giveaway takes place on Saturday, March 22, 2025 in Reston.



The Fiesta del Sol Latin American & Caribbean Festival takes place on Saturday, March 22, 2025 at the McLean Community Center.

PLANT A TREE

The McLean Trees Foundation, Neighborhood Trees Program, wants to help you plant a native tree in your yard. Don't know how to plant a tree but want to support the environmental health of your community? Want your family to have the experience of planting a tree? If you live in McLean, Virginia, the McLean Trees Foundation (MTF) (a local nonprofit) will help you select an appropriate native tree for your property, deliver the tree to your yard, help you plant it, provide information on maintenance, and even check back with you a few months after planting to see how your tree is doing. If you are interested in participating in this terrific program to boost our native tree canopy in McLean, please visit our website at <https://www.mcleantreesfoundation.org/neighborhood-tree-program> and submit your application! A modest fee of \$100 is assessed to cover the costs of the program (limit one 6-7 foot tree in 15 gallon container per household). We have a separate program for those who are interested in spearheading a community tree planting campaign in their neighborhood. MTF's Tree Champion program makes it easy to help your neighbors plant more trees! For more information, visit the website at <https://www.mcleantreesfoundation.org/tree-champions-program>.

NOW THRU MARCH 23

Flourish Exhibit 2025. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Flourish 2025 is an exhibition at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton, Virginia, celebrating bold artistic expressions and the thriving creativity within the community. Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/flourish-2025>

NOW THRU MARCH 23

Workhouse Arts Center Unveils (un) Endangered Species: Re-imagined Places by Andi Cullins. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton, Bldg. W3 Theater.

CITY OF FAIRFAX EVENTS

Funday Monday. 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. This is a free program perfect for preschoolers, but children of all ages are welcome at the Stacy C. Sherwood Center, 3740 Blenheim

Blvd., Fairfax. For more information, visit the website at <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts> or contact Megan DuBois at 703.273.6097/ Megan.DuBois@fairfaxva.gov.

The Bonita Lestina Old Town Hall Performance Series is now in its 35th Season! 8 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd., Fairfax. For more information, visit the website at <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts> or contact Megan DuBois at 703.273.6097/ Megan.DuBois@fairfaxva.gov.

SCHEDULE

March 28 – Dr. John “JJ” Mitchell, Organ Recital (held at Truro Anglican Church, Fairfax)

April 11 – Bobby J and the Hot Lanes

MARCH 8 TO APRIL 6

Workhouse Arts Center Presents Clyde's by Lynn Nottage. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton, Bldg. W3 Theater. At a truck stop sandwich shop, a group of formerly incarcerated kitchen staff get a second chance at life. Under the oppressive rule of their tough-as-nails boss, they find purpose, redemption, and even inspiration in their quest to craft the perfect sandwich. This witty and uplifting play explores themes of resilience, reinvention, and the power of dreams as these five characters navigate life's twists and turns as returning citizens.

NOW THRU MARCH 30

“Hang.” At 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road Tysons. Times: 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. One crime. One room. Three people. A woman's unspeakable decision as the criminal's fate hangs in the balance. Set in a haunting world where every word is a revelation and every silence speaks volumes, this electrifying production will take you on a journey through the complexities of justice and human nature.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 19

Guest Artist Speaker. 7-9 p.m. At Grace Presbyterian Church, 7434 Bath Street, Springfield. Springfield Art Guild will be hosting guest artist Diana Cull to discuss and

give a demonstration of Ikebana, traditional Japanese flower arranging. Free. Visit the website: <https://www.springfieldartguild.org/>

MARCH 20-23

2025 Women's Storytelling Festival.

At Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd., Fairfax. The festival features 19 of the nation's top storytellers, hailing from as far away as Alaska to Fairfax County, sharing a range of stories - from personal to folk, historic to fantastic - intended for a mature audience. Hosted by Better Said Than Done, in-person performances will be held at the Sherwood Community Center, with a special virtual only showcase premiering on March 20. The festival will also be live-streamed online. It kicks off Thursday, March 20, 2025, at 8:00 p.m. ET, with the virtual showcase, and the in-person and live streaming storytelling begins on Friday March 21, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. The festival concludes Sunday, March 23, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. For schedules, other details, and tickets, visit <https://betersaidthandone.org/womens-festival/>

MARCH 21-23

Capital Art & Craft Festival At Dulles

Expo Center, Chantilly. Featuring painting, clothing, jewelry, glass, woodworking, leather, photography and ceramics. Dates are Friday, Mar 21 and Saturday Mar 22: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday Mar 23: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Tickets: \$10 in advance; \$12 at the door; Senior & Military discounts available; children under 12 free. Ticket information: www.CACE.art

MARCH 22 - 23

Traveling Players Presents Sea

Changes: A Festival of Two Plays. Treasure Island — 3 p.m.; Orlando — 7 p.m. At their Studio in Tysons Corner Center. Tickets are \$16 online, \$20 at the door. Call 703-987-1712. Performed by Traveling Players students, the festival will breathe new life into satirical romances and scurvy sailors, with modern twists on two beloved novels.

SATURDAY/MARCH 22

The Workhouse Ball. 6-11 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. The highly anticipated inaugural Workhouse Ball is set to be the

premier arts and culture event of the season, bringing together influential figures from politics, sports, and the arts for a night of creativity, philanthropy, and entertainment. Hosted at the historic Workhouse Arts Center, this Met Gala-inspired soirée will captivate guests with an immersive and dynamic experience, all in support of artistic innovation and cultural impact. A Night of Artistic Excellence and Celebration Themed “Art After Dark,” the Workhouse Ball will transform the venue into an interactive, sensory-filled experience featuring: Immersive Art Activations and live performances; A Stylish Cocktail Hour followed by a gourmet dinner; Dancing and an Exclusive After-Hours Party; and Silent & Live Auctions offering one-of-a-kind art and experiences. Reserve your spot now: www.workhousearts.org/workhouse-ball

SATURDAY/MARCH 22

Fiesta del Sol Latin American & Caribbean Festival. 5-10 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Taste sumptuous tapas, enjoy great live music and hear the sounds of Latin America and the Caribbean right here in McLean with renowned live bands, top notch chefs, quality artisan exhibitors and alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. Learn how to dance the salsa, merengue or cumbia from the best dance instructors, free throughout the evening. Free Admission. Drink and food tickets sold onsite.

SATURDAY/MARCH 22

Huge Rummage Sale. 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Providence Presbyterian Church, 9019 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Gently Loved Items at Low Prices. Furniture, Clothing, Shoes, Books, Toys, Accessories, Housewares, Glassware, Linens, Books, Home Décor, Kitchenware, Seasonal Items, Boutique with higher-end items, and more! Presale: Friday, March 21, 2025; 12-3 p.m., \$5 admission; Main Sale: Saturday, March 22, 2025; 8 a.m.-1 p.m., free admission. Visit the website: <https://www.providencechurch.org>.

SATURDAY/MARCH 22

RCC's Diva Central Dress Giveaway. At Lake Anne, Reston. Local middle and high school students are invited to enjoy a boutique shopping experience where they can select a

complete outfit for their spring formal dance or prom. The combined cost of hair styling, makeup, gowns, tickets and transportation puts attending the prom out of reach for many families. This one-day event offers an ideal shopping experience for middle and high school students in need of a dress, shoes, jewelry and other accessories. Everything is free and each shopper can select up to two outfits.

SATURDAY/MARCH 22

Rhythm India: Bollywood & Beyond.

8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. With colorful costumes, dynamic music, and soulful beats, Rhythm India evokes the glitz and glamor of a blockbuster Bollywood dance sequence and the graceful movements of classical Indian dance.

SUNDAY/MARCH 23

Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey

Siegel: Humor in Music. 7 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Siegel closes out his season of Keyboard Conversations with music to raise the spirits—and stimulate smiles! Center audiences are invited to enjoy merriment in musical tones from the enchanting works of Chopin, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Copland, and Stravinsky.

SUNDAY/MARCH 23

Guided Pokemon Go Hike.

2:30-4 p.m. At Riverbend Park, Great Falls. Learn about nature while enjoying playing Pokémon Go with your family or friends. Participants must be familiar with Pokémon Go, supply their own smart device, and have Pokémon Go already installed. Backup battery or charger recommended. Program will be outdoors, so participants must dress for the weather. Visit <https://bit.ly/3QrP7GV>

SUNDAY/MARCH 23

Burke Historical Society Meeting.

3-4:30 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Heather Cole, author of Virginia's Presidents: A History and Guide, will speak on the stories of our eight Virginia born presidents. Free.

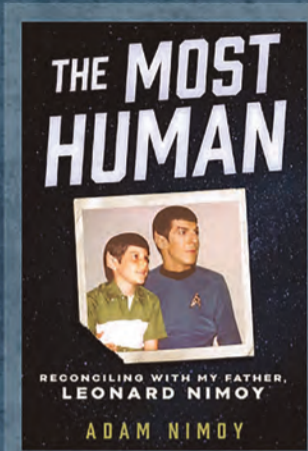
WEDNESDAY/MARCH 26

Senior Movie Day.

10 a.m. At Movie theater at Reston Town Center, Reston. Featuring the movie “Here.” Reston Association presents Senior

ENTERTAINMENT

Adam Nimoy: On Reconciling with my Father



Adam Nimoy

Thursday, March 27 | 7 p.m.



Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center
3740 Blenheim Blvd, Fairfax, VA 22030

A talk by Adam Nimoy: On Reconciling with My Father, Leonard Nimoy takes place on Thursday, March 27, 2025 in Fairfax.

Movie Day. Join them on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Coffee, donuts and OJ are provided, and door prizes are distributed prior to the movie.

more engaging than ever!

THURSDAY/MARCH 27

Adam Nimoy: On Reconciling with My Father, Leonard Nimoy. 7-8:15 p.m. At Stacy C. Sherwood Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd., Fairfax. In *The Most Human: Reconciling with My Father* Leonard Nimoy, Adam Nimoy explores his complicated and often tumultuous relationship with his father, Leonard, the iconic half-Vulcan science officer he portrayed on *Star Trek*. Despite their differences, father and son travelled parallel paths from divorce, to addiction, and finally to recovery. More importantly, Adam Nimoy shares how he and his father reconciled with the help of AA meetings and over Shabbat dinners. George Takei says “The fact that Leonard and Adam found a way to rebuild their relationship should resonate with anyone who struggles with difficult family dynamics.”

MARCH 28-29

2025 Mason School of Dance Gala Concert Performances. 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. This year’s program showcases George Mason School of Dance majors in four varied, critically acclaimed works by well-known choreographers: Robert Battle (*The Hunt*), Christopher d’Amboise (*Twist*), Robyn Mineko Williams (*Cloudline*), and Yue Yin (*Through the Fracture of Light*).

FRIDAY/MARCH 28

Learning at Lunch. 12-1 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, W16, McGuire Woods Gallery, Lorton. Discover a New Way to Learn Women’s History! Have you ever thought about how games can bring history to life? Join them for Learning at Lunch: Gamifying Women’s History, where they’ll explore how educators and historians are using interactive storytelling and game design to make women’s history

SATURDAY/MARCH 29

“Happiness Happens”: Lecture by Ester and Arthur Brooks. 7 p.m. At Oakcrest School, 1619 Crowell Road, Vienna. Dr. Arthur Brooks is a Harvard professor, Ph.D. social scientist, #1 best-selling author, and columnist at *The Atlantic* who specializes in using the highest levels of science and philosophy to provide people with actionable strategies to live their best lives. Mrs. Ester Munt-Brooks is a Catholic educator dedicated to helping ordinary people deepen their faith and apply it to daily life. She speaks widely in parishes and Catholic events around the United States. Ester and Arthur will share their different approaches to finding happiness in daily life. To RSVP, visit Oakcrest.org/parent-support-speakers.

SATURDAY/MARCH 29

Tails, Trails and Ales. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Lark Brewing Company, 24205 James Monroe Highway, Aldie. Join FOHA (Friends of Homeless Animals) for a charity walk, adoptable pets, vendors, raffles, pet-friendly activities, and craft drinks. Tickets include event access and a souvenir. Cost: \$20 Adults, \$10 Youth, Kids under 12 Free. Buy tickets at <https://fohata-2025.eventbrite.com>. Visit the website: <https://www.foha.org>

SUNDAY/MARCH 30

Les Arts Florissants: Vivaldi’s Four Seasons at 300. 4 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. In celebration of the 300th anniversary of Vivaldi’s *The Four Seasons*, Les Arts Florissants, one of the foremost Baroque music ensembles in the world, reframes the iconic work for the 21st century. The 15-person chamber orchestra, which performs on period instruments, intersperses the movements of the beloved *Four Seasons* with lesser-known works by Monteverdi, Uccellini, and Geminiani in this “performance to be celebrated” (*New York Times*).

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 19

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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.

Structure Name	East Weight Limit (Tons)	West Weight Limit (Tons)	Structure Name	Location	Updated Date
DINWIDDIE	6048	623	SUTHERLAND ROAD	WHIPPONOCK CREEK	3/1/2025
LOUDOUN	11147	600	NEW ROAD	BULL RUN	2/25/2025
BLAND	2942	42	BLUE GRASS TRAIL	BIG WALKER CREEK	2/19/2025
BUCHANAN	3949	651	OLD LESTERS FORK ROAD	LESTER'S FORK	2/19/2025
SCOTT	16802	665	MANVILLE ROAD	BLACK OAK BRANCH	2/13/2025
LEE	10977	764	ROUTE 764	CANE CREEK	2/13/2025
CHESTERFIELD	4993	1	JEFF DAVIS HIGHWAY	TRIB ASHTON CREEK	2/10/2025

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

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

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

Know The Facts

Your business must report its unclaimed property each year by the deadline to Virginia Department of the Treasury.

- Reporting is mandatory with penalties for non-compliance.
- All businesses, legal entities, non-profits, & corporations must report.
- Reporting is an annual requirement, not a one-time task.
- Unclaimed property includes account balances, uncashed checks, deposits, refunds, etc.

May 1st - deadline for insurance companies to file.

Nov. 1st - deadline for most businesses, corporations, etc.

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Legals

Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF VOLUNTARY REMEDIATION

Pursuant to the Virginia Voluntary Remediation Regulations, Virginia Administrative Code section 9VAC20-160-120, Jennings Business Park, LLC (Participant) with an address of 4303 SW 25th Place, Cape Coral, FL 33914 hereby provides notice of voluntary remediation at the following site (Site):

Jennings Business Park #1
7601 Loisdale Road
Springfield, Fairfax County, Virginia 22150
VRP Number VRP00555
Map#s 0904-01-0006A2 and 0904-01-0006A5

The Site consists of two non-contiguous parcels 6A-2 and 6A-5. The parcels and contiguous properties have a history of use as a gravel pit from the 1950s-1970s and were subsequently backfilled with fill dirt and construction debris. Parcel 6A-2 was redeveloped as an automotive dealership in 2014 and Parcel 6A-5 as a parking lot in 2015. Sampling on the Site detected the presence of volatile organic compounds, semi-volatile organic compounds, metals, petroleum hydrocarbons and polychlorinated biphenyls in soil, herbicides in groundwater, and volatile organic compounds and methane in soil gas. The Participant applied to and was deemed eligible to participate in the Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP) in order to assess and address any environmental risks associated with the detected constituents. A Site Characterization Report and a Risk Assessment have been reviewed and accepted as complete by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The Risk Assessment includes an assessment of the risks to human health and the environment that were evaluated in accordance with DEQ guidelines. The risk evaluation found that the following restrictions placed on the future use of the Site pursuant to the VRP will be protective of human health and the environment: (1) groundwater beneath the Site shall not be used for any purpose other than environmental monitoring and testing, or de-watering in compliance with law; (2) the Site will not be used for residential purposes or for children's (underage 16) daycare facilities, schools or playgrounds (although hotels and motels are not prohibited); (3) the existing methane mitigation system under the building on Parcel 6A-2 will continue to be operated and maintained in accordance with an operation and maintenance plan, and (4) a methane mitigation system will be installed and operated and maintained in accordance with an operation and maintenance plan on any new structure constructed for occupancy on the Site.

Persons wishing to comment on the voluntary remedial action or request additional information should contact the following person who is familiar with the Site:

Michael Bruzzesi
ENVECO Environmental Solutions, LLC
103 Manor Lake Estates Dr., Spring, TX 77379
703-608-5969
mbruzzesi@envecoenvironmental.com

Written comments will be accepted until 30 days from the date of publication of this notice.

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The Flourish Exhibit 2025 takes place now through March 23, 2025 at Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton.

FROM PAGE 17

SUNDAY/MARCH 30

Blossom Bash at Tysons Corner Center. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At The Plaza at Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Take part in an Official National Cherry Blossom Event as they paint the plaza pink! Experience vibrant retailer activations and exclusive promotions, live chalk art featuring 20 local artists, food and beverages specials and tastings, live music, face painting, giveaways, festival parade entertainment and more! Enjoy performances from the Washington Wizards Dance Team and Washington Commanders Command Force. Be sure to check out PenFed Petals during the event. PenFed Credit Union will be giving away beautiful build-your-own bouquets featuring cherry blossom branches and other seasonal flowers. Plus, their flower wall will be available for selfies. PenFed members get VIP access and premium bouquets.

TUESDAY/APRIL 1

Dinaw Mengestu, Ethiopian-American novelist & journalist. 6:30 p.m. At The Stacy C. Sherwood Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd., Fairfax. By exploring courage, Mengestu will present us with his ideas on the politics of language and masculinity. Through his work the multitudes of men and women at work in the cities and small towns in America become personal and quietly heroic. Mengestu is the author of four novels, including *Someone Like Us* (Knopf 2024), and *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears* (Riverhead, 2007), all

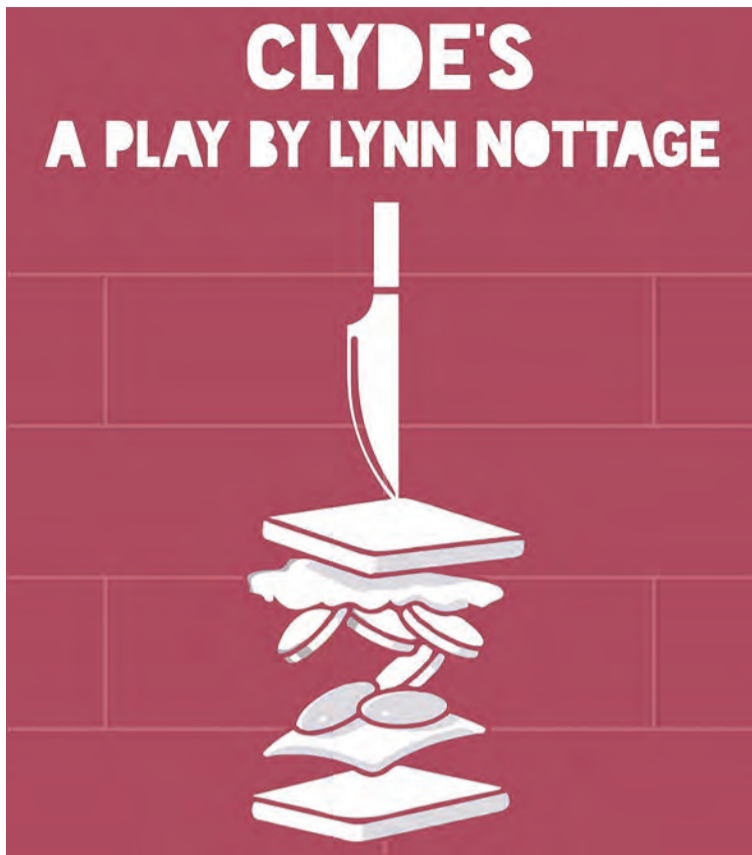
New York Times Notable Books. Visit <https://cheusecenter.gmu.edu/events/16747>.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 2

National Walking Day. 7:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. At The St. James, 6805 Industrial Road, Springfield. Visit The St. James sports complex in Springfield for a special National Walking Day event presented by Sheehy Auto Stores. The event is free and open to the public. Guests will participate in a walking challenge with interactive sessions including fitness demos led by St. James trainers and professional rugby team, Old Glory DC, healthy cooking demos, hands-only CPR coaching and more. No advanced registrations or RSVPs required. Questions? Reach out to us at ESGWRHeartWalk@heart.org.

SATURDAY/APRIL 5

Cirque Mechanics: Pedal Punk. 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Known for their modern circus incorporating mechanical marvels, Cirque Mechanics introduces the wildly astonishing Pedal Punk, set in a Steampunk-inspired world where cycling provides wondrous escape from pervasive obsession with technology. A 22-foot, pedal-powered performance platform (dubbed the Gantry bike) serves as the caravanning mobile centerpiece of this high-flying thrill ride, featuring spectacular storytelling and daredevil acrobatics. The awe-inspiring ensemble of aerialists, jugglers, and clowns—including a zany bike shop mechanic—interacts with the elaborate contraption as well as



Workhouse Arts Center Presents "Clyde's" by Lynn Nottage now through April 6, 2025.

penny farthings, unicycles, and tandem cycles.

SATURDAY/APRIL 5

Sydenstricker Schoolhouse Trivia. 7-9:30 p.m. At Historic Sydenstricker Schoolhouse, 8511 Hooes Road, Springfield. Sydenstricker Schoolhouse Trivia Night with host Mike Loos! Teams limited to 6 persons due to space in the Schoolhouse. Contact Sharen Sheehan with team information – name / number of team members. Make payment at Schoolhouse website (www.sydenstrickerschoolhouse.org) using yellow 'donate' button on left side of home page.

SATURDAY/APRIL 5

Historic House Tours. 10:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. At Sunrise at Silas Burke House, 9619 Burke Lake Road, Burke. The historic house at Sunrise at Silas Burke House will be open for free tours (10:30-12:15 April 5) given by the Burke Historical Society. Registration not needed.

APRIL 5-6

SPRINGPEX Stamp Show. At John R. Lewis High School cafeteria, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. Presented by Springfield Stamp Club. SPRINGPEX is the Washington D.C. area's largest club-sponsored stamp show. Features interesting philatelic exhibits, 20+ dealers, U.S. Postal Service booth, 2nd annual Postcrossing meetup, and free materials for young, beginning, and returning collectors. Free admission and parking. Saturday 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Details: springfieldstampclub.org/springpex

SUNDAY/APRIL 6

The Hot Lanes Perform. 6-8 p.m. At Earp's Ordinary, Fairfax. The Hot Lanes makes its debut at this fine eatery/bar/music venue that rivals Jamm'n Java! Tickets available at the door. Two sets of fine music in a two-hour span for \$15.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 9

Potomac Harmony Chorus. 7:30 p.m. At St. Patrick's Episcopal Church, 3241 Brush Drive, Falls Church. As the chorus prepares to participate in the Sweet Adelines Regional Competition, they will have a dress rehearsal in which they will present their two-song competition package as well as a few other fine tuned numbers. All music will be sung in 4-part harmony, a cappella style! For more information, contact Jackie Bottash at jackiebottash@gmail.com.

FRIDAY/APRIL 11

Community Comedy Show. 6:30-8:30 PM. At Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods, Reston. Hilarious, spontaneous comedy meets meaningful community impact at the inaugural event of Resonance Improv Alliance. Your laughter contributes directly to our mission to spread joy in Fairfax County. Improvisation is unscripted and may include adult content. Shows typically feature PG-13 content but may include adult situations and language. Recommend that children under 16 be accompanied by a trusted adult. Tickets are available at Resonance.betterworld.org.

SATURDAY/APRIL 26

RA's Community Yard Sale. 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. At 12010 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston (near Reston Wegmans).

SATURDAY/MAY 3

Feed Fairfax 5K. At Greenbriar Town Center, Chantilly. Looking for a family-friendly way to support Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM) weekend meal programs for students in Fairfax County Public Schools? Registration is now open for the Feed Fairfax 5K set for Saturday, May 3, at the Greenbriar Town Center in Chantilly. All proceeds from the race entry fees and donations will support WFCM's and Food for Others' weekend meal programs for students. For more information and to register, go to feedfairfax.com.

Less About Me Than It Used to Be



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Having been a cancer patient now for 16+ years, I speak with some experience on the subject. Though hardly an authority on the matter, I have been there and done that, including surgery in my many years living on the presumptive edge/slippery slope that comes with a "terminal" diagnosis. For me, that diagnosis was originally heard at the initial Team Lourie meeting with my oncologist when I was given a "13 month to two years" prognosis, "non-small cell lung cancer stage IV." As Maurice Chevalier so famously sang – and I invoke it here: "I remember it well." And as much as I've tried to make light of it, make a joke about it, compartmentalize it/lock it in the vault, the reality is that cancer is the opposite of the gift that keeps on giving. It is in fact the bomb that keeps on ticking. (With apologies to John Cameron Swayze.)

How you adjust/react/respond to all that ticking is quite simply, the rest of your life. You must take the highs and the lows and the in-betweens in some kind of stride. A stride which enables you to still put one foot in front of the other, literally and figuratively, and "get busy living," to quote Morgan Freeman from the Oscar-nominated film of his: "Shawshank Redemption;" and live as if you have a future rather than bemoaning that you don't. As my close friend Lynne advised me at the beginning of this journey: "Being a cancer patient is the hardest thing you'll ever do." Of course, she was right. Moreover, one can never be prepared for being a cancer patient. The real problem is that your brain has a mind of its own and once cancer infiltrates your conscience – and/or sub conscience, it is, as we say in Boston: "Katie bar the door." Which means – in effect: Look out. Trouble is coming. And cancer is trouble with a capital "C."

Aside from the obvious physical toll cancer inflicts on your body, it is the unseen and nearly unpredictable effect it has on your brain. Suddenly, or so it seems, you become a different person. Familiar certainly, but one whose opinions, interests, tolerances, initiatives, and follow-throughs change compared to the person you used to be. And its way more complicated than a bucket list that now takes on more of an urgency to complete. It's more about your attitude.

For me, at least, it became very difficult to do things I didn't/don't want to do. That includes being told what to do and/or being motivated to do things that don't benefit you (household/domestic-type-should-be-shared-responsibilities). When you're told you're "prognosed" to die in two years – or less, your focus in life narrows to include what you want to do, not what others want you to do. It's not exactly being stubborn but certainly you become set in your ways. And really, how do deny a dying man his last wish – or a reasonable facsimile thereof? This attitude/lack of tolerance permeates your brain. It's as the cancer has completely rewired your brain – without your permission.

Fighting back against this self-preservation type instinct is the parallel, but not nearly as obvious, universe, that cancer patients – certainly ones with "terminal" diagnoses including me, inhabit. Like it or not. It's an emotional reaction as instinctive as the knee-jerk when your pediatrician hit you in the knee with the mallet thing when you were a kid. I imagine it applies to similarly diagnosed non-cancer patients as well. When your world/mortality shrinks, it's impossible to act normal. ('Normal' left the barn when the doctors told you the tumors biopsied were malignant.) When this news is finally absorbed/processed/understood – and it doesn't quite happen at moment of impact, the three most important people in your life become me, myself and I. Maturing beyond this narrow but inevitable perspective is as much the goal in one's treatment as is the reduction in your cancer markers as measured by your monthly lab work. And not that you can necessarily feel a decrease in those markers, but if they come down, you sure do feel it emotionally. Moreover, if one is fortunate to experience some positive results along this cancer way, it seems to clear a path for you to become the pre-cancer-diagnosis person you used to be rather than the post-cancer-diagnosis you sort of became. This return-to-normal transition happens as seamlessly as the attitude changes that manifested when you first began coming to grips with this cancer diagnosis/abbreviated mortality. Your focus begins to broaden again and you're not always the most important person in the conversation. And in a way, it helps to not be consumed with self anymore. It's not an indication of remission, nor is it a guarantee/predictor of anything, it's more an acceptance of reality. "Cancer sucks" for sure as the motto so simply states. It's certainly a blip on the radar, but it doesn't have to be a life's sentence. Instead, it can become your life's work, one you're redefining every day.

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

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