

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

APRIL 17, 2025

The Economic Outlook

Sobering Economic Messages for Northern Virginia.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE GAZETTE

On April 3, one day after U.S. President Donald J. Trump announced sweeping tariffs on imports from over 60 countries, several Northern Virginia officials gave a pep talk to 75 business leaders who gathered for a breakfast of scrambled eggs, bacon and hope.

On April 4, the day of the event, stock market indexes tumbled. "Tariffs Torpedo Markets around the World," screamed an Associated Press headline.

"We will have a period of real pain."

— Dr. Terry Clower, Director of GMU Center for Regional Analysis

The speakers did not utter the U.S. president's name, but the changes and proposals, coming largely from the Trump administration hovered like an ominous, gray cloud over the room. Chamber Chair Roberta Tinch said that the new administration in Washington "brought a lot of change."

Bank of America economist Stephen Juneau warned that these are "difficult, uncertain times."

"No better place to be than here in tough times."

— Chairman Jeff McKay, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

Dr. Terry Clower, Director of George Mason University's Center for Regional Analysis, predicted, "We will have a period of real pain."

Spotlighting the County's

Strengths

One of the event's sponsors, Kathy Taylor with the Walsh Colucci law firm, touted, "Our community is strong, dynamic and resilient."

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay sang the praises of Fairfax County, saying that there is "no better place to be than here in tough times," that the county has a "strong backbone and a strong economy. I am optimistic about our ability to get through this."

Listing some plusses, McKay commended the public school system and noted that Fairfax County is home to ten Fortune 500 companies and "a great place for small employers." Recovering from the Covid pandemic crisis, more people are working and more businesses than ever are operating, he said.

McKay refuted reports that Fairfax County's population is declining, asserting, "That is completely false." In 2023-2024 Fairfax County grew by 14,000 people, the highest of all Northern Virginia jurisdictions, he said. "We are in growth mode."

He singled out plans to redevelop U.S. 1 in Mount Vernon. The stretch between Fort Belvoir and Huntington "is ripe for redevelopment and investment," and will be an economic driver, like Metro's Silver line, he said, adding, "Never before has Fairfax County had a \$1 billion infrastructure investment in U.S. 1."

Alex Iam, Executive Vice President of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (EDA), also spotlighted local assets, citing "world class talent" and strong aerospace, information technology and satellite communications industries. "We have a great aggregation of intelligence resources

in the region," he said, showing a slide reporting 500+ cybersecurity companies in Fairfax County, and noting that Virginia is the "top state for digital infrastructure."

Iam reported that some of the

SEE SOBERING ECONOMIC, PAGE 14



MOUNT VERNON SPRINGFIELD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Participants in the 2025 Economic Outlook hosted by Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber and SFDC were Stephen Juneau, Bank of America Securities; Alex Iam, Fairfax County EDA; Roberta Tinch, chair, Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber and CEO of Inova Mount Vernon Hospital; Jeff McKay, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; Dr. Terry Clower, Center for Regional Analysis, GMU.



Dr. Terry Clower, Center for Regional Analysis, GMU, told the audience to prepare for anticipated challenges in the local economy.

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\$1,820,000 | Beautifully preserved 3-bed, 3.5-bath home originally built in 1812, seamlessly blends historic elegance with modern amenities. High ceilings, beautiful millwork. Meticulously updated. 2 off-street parking spaces.

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\$665,000 | Stunning 6-bedroom 3.5-bathroom colonial situated in prime cul-de-sac location. Newly renovated kitchen, gas fireplace, back deck, walk-out lower-level, newer flooring (inc. hardwoods), new HVAC, and 2-car garage.

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RealtorHeidiB.com



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LisaLSmith.com



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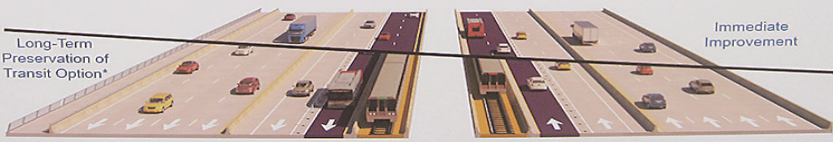
Extend Express Lanes on the Beltway?

After public meetings, deadline for public comment is April 21.

Preserving Space for Future Metrorail

495 Southside ExpressLanes

- Alternatives under consideration incorporate rail preservation across the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge through:
 - Retaining existing, unoccupied space, or
 - Incorporating a commitment to convert necessary space to rail transit in the future
- Rail preservation commitment would be incorporated as part of environmental (NEPA) process, which must receive federal approval.
- Terms within any potential contract or concessionaire agreement would incorporate a requirement for conversion to rail transit in the future.



I-495: Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge
*Should future transit (i.e., rail) be provided by others

VDOT Public Information Meeting April 2025

A VDOT poster indicates that “rail preservation would be incorporated.”

Typical Sections for 1 and 2 Express Lanes Alternatives

495 Southside ExpressLanes

1 Express Lane Alternative

Virginia (I-95 to Eisenhower Ave.)

Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge

Maryland (I-295 to MD210)

Both configurations include 1 express lane east of I-295 for transition between general-purpose lanes and express lanes

These are representative typical sections based on planning-level design

LOCAL LANE
THRU LANE
MERGING/DIVERGING LANE
EXPRESS LANE

2 Express Lanes Alternative

Public Information Meeting April 2025

This poster shows the two express lane build options.



At recent public meetings, attendees visited VDOT stations and discussed the proposal with VDOT staff. April 1 at West Potomac High School.

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PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



VDOT's Michelle Shropshire chaired the meeting at West Potomac High School on April 1.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE GAZETTE

Stop-and-go traffic congestion on the Beltway/I-495 approaching the Woodrow Wilson Bridge from vehicles traveling both the east and west is a frequent, frustrating headache for many drivers, especially daily commuters.

The Virginia Department of Transportation has a possible solution – 11 additional miles of express toll lanes.

At public meetings on April 1, 2, 7 and 9, VDOT officials presented the I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study, which started in 2022 and focuses on the stretch of the Beltway from the Springfield interchange (I-95/I-395/I-495) to the route 210 interchange in Maryland near National Harbor.

On April 1 at West Potomac High School, Michelle Shropshire predicted, “Traffic conditions will get much worse,” citing modeling from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Shropshire is the VDOT Megaprojects Director for VDOT's Northern Virginia District. VDOT's analyses predict that under the “no build” alternative (existing conditions) by 2050, on westbound lanes, morning travel times could more than double, from 16 to 52 minutes; on east-

bound lanes in the afternoons and evenings, from 21 to 54 minutes.

They presented three options: no build; one express lane in each direction from Van Dorn Street to the Maryland 210 interchange; and two express lanes in each direction from Van Dorn Street to the I-295 interchange.

There would be no loss of existing lanes. “We would use the space we now have,” said Shropshire. Describing the current 94 miles of express or “managed lanes” in Northern Virginia as “a robust system,” these plans would fill a gap, the last segment without express lanes.

The VDOT officials' justifications for the project's needs are providing continuity in the current system; offering more travel choices; reducing congestion; improving safety; and providing consistency with local and regional plans.

Today, over 200,000 vehicles travel on Interstate 495 between the Springfield interchange and Interstate 295 on average each day. During peak hours, by 2050, adding one lane could move 1,600 more people, VDOT contends. Adding two lanes could move 2,400 more people. They said that currently 50 percent of vehicles going east exit at route 210 or In-

SEE AFTER PUBLIC MEETINGS, PAGE 12

Schedule:

April 21, deadline for public comments

June, public hearing on the preferred alternative
Mid- to late-2025, regional transportation planning board decision
Late 2025, public hearing on the final environmental assessment
Early 2026, federal decision

Information, public comment form:

<https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/projects/northern-virginia-district/i-495-southside-express-lanes-study/>

You Could Become a Puppy Raiser for the Blind

BY ANN VERNON
THE GAZETTE

Our family's incredible journey in puppy raising began the day that I saw the ad in the Alexandria Gazette: volunteer raisers needed for Guiding Eyes for the Blind puppies. They had me at puppies. As I continued reading further in the volunteer section of the Alexandria Gazette almost 20 years ago, I found that it might be possible to be a volunteer home raiser for Guiding Eyes for the Blind, an organization with the mission to train and place dogs as guides for visually impaired individuals. I was to find that these special dogs were raised in homes like mine to learn social skills, house manners, polite behavior, how to handle new experiences and how to interact with other dogs and people in a polite and calm manner.

There was another motive for this particular endeavor which was to have a service project for one of my teenage sons, Scott, that we could do together. Plus I did love dogs, already having two golden retrievers in our Alexandria home.

Fast forward another year, and we had almost completed the raising of our first guide dog in training, Lawrence. We enjoyed him since the age of two months and worked with him in lots of situations and classes that this organization provides locally throughout Alexandria, Mount

Vernon, Fairfax County, Arlington and other metro locations.

At 18 months, he returned to the campus of Guiding Eyes in Yorktown Heights, New York, and passed his next step to be in for training. This meant that this beautiful black lab was probably going to be a bona fide guide dog after just another six months of harness training by the professionals.

Although parting with a handsome and well-trained dog that we'd come to love is not the easiest on the emotions, the reward is experienced when your dog's success becomes your success at graduation six months later, and when you meet the lucky individual who gets your dog as their guide. Lawrence moved to Kansas City and guided Ron until retiring after seven years of service. How wonderful to hear from that human-dog team from time to time about how well they worked together.

And, you could get another puppy

There have been four more dogs that our family has trained and helped graduate since then. All have been a joyful and expansive learning and life experience because of the organization of people we have met. As we've trained our pups, gone to classes, shared puppy play dates sponsored by other raisers with fenced yards, puppy overnight swaps, and problem solved with more experienced raisers and regional instructors along the



At the celebration for MIA, raised by the Vernon family, now an 18 month old yellow lab just accepted for harness training in April, Guiding Eyes for the Blind Training Center in Yorktown Heights New York. From left, front row: Tim McQuade, Margie Weinreb, MIA, Kathleen McQuade; back row: Scott Vernon, Ann Vernon, Will Warchol, Jerry Vernon.

journey, we made many enduring friendships. And sometimes you even see your pup again! One of our pups, Tilly, retired ear-

ly and came back to our household at age four, and became a trusted therapy dog at the private special needs school where I worked in Alexandria as a nurse. Another dog, Parsley, became a police dog upon graduation because she had the profile and work ethic for that career. The next dog, Star, successfully began guiding a busy, young professional man last year near Boston.

Most recently our family raised Mia, now an 18 month old yellow lab just accepted in for harness training in April. This was the first time we have co-raised with another family, Tim and Kathleen McQuade. It was a very good choice at this time, benefitting Mia to have so many humans invested in her success, and sharing the responsibility of training. Included in this village of raisers were grandchildren, children, neighbors, and the NoVa region's extensive volunteers, co-raisers, and regional managers — so much support. Behind the scenes are financial sponsors like Margie Weinreb who named Mia after her granddaughter and whom we met at Mia's testing this month; another special human piece of this guide dog training.

Raisers are always being sought for these amazing pups: check out this link to see if you might look back one day and see how much you loved it.

<https://www.guidingeyes.org/>

Hayfield High Gym Was Big Enough for Big Names

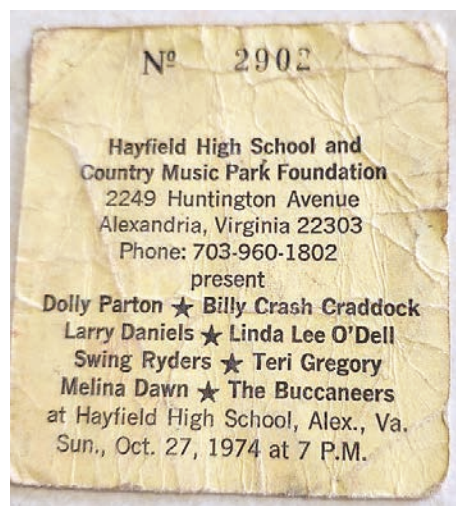
In the 1970s, celebrity events were common at Hayfield.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

There was a time in the early 1970s where Hayfield High School had one of the biggest gymnasiums around so they used it for all kinds of things, like a country music concert featuring Dolly Parton.

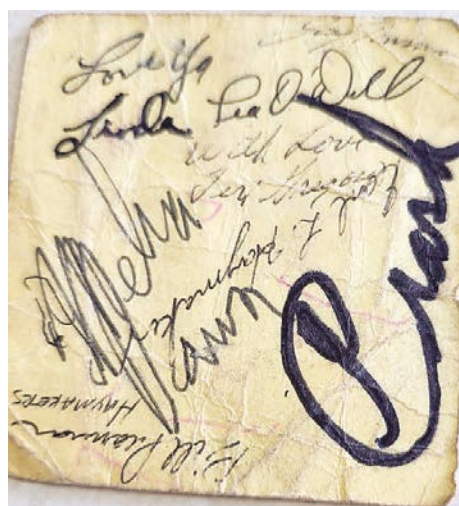
She wasn't quite the name she is now, but the country music crowd knew her, and there she was on the stage in the gym at Hayfield alongside other country musicians such as Billy Crash Craddock, Larry Daniels, Linda Lee O'Dell, Swing Ryders, Teri Gregory, Melina Dawn, and The Buccaneers.

Hayfield resident Patti Derflinger remembers being a 9-year-old at the show and somehow got in the autograph line after-



If ticket stubs could talk.

wards where she got many of the performers to sign. Dolly seemed to have a short show, Derflinger remembers. Recently she was digging into some old family papers when she found the ticket stub and autographs, bringing back the memories. "When they were doing autographs, I remember I just kind of got in the line and dug the stub out of my



Country music stars of the 1970s signed autographs at Hayfield.

pocket for them to sign," she said.

It was a big deal for the little community of Hayfield Farm.

The area was more "country," then it is now. Kingstowne was a bunch of dirt bike trails, the 7-11 was the only store around, and Nixon just resigned.

Billy Crash Craddock was a country star

with all sorts of top tunes for that time and when he was on stage at Hayfield, his big hit was "Rub It In", a top 20 pop hit. At the time, he was signed with ABC Records. Craddock did a cover of the Tony Orlando and Dawn pop hit "Knock Three Times" in 1971. Craddock was inducted into the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame in 2011. Country star Linda Lee O'Dell played a few times at Hayfield.

One of her shows in 1975, a ticket was \$5 in advance or \$6 at the door.

Big Gym of Big Names

Other well-known celebrity events at Hayfield included a pro wrestling match featuring "Haystack Calhoun," a celebrity on that circuit, and a Jerry Lewis muscular dystrophy event reportedly featuring Jerry himself, though he never appeared on stage, disappointing audience members. After the then-named Washington Redskins appeared in their first Super Bowl in the early 1970s against the Miami Dolphins, stars from both teams were in a basketball game at Hayfield, as were the Harlem Globetrotters. Also on the courts, the Washington then-named Bullets played against the 76ers in an exhibition NBA game at Hayfield.

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SENIOR LIVING

Virginia Ranks 14th State For Older Workers

A new study shows Virginia is the No. 14 best state for older workers based on the criteria chosen. Seniorly released the study on the Best States for Older Workers after analyzing data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census Bureau, and Federation of Tax Administrators.

Metrics included labor force participation, business growth rate, and age-related workplace discrimination. Six factors specific to seniors in each state were analyzed: median income, income tax, remote work, labor force participation, business growth rate, and age-related workplace discrimination. Cost of living was apparently not considered.

Among the findings, Virginia has a median household income of \$64,938 for seniors (No. 10), 18.4% of older workers are working from home (No. 14) and 32.3% of older adults are in the labor force (tied for 15th). Maryland ranked No. 4. DC ranked No. 1.

A record 11.2 million seniors continue working in the U.S., Seniorly says, and 14.8 million seniors are projected to be in the workforce by 2033. As healthcare and living costs continue to rise, a growing number of seniors cannot afford to retire, while others opt to work, encouraged by better health, longevity and the flexibility of remote work.

The 10 best states for older workers are Washington, New Hampshire, Alaska, Maryland, Colorado, Connecticut, Massachusetts, South Dakota, Utah, and Vermont.

Washington	1
New Hampshire	2
Alaska	3
Maryland	4
Colorado	5
Connecticut	6
Massachusetts	7
South Dakota	8
Utah	9
Vermont	10
New Jersey	11
Wyoming	12
Idaho	13
Virginia	14
Arizona	15
Hawaii	16
Texas	17

SOURCE: SENIORLY

Virginia Ranks 14th best state for older workers

<https://www.seniorly.com/resource-center/seniorly-news/best-states-for-older-workers-2025>

May Is Foster Care Month

Fairfax County Foster Care and Adoption is planning two special events in recognition of National Foster Care Month.

One event is Tuesday, April 29, 5-7 p.m. at the Lorton Library and the second is Tuesday, May 20, 7-8:30 p.m. at the Burke Centre Library, to encourage community involvement in supporting children in foster care.

According to the Virginia Department of Social Services, in February 2025, there were 5,482 children in foster care in the Commonwealth of Virginia, 247 in Fairfax County. These children need the caring support of the community to overcome their challenges.

Fairfax County Foster Care and Adoption is dedicated to ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in need. Through comprehensive support and community engagement, we strive to provide stable and loving homes for children who are unable to live with their families of origin.

Foster parents play an unmatched role in providing loving, temporary homes for children. There is a need for more dedicated foster parents.

Attend an event and find out about the foster care system, the critical needs, and the life-changing rewards of becoming a foster parent. You'll hear from Fairfax County Foster Care social workers, current foster parents, and community partners eager to share ways to get involved.

Whether you are simply curious about what foster care is like or you are seriously considering becoming a foster parent, these meetings are the perfect chance to get your questions answered, find out steps to become a foster parent and how to get involved.

Drop in or register online to let us know that you are planning to come. For general questions, call 703-324-7639 or visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/children-youth/foster-care-adoption>

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Semiquincentennial!

Fairfax County Kicks off 250th Celebrations with George Washington's Mount Vernon.

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK

I am thrilled to invite you to join the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association and the Fairfax 250th Commission as we kick off the Nation's Semiquincentennial Celebrations here in Fairfax County! Sunday, May 4, is the 250th anniversary of the day George Washington departed his beloved Mount Vernon to attend the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia, where he was ultimately appointed commander in chief of the newly created Continental Army.

For the duration of the war, he only briefly returned to his estate for a day or so in September 1781,

prior to the Yorktown campaign and ultimate victory.

At 1:30 p.m. on May 4, as part of Revolutionary War Weekend at George Washington's Mount Vernon we will be recognizing this moment with remarks from "George Washington," as well as myself and Mount Vernon President & CEO Doug Bradburn. US Army Secretary Daniel Driscoll and Fairfax County Chairman Jeff McKay have also been invited.

Following the remarks, a ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held at the Patriots Path, Mount Vernon's brand-new installation of a military encampment for guests to visit year-round. George Washington. SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL!. PAGE 9



PHOTO COURTESY OF MOUNT VERNON LADIES' ASSOCIATION
George Washington.

Mount Vernon Gazette Wins Awards

Each year the Virginia Press Association (VPA) holds a competition to select the best published material from newspapers and news sites from across the state. This is one of the largest competitions in the country and judged by journalists from outside the commonwealth.

The Connection and Gazette newspapers received thirteen awards for their work in 2024. The awards were announced at the Omni Richmond on April 12 where the Virginia Press Association "celebrated the talent, dedication, and impact of those shaping the media landscape."

In the Alexandria Gazette Packet

Jeanne Theismann, Third Place for Column Writing, "Legends of Alexandria" Judge's comment: "An extremely elegant way to present spotlight stories. Each story was informative and well presented. Good solid writing by Jeanne Theismann highlighting a lifetime of achievements by each individual."

Jeanne Theismann, Third Place for Education Writing.

In the Mount Vernon Gazette

Glenda Booth, Second Place, Feature Series or Continuing Story. Judge's comment: "It's a tough assignment to tackle stories of critical importance but with an

overarching theme that in less competent hands might be overlooked. In this case each story was well researched and written and succeeded in holding the reader's attention."

Glenda Booth, Second Place, Health, Science & Environmental Writing Susan Laume, Third Place, Picture Story or Essay, "Washington's Birthday"

Judge commented there were several events submitted in this category but this rose to the top for the variety of angles and events depicted. "I really liked the smoke rising over the costumed soldiers. Good work!"

Susan Laume, Third Place, Health, Science & Environmental Writing

In the Arlington Connection

Eden Brown & Shirley Ruhe, First Place for Headline Writing. Judge's comment: "Cutely conveys the squirrel's success, with a nod to the A-team. Love it."

Eden Brown & Giovani Flores, Second Place for Combination Picture and Story, "Memorial Day." Judge's comment: "Wonderful photos and variety of quotes that hit hard. Very well done coverage



Jeanne Theismann



Glenda Booth



Susan Laume



Bonnie Hobbs



Shirley Ruhe



Eden Brown

for an annual event."

Shirley Ruhe, Second Place, Personality or Portrait Photo, "Way Too Long." Judge's comment: "The musician in the foreground and background each bring a different feeling to the photo."

Shirley Ruhe, Second Place, Feature Series or Continuing Story, "Food Insecurity Series." Judge's comment: "Lovely writing on an important subject that focused on issues affecting so many communities in the country beset by widening levels of poverty in what we think of as a land of opportunity."

In the Fairfax County North Connection

Bonnie Hobbs, Second Place, Feature Writing Portfolio. Judges comment "Your writing and interviews were so thorough.

I appreciated the perspective you gathered for the Chantilly High job fair in particular and your coverage of Maj. Jane Russell's career was clear and informative."

Bonnie Hobbs, Second Place, In-depth or Investigative Reporting, "Senior Housing Approval" Judge's comment "Lots of deep diving here on airport issues re: noise and

how it could affect a senior housing project. I liked the "side bar" story on the misrepresentation of a sub-committee's decision. Thank you!

In the Fairfax County South Connection

Bonnie Hobbs, Third Place, Investigative-Government. Judge's comment "Thorough recap and coverage of unusual decision by local city to part ways with city manager. Reporter hit bases with all sides told and what is possibly next as new council prepares to take office shortly after outgoing council left them with no city leader."

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Dave O'Neill brought vegetables from Harrisonburg, Virginia.



Ryan Starnes came from Kentucky and had prepared for messy weather.



Many trays of young vegetables awaited shoppers.

Diehard Gardeners Brave the Elements at AHS Garden Market

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

It was a rainy, drippy slog that tested gardeners' grit on April 11, the first of the American Horticultural Society's (AHS) two-day, annual, spring garden market in Mount Vernon. Ellen Sliger with Nature by Design said the temperature, hovering around 44 degrees, was 20 degrees below normal, as she tried to operate her handheld credit card machine with gloved fingers.

The 35 vendors, most huddled under sodden tents awaiting customers, tried to keep spirits up. "Today we have the diehard gardeners," said Dave O'Neill with Radical Roots from Harrisonburg, Virginia.

By 2 p.m., Ben Stowe with Little Hat Creek Farm had had about 30 customers since the 9 a.m. opening.

It rained, poured and drizzled all day. The plants loved it.

On Sunday, the rain had stopped, but the sky was overcast and gray. By 1 p.m., the temperature had inched up to 50 degrees. Nonetheless, the plant lovers descended. By the 3 p.m. end, around 1,300 had purchased and perused over two days. Last year, around 2,300 people shopped on two sunny days.

Stowe brought "ecologically grown" vegetables, fruits and other plants from his Nelson County, Virginia, farm. This was his third year, calling it "a good market." His website says "We are doing our best to leave our land and our community better than we found it."

The "Peony's Envy" sign lured the curious by the name alone. Kathleen Gagan grows only peonies at her Bernardsville, New Jersey, farm and gave Cory McGee of Hollin Hills a how-to-grow-peonies tutorial. "I'm trying to learn," McGee said.

On peonies, Gagan explained, "I got into this by accident. It's the first crop I grew that did not fail. The deer won't eat them." She has a 14-acre display garden and 12 acres in production at her farm. Asked how many peonies? She replied, "Tens of thousands."



Shoppers braved the rain and loaded up wagons with their purchases.



Bruce Ciske makes vases in his Mount Vernon-area studio and goes to the market every year.

Mount Vernon-area potter Bruce Ciske goes every year to sell his distinctive vases and containers, often bought by Ikebana enthusiasts. "I wouldn't miss it," he said. "There are pleasant people here."

Ryan Starnes's iron garden art, including butterflies and dragonflies made from spoons, forks and knives, sparkled even in the rain. He's with Greg's Art and Garden and came all the way from Covington, Kentucky.

Inside the estate house, more art, woodworks, stoneware, floral arrangements, ceramics, soap and other products were for sale.

This year's market sponsors were Hartley Botanic, Bartlett Tree Experts, Burke and Herbert Bank, Wegmans, the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, Thomas Fannon and Sons, Alexandria Living Magazine and Party Potty.

AHS headquarters at River Farm is on the northernmost of George Washington's five farms.

Tallamy Coming Up

On April 17 at 2 p.m., in a virtual program, native plant champion Dr. Douglas Tallamy will discuss his new book, *How Can I Help? Saving Nature with Your Yard*. For more programs, visit www.ahsgardening.org/.

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Kathleen Gagan from New Jersey gave Cory McGee from Hollin Hills a lesson in peony growing.

Semiquincentennial!

FROM PAGE 6

ington, along with musicians and reenactors will march down the Patriots Path and out the front gates to “head to Philadelphia.”

This rich visual display is befitting the ceremonial kick off of the Fairfax 250th Celebrations which will include hundreds of events throughout the County over the next two years.

This significant anniversary is a celebration of not only how our country began, but also the first steps of the journey we have been making over the last 250 years. This is not only just a celebration of our history, but of our movement toward greater justice and equity, and the journey to fulfill the promise of the Declaration of Independence that all people “are created equal and are endowed

by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” It is a time to commemorate what defines us as a nation and the values that we hold most dearly. We have come far, but we have more work to do to ensure these values for all Americans.

I am proud to be a leader in the County’s Semiquincentennial planning, starting in 2020 with the unanimous support of my Board colleagues, by directing the Fairfax 250 Commission be established to create and host appropriate events and celebrations. We look forward to you joining us on May 4 and throughout the next two years.

To learn more about the Fairfax 250th Celebrations, visit: <https://www.fxva.com/fairfax250/>.

Library: Freedom to Learn

Dear editor at Fairfax Connection,
I visit my library every week. It’s full of people using the resources there. The meeting rooms are booked for community meetings, children are there with their parents picking out books, people are working on their own laptops using the WIFI, and people use the library’s computers because they don’t have their own. In general there is a lot of life in

the library. I save money by checking out books rather than buying them. I’ve made friends there by volunteering my time to keep library services running. We need libraries because they help support people of all ages and backgrounds. A library is central to a well informed public. We need to protect the library and what it stands for. The freedom to learn is priceless!

Karen Moore
Fairfax Station, 22039

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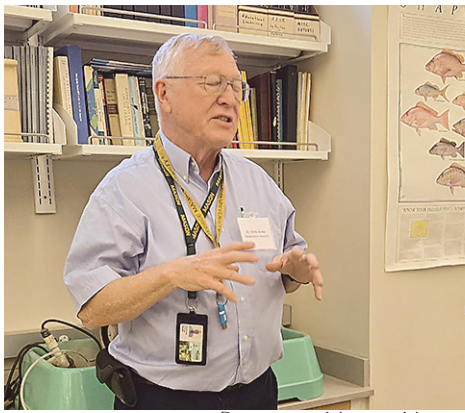


PHOTO BY NANCY VEHR

Dr. Chris Jones took Roundtable participants on a tour of the lab. Jones described the research conducted at George Mason University's PEREC.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Robert Pickett, Northern Neck Soil and Water Conservation District, chaired the meeting of 45 attendees.



PHOTO BY NANCY VEHR

Delegate David Bulova briefed Roundtable participants on the recent session of the General Assembly.

Some Success in Richmond but PFAS Headaches

Potomac Watershed Roundtable looks at challenges ahead.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

The news was both grim and hopeful on April 11, when officials at the Potomac Watershed Roundtable heard about the Potomac River basin and area water supplies. The 45-person gathering convened at George Mason University's Potomac Environment Research and Education Center (PEREC) in Lorton.

The Roundtable is a regional group of local government and stakeholder groups in the middle and lower Potomac River watershed, from Northumberland to Loudoun counties and in between.

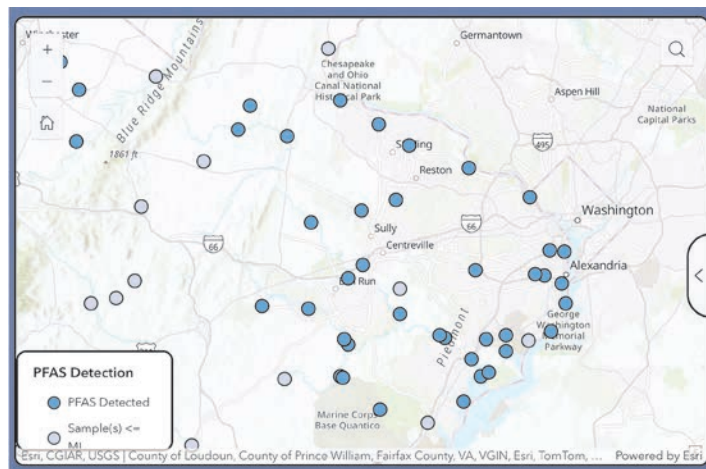
Del. David Bulova, who represents the Fairfax City-area 11th district, reported on the 2025 General Assembly session: "We just survived." Gov. Glenn Youngkin is now considering final actions on some bills. "The governor used the veto pen quite freely," Bulova said.

While some measures await the governor's decisions, the legislature increased funding for wastewater plant upgrades, stormwater assistance, environmental literacy and state parks and funded a study of cumulative impacts of surface water intakes, Bulova said. "We felt super good, but the governor was in more of a cutting mood."

On data center legislation, "It's in great flux," Bulova said. "They won't go away unless AI goes away or we pack up our cell-phones. We are really struggling." Virginia is a tax-friendly state for data centers, Bulova said, but policy makers should "reduce impacts and plan for future impacts on the electric grid and the ecosystem. What we have now is not sustainable. It's a huge issue in 2026 and beyond."

Bulova highlighted a bill, now law, that requires retailers by 2027 to post signs that label certain specified plants as invasive.

Under the heading of "storm clouds," Bulova discussed the new Emergency Com-



SOURCE: VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

This map shows the presence of PFAS detected in local waterways.

mittee on the Impacts of Federal Workforce and Funding Reductions, which he chairs, formed to respond to recent federal actions, including funding cuts in Virginia. "It is really, really important work," he said. "We simply need to be prepared." Bulova reported that "30 percent of the state's budget relies on federal funding in some way." For health and human services, 59 percent of the state budget is federally funded; for veterans, 49 percent; for natural resources, 22 percent. "That's a lot," he said.

Forever Chemicals

On PFAS chemicals, Bulova said that the governor signed his bill requiring "polluters, not water users, to pay" if a facility discharges PFAS chemicals into the Occoquan River and Reservoir at levels above U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) limits. PFAS stands for perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl substances, a group of over 10,000 chemicals designed to resist water, dirt, oil, grease and heat.

Robert Bowcock with the California firm Integrated Resource Management waded through complicated PFAS details. They are persistent, manmade, not naturally occurring and have been used since the 1940 Manhattan Project when Dupont invented them, he said. They are in everyday products like non-stick cookware, clothes, carpets, personal care products, food and fire-fighting foam, and they are used in many

industries, including aerospace, automotive, construction and electronics.

"We've known they are a problem for 30 years," Bowcock said, adding that they are common in sewage sludge from wastewater treatment plants, called biosolids, and if biosolids are stored in landfills, they can leak into water supplies. "Every landfill liner leaks," he asserted. "It's a vicious cycle into our rivers."

People can be exposed to these chemicals from drinking water, eating certain foods, including fish, using products made with PFAS or breathing air that contains them. Exposure to certain levels of PFAS may lead to adverse reproductive effects, developmental effects in children, risk of some cancers and reduced immune responses, according to EPA.

"PFAS in wastewater can be treated," Bowcock said, "but it is expensive." He cited activated carbon treatment and ion exchange as possible methods. EPA says that "a home filter could be an effective way to reduce PFAS levels."

EPA published national drinking water standards for six PFAS chemicals in 2024, but Bowcock contended that states will "be regulating more than EPA." For PFAS chemicals in biosolids, EPA has not set numeric limits, but the agency is now accepting comments on a draft sewage sludge risk assessment for some of the chemicals.

Bowcock said that the Upper Occoquan



PHOTO BY NANCY VEHR

April 11 meeting of the Potomac Watershed Roundtable, consultant Bob Bowcock of California presented alarming information about PFAS and biosolids

Service Authority wastewater treatment plant in Centreville is discharging 75 parts per trillion in PFAS chemicals, a measure that is troubling, but "not catastrophic," he said.

Susan Miller, Public Affairs Manager for Fairfax Water, emailed that her agency is identifying sources and evaluating treatment options. "As your water utility, we didn't create PFAS, but it's our job to ensure your drinking water meets federal standards for PFAS. EPA set strict limits for PFAS in drinking water in 2024 that will officially take effect in 2029, giving us time to put new treatments in place."

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) monitors PFAS and DEQ's map shows detections all over the state at <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/topics-of-interest/per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas>.

Other presenters were Dr. Christian Jones, PEREC's director, who described the center's programs, including ecological studies in Fairfax County's Gunston Cove and Hunting Creek. Rebecca Murphy, with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, who explained salt management outreach efforts.

More information
<https://www.potomacroundtable.org/>
<https://www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-explained>

<https://www.fairfaxwater.org/water-quality/facts-about-pfas>

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Historic Huntley today, facing south.



Visitors to Historic Huntley on April 4 studied the ice well.



Friends of Historic Huntley volunteer Carolyn Gamble led tours at the April 5 event.



Seana Gallagher was one of eight artists at the event. She painted the tenants' house.



Visitors on April 5 enjoyed a special cake.



Carolyn Gamble, Secretary, Friends of Historic Huntley; Franconia Board of Supervisors member Rodney Lusk; Todi Carnes, President, Friends of Historic Huntley.

Appreciating the Details of Historic Huntley

On the 200th Anniversary of the Masons' Getaway.

BY GLENDA BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

The imposing cream-colored brick house perched on a terraced knoll just north of Huntley Meadows Park commands the attention of many passersby. "The house has singular architectural sophistication and exhibits the refined ingenuity inherent in the buildings of the English Regency period," says the Virginia Landmarks Register.

This is Historic Huntley, a federal period, 11-room villa built around 1825 by Thomson Francis Mason, the mayor of Alexandria and grandson of Gunston Hall's George Mason IV. Mason called his country retreat "Huntly," likely named for the family's ancestral home in Scotland.

While in the eyes of some, it may not have the grandeur of George Washington's Mount Vernon or Robert E. Lee's Arlington House and historians call it a "secondary home," architecturally, it's a gem, experts say. Secondary in this context means it was not the Masons' primary residence.

Mason, a public figure, built the villa almost a mile west of today's U.S. 1 as a place to escape the bustling port city and probably

some demanding constituents, to wind down in a quiet place and have some private time. It probably took 90 minutes for Mason to get there by horse from his home, Colross, on Oronoco Street. "It's like driving to the Northern Neck today," said Robbie McNeil, a Friends of Historic Huntley (FOHH) board member.

The three-level house has a main entry room with opposite doors that open to the north and south, plus a door to the outside from every main floor room. This was perhaps the summer "cooling system" of the day, taking advantage of the hilltop's breezes.

Marking its 200th Year

To honor the 200th anniversary of the villa's construction, FOHH and the Fairfax County Park Authority, the property's owner, hosted Art and Architecture Day on April 5. Eight artists created sketches and paintings and volunteers led tours for around 60 visitors.

FCPA acquired the house and 2.8 acres in 1986 and restored it in 2012, removing changes made by owners who followed the Masons. The complex includes the house, a necessary with flanking rooms, a root cellar, an icehouse, a spring house and a tenant house.

In the 1800s, the site overlooked a 2,000-acre plantation called Hunting Creek Farm where enslaved people grew oats, wheat,



The 19th century "necessary," outside and inside.

corn, hay, clover and other crops. Today's visitors can see Huntley Meadows Park to the south.

Refined Architecture

Historic Huntley is a federal period house, a style that some say shifted from European influences to reflect the country's independence and new identity.

Symmetry is a salient design element inside and outside. The complex appears to have been designed as a whole, with symmetrically-situated dependencies on both sides. One still stands.

"The mansion house at Huntley has remarkable refinement for a secondary house of a Virginia planter's family," wrote historian Tony P. Wrenn. At 1,400-square-feet, it has an "H" design with a central room and two identical wings.

SEE APPRECIATING THE DETAILS, PAGE 19



Forthcoming Events

Every Saturday, 10:30 a.m. and 12 noon, tours, April to November, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley/hours-tour>

May 17, 4:30 to 5:30 pm, Family Hilltop Tour, stories of the past; \$10. Register at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley.

More Information

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley;
www.historichuntley.org

After Public Meetings, Deadline For Public Comment is April 21

FROM PAGE 3

terstate 295 in Maryland.

Access points to and from the toll lanes would be at Van Dorn Street, U.S. 1 and interstate 295 and route 210 in Maryland. The footprint of the current interchange at U.S. 1 will not change, they said.

Officials cited a VDOT commissioner's letter and federal commitments to preserve the option for Metrorail on this stretch of the highway. "Rail preservation commitment would be incorporated as part of the environmental (NEPA) process, which must receive federal approval," states VDOT's document and continues, "Terms within any potential contract with or concessionaire [a private partner] would incorporate a requirement for conversion to rail transit in the future." The Wilson Bridge's design left space for transit or express lanes. Shropshire said, adding, "Both build alternatives have rail preservation when the region deems it appropriate."

The project also includes possible new bicycle and pedestrian trails.

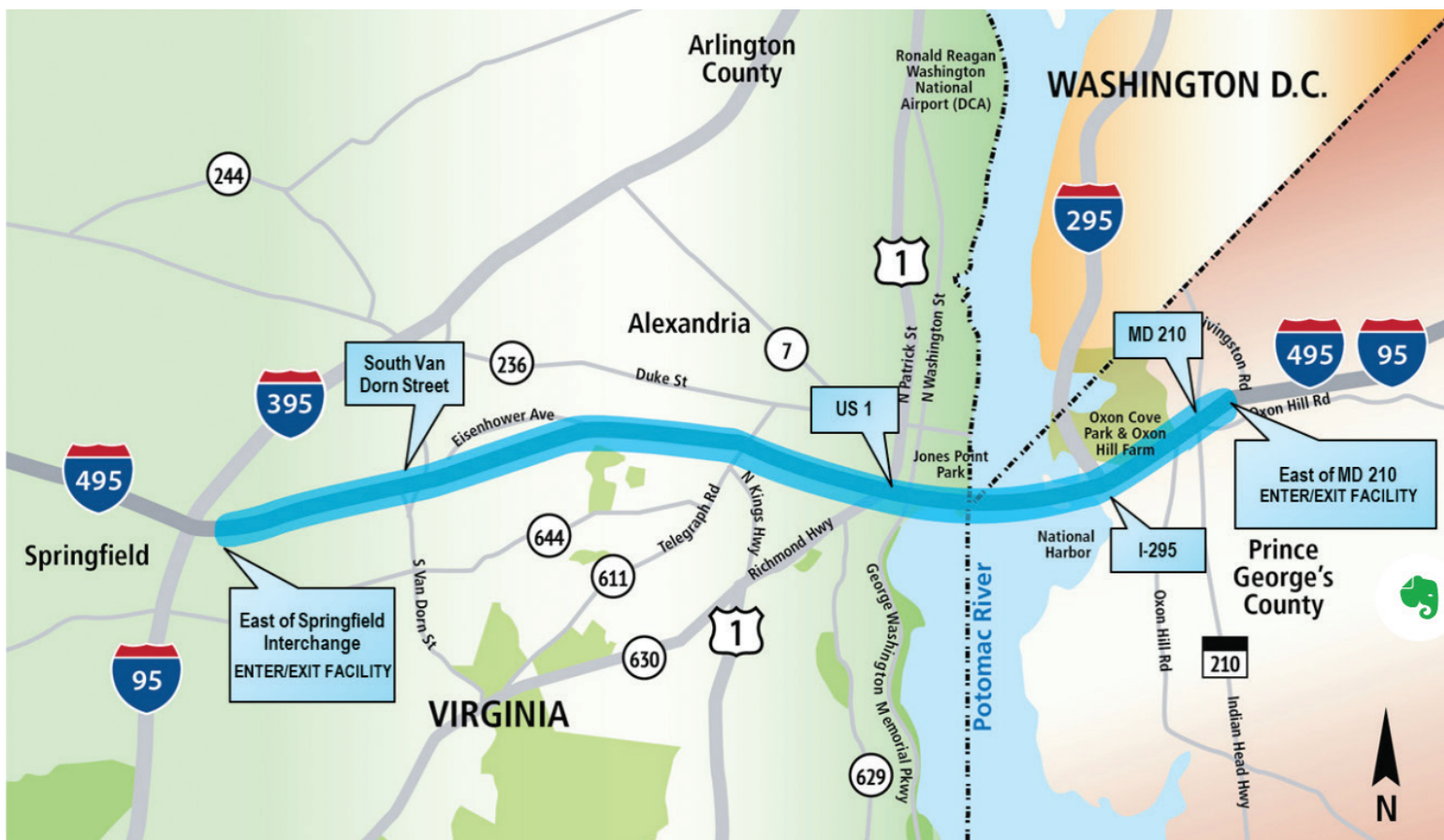
Holly Dougherty, President of the Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce welcomed the study and offered, "We are hopeful that extending the express lanes will be another component of a robust transportation system that benefits economic growth."

Doubts and Questions

At the April 1 hearing, attendees raised questions about costs, financing and traffic predictions. Mount Vernonite Greg Crider who attended the meeting said, "It seems that nobody attending the meetings are for the express lanes, except VDOT. Perhaps VDOT should shut down the study and spend its resources elsewhere."

Stewart Schwartz, Executive Director of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, has multiple concerns. "From the outset this has been a biased study that starts with their conclusions-first 'purpose and need' statement to 'extend and provide continuity of the Express Lanes system,'" he emailed, "which effectively excludes other alternatives like transit with transit-oriented development from satisfying their self-defined purpose."

Many studies on highway widening projects show that the expanded I-495 would generate more traffic, Schwartz emphasizes, a phenomenon called "induced demand," build it and they will come.



VDOT

495 Express Lanes Proposed Project.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Residents talk with VDOT representatives about the toll lane proposal. On April 1 at West Potomac High School.

More driving cancels out any congestion reduction within five to ten years, Coalition for Smarter Growth maintains.

Schwartz also argues that this expansion could block future rail. "The bridge was explicitly designed to hold the weight of Metrorail. Metrorail was a top goal of the public and the city of Alexan-

dria and Prince George's County when the lawsuits were settled over the Woodrow Wilson Bridge," he said. "VDOT is not providing documentation and legally binding assurances that the toll lanes will be removed to place Metrorail on the bridge."

He also charges that the study fails to analyze the traffic impacts on

connecting roads like U.S. 1, Telegraph Road and Van Dorn Street.

At the April 1 meeting, Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck urged people to share their concerns. "I'd like to stress the importance of your engagement. This is not a done deal for the Mount Vernon community. You should get your concerns addressed. There

will be more opportunities. We need to hear from you," he said.

https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/media/vdotvirginia.gov/projects/northern-virginia/i-495-southside-express-lanes-study/495-Southside-April-2025-Public-Information-Meetings-Presentation_acc03312025_PM.pdf

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Aging in Place

National Home Care Advocacy Day.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Aging in place. It's what most Americans want as they get older: to stay in their own homes and maintain independence for as long as possible. But concerns about safety, getting around, or performing daily activities sometimes necessitate the need for home care in order to avoid moving into an institutional care facility.

Driven by an aging population, the home care industry has become an essential pillar of the healthcare system offering non-hospital care solutions to support individuals who require assistance with daily living or managing chronic illness.

With over 4.5 million individu-

als currently employed as home health aides or personal care aides in the United States, providers from across the country participated in National Home Care Advocacy Day April 9 on Capitol Hill to ensure legislators were aware of the latest industry needs.

"Home care is getting more and more focused in the continuum of healthcare," said Mitch Opalski, CEO of Synergy Home Care of Arlington/Alexandria. "Awareness is a big part of our advocacy. It's important that people know that home care is vital in keeping people healthy and out of the hospital."

To avoid institutional care, older adults or those with disabilities may need one or a combination of two types of home care: home care

and home health care. Home care refers to non-medical care such as homemaker services (laundry, cooking, etc.), assistance with daily living activities (walking, bathing, etc.), personal care, or companionship.

Home health care must be prescribed by a doctor or nurse practitioner and is delivered by licensed

medical professionals such as registered nurses or physical therapists. Medicaid and Medicare are the largest payers in home health spending in the United States, but much is also paid out of pocket.

"The second reason that we're on the Hill is to specifically ask

Congress to support legislation that helps our industry," Opalski said. "What we're focused on right now is the cost. Our kind of care is only covered by one type of insurance – a specific long term care policy that not many companies do and most people are not aware

SEE NATIONAL HOME, PAGE 18



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Synergy Home Care of Arlington/Alexandria CEO Mitch Opalski, center, poses with fellow home care advocates during National Home Care Advocacy Day April 9 on Capitol Hill.



Mitch Opalski, right, CEO of Synergy Home Care of Arlington/Alexandria, and Dr. Felix Gbee, CEO of Synergy of Leesburg, visit U.S. Sen. Mark Warner's office as part of National Home Care Advocacy Day April 9 on Capitol Hill.

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Sobering Economic Messages for Northern Virginia

FROM PAGE 1

largest tenants in the county like Northrop Grumman retained their leased office space over the past two years and some, like Bechtel, expanded.

But Iam tempered his upbeat report by acknowledging that the federal government has a big presence with 80,000 federal employees in Fairfax County. "Federal contracting is huge," he observed, totaling \$41 billion in federal procurement in 2024.

There are six major federal headquarters in Fairfax County, including the Transportation Security Association and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Current actions to shrink the federal government through workforce cuts, contract cancellations and real estate space reductions is a "very serious situation," he soberly asserted.

EDA seeks to help displaced federal employees and contractors, with steps like job fairs and encouraging retraining.

Adjusting to Economic Shifts

"The federal government will still be big, but it will be smaller," Clower predicted. He estimated that 125,000 federal workers "will be lost" and said that federal spending is typically "worth another 1.4 jobs, so in the next few years, we could see 250,000 jobs gone. It's sobering," he said.

Clower said that Northern Virginia's economy is "shifting, ... changing into a data driven economy."

"We must rethink the way we are doing things," he challenged. If the federal government abandons office space, public-private partnerships could step in. "We have a basis to compete for new industries," he said.

Clower expressed optimism that the region could retain former federal employees, capitalizing on "the sheer brain power in this region. Get them to stay while we restructure," he urged.

He stressed that the region needs "to be more open to development," to incentivize businesses to come to the area, by speeding up permitting, for example.

On population trends, he attributed the county's growth to net international migration, contending that domestic migration is "negative" because people ages 30 to 40 cannot afford a house here. "The housing stock is still a real challenge," he said.

Evan Kaufman, the Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation's Executive Director, said, "We must be nimble and turn this negative into a positive."

Tinch closed by urging attendees to be positive and innovative "in a changing environment. ... Be ready for uncertainty," she advised. "We are a resilient county."

The Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce and the Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation hosted the event at the Belle Haven Country Club. Sponsors were Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley and Walsh; IMEG; and Bean, Kinney and Korman.



Stephen Juneau, Bank of America Securities, discussed recent developments with interest rates and the national anticipated forecast for inflation.



Roberta Tinch, chamber chair and President of Inova Mount Vernon Hospital, facilitated questions and answers between the audience and the panel.

Internet Access a Key to Progress Throughout Fairfax County

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Most of the residents of Virginia have a computer but not all the computer owners use the internet and those that do use the internet pay an average monthly price of \$86.70 which is 12 percent higher than the national average. Virginians aren't really happy with their coverage says an internet group called "high speed internet."

"That ranks Virginia 39th nationwide for internet customer satisfaction," they said.

Broken down into the Virginia cities that have the fastest internet, Glen Allen is the highest with an average upload speed of 137.68 megabytes per second, followed by Centreville

with an average upload speed of 118 megabytes per second.

All this speed up and downloading and internet coverage is a statistic to note, but many in Fairfax County are not at that level and county officials are working to improve the "digital equity," a term the county uses to ensure opportunities for Fairfax County residents to participate and engage in a connected community, it stated on the county website. Ideally, the state of "digital equity" would mean affordable hardware and connections, awareness of the resources and advancement of digital literacy.

A county map of internet coverage shows that an estimated 9,788 households have no internet connection which is approximately 2.4 percent of all households in the county.

While the County's Digital Equi-

ty and Inclusion work is intended to address countywide internet availability and adoption, it is part of the County's broader Countywide Strategic Plan and One Fairfax racial and social equity policy. These include goals of economic opportunity, empowerment and promoting equity, the county said. Internet affordability, awareness, access, and advancement are important components of these goals so there is a particular focus on digital equity in all communities, including the Mount Vernon District. A map shows the sections that are lacking.

"Our Countywide Strategic Plan also calls for expanding and enhancing the technology skills of learners of all ages, while eliminating barriers to digital access," the county said. The plan is to eliminate barriers hindering residents



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE

Hands on training at Mount Vernon's WISH center in Fairfax County.

from accessing broadband and technology through five strategies: advancement, access, affordability, awareness and adoption.

Fairfax County's future goal is to make sure all residents will have the resources and skills to participate and thrive in digitally

connected communities. Only about three percent of residents in Fairfax County do not have digital access, but we do not have data on whether that is by choice or due to other factors, said county official Meredith Martinez.

Call for Artists

Sculpture sought for new Lorton facility.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE GAZETTE

“As a long time arts champion, I recognize that public art helps us establish a sense of place and identity, beautify areas, and stimulate learning and understanding among community members,” said Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck. “I am very pleased that we are aggressively pursuing public art opportunities throughout the County and I continue to lead these efforts in the [Mount Vernon] district.”

ArtsFairfax is issuing an open call seeking a professional artist or team to design, fabricate, and install a permanent sculpture on the grounds of the Lorton police station and animal shelter. The desired design should convey the facility’s offering of hospitality, safety, and community engagement. In turn, for the artist, the high traffic location offers the opportunity for high visibility and point of pride for the paid work. Storck adds, “Our goal for this sculpture is to welcome residents and to celebrate the vibrant people and essential County services that support our incredibly diverse community at this new facility.”

The open call indicates that design entry is open to all U.S. professional artists; with preference given to local and regional artists. The selection committee will include representatives from the Lorton community and government. A project budget of up to \$50,000 will support semi-finalist, and materials, installation and payment to the selected artist.

Requirements for sculpture



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE GAZETTE

Mount Vernon District staff member Camela Speer at ArtsFairfax’s earlier Lorton facility art acquisition, a painting by Alexandria artist Sally Veach, inspired by a sunset view at Mason Neck.

submission include showing experience with past installation of works of a similar scope, scale and budget. Submission deadline is June 20, 7 p.m., via Submittable; with details found at <https://arts-fairfax.submittable.com/submit>.

ArtsFairfax expands support and access to arts and culture opportunities for residents of Fairfax County, City and Falls Church. For more information on their work and other upcoming opportunities and grants, see <https://artsfairfax.org/artistcalls/>

BULLETIN BOARD

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

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League’s programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in

need. To learn more, email info@alnv.org, or visit www.alnv.org.

Join Friends’ Board. Those who care about mental health, the Alexandria community, and collaborating with fellow residents to make sure the City’s most vulnerable residents have a chance to thrive, then consider joining the Board of Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center. The Friends Board is an all-volunteer group of residents that oversees the administration of one of Alexandria’s top mental health charities. Friends has no paid staff, so Board members, working on average 10 hours per month, share the day-to-day work needed to accomplish its goals. Interested candidates should email FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com.



Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

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

Jurisdiction	Fed Struc Id	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
WYTHE	19757	681	BRUSHY MOUNTAIN ROAD	BR REED CREEK	3/25/2025
FRANKLIN	7914	703	AYERS ROAD 703	POPLAR CAMP CREEK	3/19/2025
ALBEMARLE	746	680	BROWNS GAP TURNPIKE	LICKINGHOLE CREEK	3/13/2025
SCOTT	23815	812	RED STONE DRIVE	STREAM	3/11/2025
DINWIDDIE	6037	619	COURTHOUSE ROAD	HORSEPEN BRANCH	3/10/2025
FLOYD	7503	221	FLOYD HWY SOUTH221	BRANCH HOWELL CREEK	3/7/2025

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.

ENTERTAINMENT



Wright at Twilight can be seen on Friday, April 18, 2025 at Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House in Alexandria.

NOW THRU APRIL 19

The Silent Narrator Exhibit. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Studio 312, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Alexandria. Featuring a solo exhibition of photographic work by Irina Dakhnovskaia-Lawton. The Silent Narrator explores the relationship between time and memory, storytelling, and the power of photographs and photo albums.

NOW THRU APRIL 19

"Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing." At The Little Theatre of Alexandria. Set in the jazzy streets and of modern-day New Orleans, Shakespeare's timeless Rom-Com comes to life. "There is a merry war" between the sharp-tongued Beatrice and Benedick, whose playful banter masks their growing affection for each other while their friends conspire to bring them together. Meanwhile, the earnest Claudio and Hero's romance is put to the test by a series of deceptions. This romantic comedy promises an exhilarating ride from start to finish. Thursdays – Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sunday Matinees at 2 p.m. Opening Night Pre-Show Party is Saturday, March 29, from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m.

April 4-26

The "Synchronous" Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features artwork by Del Ray Artisans outstanding volunteers. These members help make Del Ray Artisans a thriving organization that fosters community and acceptance. Come celebrate their dedication and enjoy their artwork. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

THURSDAYS, APRIL 17, MAY 8 & 22

Spring Garden Tour & Tea. 1-3 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (Adult) Take a tour of the beautiful demonstration gardens with an Extension Master Gardener docent. Find inspiration in our horticulturists' plant choices and garden bed designs. Hear about our 18th century origins and our mission today, then step inside for afternoon tea. Garden tours run rain or shine. \$42 (lecture + tea).

FRIDAY/APRIL 18

Garden Talk - Attracting Bees, Butterflies & Bugs. 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (Adults) Put out the welcome mat for pollinators such as bees, birds and beneficial insects by providing a garden in plant diversity for food and habitat. Extension Master Gardeners help you with plant lists and share techniques for attracting these pollinators. \$12 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code D2A.VNJO.

FRIDAY/APRIL 18

Wright at Twilight. 6:30 to 9 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Enjoy the iconic Pope-Leighey House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, at twilight! Sit back with complimentary snacks and a glass of wine, as you watch the changing light bring out the beautiful architectural details of the house. Play games in the yard, listen to period music, and tour the house at your leisure as the sun slowly sets. Tickets are \$30, with one drink included in the price of your ticket. Questions? Call (703) 780-4000 or email woodlawn@savingplaces.org. Visit the website: <https://www.woodlawnpopeleighey.org/upcomingevents>

APRIL 18-19

Tree and Shrub Seedling Distribution. At Mount Vernon Government Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria. Friday from 3 to 7 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. A free tree and shrub seedling distribution will be held. Fairfax ReLeaf, a local non-profit, has partnered with Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck, Amazon and Arbor Day Foundation to support this event. The goal of this event is to increase the tree canopy thereby benefiting the environment and community residents through improved air quality, climate change mitigation, and enhanced outdoor spaces. Species available will be buttonbush, elderberry, red maple, and bald cypress.



"Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing" is playing at The Little Theatre of Alexandria now through April 19, 2025.

SATURDAY/APRIL 19

Spring Plants for Small Gardens. 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (Adults) Join Green Spring Gardens' curatorial horticulturist Brenda Skarphol on a walk to look at the variety of colors and forms of beloved spring plants. See a mix of herbaceous perennials, trees, shrubs, and vines that grow well in small spaces, from containers to patios to gardens. Get plant recommendations tailored to your garden. Dress for the weather. \$19 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code OGM.SZHK

SATURDAY/APRIL 19

Colored Pencil & Acrylic Workshop. 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (16-Adult) Colored pencils and acrylic layering is a fantastic technique for building up soft textures, sharp edges, and rich colors. Drawing from colorful photographs or still-life objects of flora and fauna, artist Dawn Flores helps you explore the techniques used to take colored pencils a step beyond their traditional use. Supply list will be emailed before class. Bring a lunch. \$107 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code BD3.TFLL

SATURDAY/APRIL 19

Family Fun - Mother Earth. 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (5-Adult) Earth is a special home for all living things both big and small. Take a day to learn about motherhood in nature, explore mythology on Mother Earth, and make a craft using natural materials. Walk our natural gardens and learn how the plant provides for all animals and plants. All attendees, including parents, must be registered for the program to control size. \$8 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code R8M.797S

SATURDAY/APRIL 19

Lafayette at Woodlawn. 12-1 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Learn about the Marquis de Lafayette, French Hero of the American Revolution, his 1824 return to America and his visit to Woodlawn, home of Eleanor Parke Custis and Lawrence Lewis. Cost \$25 per adult and \$12 per student (K-12). Visit the website: <https://www.woodlawnpopeleighey.org/upcomingevents>

THURSDAY/APRIL 24

Day of Remembrance for Victims of Holocaust. 12 p.m. At Market Square, 301 King Street, Alexandria. The City of Alexandria hosts the annual ceremony as part of the week-long commemoration of the national Days of Remembrance, observed from April 20 through April 27. The event is free and open to the public. In case of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held in the City Council Chamber, located on the second floor of City Hall, 301 King Street. The guest speaker will be Richard Breitman, distinguished professor, writer, and a leading historian on the Holocaust. For more info, call 703-746-5565.

THURSDAY/APRIL 24

Poem in Your Pocket Celebration. 6:30 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. The City of Alexandria Poet Laureate will be joined by winning poets of the 2025 DASHing Words in Motion poetry contest, who will have their poems displayed inside the DASH buses and trolleys in April. Limited seating will be available, so reservations are encouraged. If you wish to read a poem, or to make a reservation email poet@alexandria.

SATURDAY/APRIL 26

Northern Alexandria Native Plant Sale. 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. In the parking lot of The Church of St. Clement, 1701 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Parking in Christ the King's parking lot, across the street on Oakcrest, will be allowed this spring. Find native perennials, shrubs, and trees for sun or shade! Ten or 11 vendors from Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania will be hosted at this event – the

ENTERTAINMENT

largest native plant sale in the D.C. metro region! Vendors are listed on the sale website at www.NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale.org. The sale is organized and run by volunteers. Contact Scott Knudsen at 571-232-0375 or cscottknudsen@gmail.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 26

Big Flea Market. At Del Ray, Alexandria. The @mvcspta Big Flea is returning and they need your help! Clear out the clutter, reclaim your space, and give your stuff a second life and support the kids at Mount Vernon Community School. Needed items include small furniture, home goods, books, toys, tools, sporting goods, small appliances, and décor (note: no clothing, linens, or large furniture, please). Visit thebigflea.org.

SATURDAY/APRIL 26

Patrick O'Flaherty Performs. At Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Rd., Alexandria. 7 p.m. Born to Irish parents in Minnesota, Patrick O'Flaherty was raised from the age of 2 in their native Galway, Ireland. Playing the harmonica as a young boy in Connemara started him on a path to a professional music career that has now spanned nearly four decades. As a dedicated promoter of the Celtic Arts, he performs as a singer and songwriter and a highly respected player of the harmonica, bouzouki, mandolin, button accordion, banjo, and mandola. Patrick is a native Gaelic speaker, and his performances include original and traditional songs in Gaelic. Info and tickets at <https://focusmusic.org/shows#sat-4-26-patrick-o-flaherty>

SATURDAY/APRIL 26

Old Town Alexandria Home and Garden Tour. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Five of Old Town Alexandria's most beautiful and historic private homes and gardens will open to visitors as part of the 92nd annual Historic Garden Week in Virginia. This event invites visitors to experience the timeless beauty of Old Town's historic homes and gardens, showcased at the peak of spring bloom. The tour features stunning floral arrangements designed by garden club members. Advance purchase tickets are \$55 each and are available at www.vagardenweek.org or \$60 at the Alexandria Visitor's Center (221 King Street) on tour day. In addition to the featured five homes and gardens, tour tickets provide access to Carlyle House, Lee-Fendall House, River Farm, Gunston Hall, George Washington's Mount Vernon, Green Spring Gardens, and St. Paul's Episcopal Church on the same day.

APRIL 26-27

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra: Ravishing Rachmaninov. Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall. Sunday at 3 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial. Featuring Alexandria Symphony; James Ross, conductor, and Sofya Gulyak, piano.

SATURDAY/APRIL 26

Drawing Workshop – Wildflower Illustration. 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (16-Adult) Use your basic drawing or painting skills to illustrate wildflowers. Artist and instructor Caroline Hottenstein shows you how to use the media of your choice - a micron pen, watercolor, graphite, or colored pencils to capture and highlight details. Previous drawing experience encouraged. Please bring a bag lunch. Supply list will be emailed before class. \$107 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code NWØ.NF9W

SUNDAY/APRIL 27

Odd Jobs of Yore. 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (Adult) Many once-commonplace occupations have vanished due to changing technology, social norms and labor laws. Discover fascinating and surprising jobs and professions of the past – from leech-collector to town crier, clock winder to

rat catcher - that can amuse and appall us today. \$42 (lecture + tea); \$18 (lecture only).

SUNDAY/APRIL 27

The PNC Alexandria Half Marathon. 7:30 a.m. In Old Town Alexandria. The PNC Alexandria Half Marathon will replace the traditional 10-mile distance, offering runners 13.1 miles through the heart of Old Town and nearly 10 miles of scenic out-and-back running along the George Washington Parkway. The adult race will feature two distance options for runners - 13.1 Mile or 5K for runners of all skill levels. The half marathon and 5K will kick off on King Street in front of City Hall and conclude on N Union Street. After the adult race, the 600-meter Kids Dash, sponsored by The Kidz Doc, a fun, family-friendly event for children under 12 will take place at 10:30 AM. Each participant will receive a bib number; after the race, kids will be rewarded with a medal and a post-run treat. As the race concludes along the Potomac in Alexandria, participants can celebrate in the beer garden for adults over the age of 21 courtesy of Port City Brewing Co. Visit <https://www.alexandriahalf.com>.

MONDAY/APRIL 28

Getaway - Ladew Topiary Gardens. 8:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (Adults) Spend a spring morning at Ladew Topiary Gardens enjoying a tour of the house and beautiful gardens. The beautiful spring bulb displays will be in bloom, along with spring flowering trees. Lunch will be served at the cafe on the grounds. Trip departs Green Spring Gardens at 8:00 am and returns at 6:30pm. Includes motor coach, admission, tour and lunch. Trip cancellation deadline: April 14. \$159 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code 8A8.3NVM

FRIDAY/MAY 2

7th Annual Senior Summit. 10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. At the Lorton Community Center, Alexandria. Join Neighborhood and Community Services for a fun, engaging and informative event filled with County resources for you! Enjoy a free lunch provided by Retirement Unlimited, Inc. You won't want to miss raffle prizes, the popular exhibit hall and special presentations.

SATURDAY/MAY 3

First Saturday Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfax-county.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional> for information on other days and times for the library's ongoing book sale.

FRIDAY/MAY 3

Alexandria Spring Fling. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In Old Town Alexandria. This lively, family-friendly celebration invites locals and visitors alike to explore Old Town's charming streets while supporting its vibrant small business community. The day will be filled with engaging activities for all ages, including tarot card readings, hands-on crafts like build-your-own flower bouquets, outdoor yoga sessions, snow cones, and more surprises around every corner. Shoppers can browse and discover exclusive in-store experiences at beloved boutiques such as Eries Interiors, Three Sisters, Red Barn, Penny Post, Pippin Toy, Mint Condition, Shoe Hive, Monday's Child, Bishop Boutique, She's Unique, and over 20 other participating shops. Many stores will feature festive pop-ups, trunk shows, and special activations during regular hours, making it a perfect day to celebrate spring and shop local in Old Town. Visit <https://oldtownboutiquecommunity.com/>



The Old Town Alexandria Home and Garden Tour takes place Saturday, April 26, 2025 in Alexandria.

SATURDAY/MAY 3

Wine & Art Night. 7 to 10 p.m. At Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden, 614 Oronoco Street, Alexandria. This exciting evening will feature wine tastings from Virginia's top wineries, an art showcase, a silent auction, and gourmet food and desserts, all in support of preserving Alexandria's rich history.

Event Highlights:

- Wine tastings from Prince Michel Vineyard & Winery and Slater Run Vineyards;
- Artwork from Barbara Cooper (paintings), Barbara Nowak (ceramics), Candace Stribling (jewelry), and Jenny Nordstrom (photography);
- Music provided by local band, DC Ambiance;
- Delicious food and dessert from Bittersweet Catering and Maribeth's Bakery;

Tickets: \$75 General Admission | \$125 VIP Admission (includes exclusive early access and a special reception)

FRIDAY/MAY 9

Wright at Twilight. 6:30-9 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Enjoy the iconic Pope-Leighey House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, at twilight! Sit back with complimentary snacks and a glass of wine, as you watch the changing light bring out the beautiful architectural details of the house. Play games in the yard, listen to period music, and tour the house at your leisure as the sun slowly sets. Tickets are \$30, with one drink included in the price of your ticket. Call (703) 780-4000 or email woodlawn@savingplaces.org. Visit the website: <https://www.woodlawnpopeleighey.org/upcomingevents>

SUNDAY/MAY 18

Old Town Festival of Speed & Style. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Old Town Festival of Speed & Style, presented by Burke & Herbert Bank, celebrates its sixth year in Old Town Alexandria. This high-profile event features an impressive lineup of rare supercars and vintage motorcycles, a live fashion demonstration at noon, live music, family-friendly fun, and a judged car awards presentation. The Festival draws thousands of visitors, boosts local business, garners media attention, and donates all proceeds to local nonprofits: ALIVE!, Community Lodgings, and the National Breast Center Foundation. Visit www.festivalofspeedandstyle.com.

THE BIRCHMERE

At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. All shows are at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com. Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or www.Birchmere.com.

APRIL

Wed. 16: Valerie June "Owls, Omens, and Oracles Tour" \$49.50
Thu. 17: The Aristocrats "The Duck Tour 2025" \$49.50
Fri. 18: Steep Canyon Rangers \$45.00
Sat. 19: Steep Canyon Rangers \$45.00
Wed. 23: OUR HOUSE: The Music of CSNY \$55.00
Thu. 24: 10,000 Maniacs \$59.50 SOLD OUT!
Fri. 25: 10,000 Maniacs \$59.50 SOLD OUT!
Sat. 26: SGGL \$39.50
Sun. 27: WMAL Presents Free Speech Forum -7pm- \$55.00 SOLD OUT!
Mon. 28: Leonid & Friends \$65.00 SOLD OUT!
Tue. 29: Leonid & Friends \$65.00 SOLD OUT!

National Home Care Advocacy Day

FROM PAGE 13

of. So families are left paying out of pocket. If you can't afford it you don't get the care or it's done by a family member or you go on Medicaid. What we're telling Congress is if there's no government program to pay for our kind of care, if it's not covered by Medicare, give us some other kind of relief."

Opalski and other home care advocates from across the state had meetings with congressional representatives, including those from U.S. Sen. Mark Warner's office.

Advocates lobbied in support of the following pieces of legislation:

❖ The Credit For Caring Act (118th Congress - S.3702, H.R.7165): Allows an eligible caregiver a tax credit of up to \$5,000 for 30 percent of the cost of long-term care expenses that exceed \$2,000 in a taxable year.

❖ Lowering Costs for Caregivers Act (119th Congress - H.R.138): Allows individuals to use tax-free health savings accounts (HSAs) and flexible spending accounts (FSAs) on medical expenses for their parents and loved ones.

❖ Homecare for Seniors Act (118th Congress - H.R.1795): Allows tax-exempt distributions from health savings accounts to be used for qualified home care services such as assistance with eating, bathing, and dressing.

"As people get older they get more chronic diseases that need to be managed," Opalski said. "Our aides are the ones who are best at doing that. It could save the health-care system a lot of money by keeping people out of acute care settings like nursing homes and the hospital by overseeing medication compliance, good nutrition, exercise, and mental stimulation. What we are asking for is not a burden on the government and is not going to be an additional cost to the federal budget."

An AARP report found that family caregivers spend, on average, 26 percent of their income on caregiving expenses or over \$7,200 annually. Family members and others who provide care for veterans spend on average \$11,500 of their personal income on out-of-pocket costs related to caregiving each year.

"We fought for two years to get the Elizabeth Dole Act passed regarding home care services for veterans," Opalski said. "The advocacy works. It takes time but still it's worth it to take a day out of our busy lives and go on the Hill and try to keep home care somewhere in the mix."

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The Murder of RFK

by Michael Calder

Barnes&Noble-Amazon-jfkvsca.com

Obituary

Obituary

Alan Gibson Gray December 18, 1929 – March 19, 2025



Alan Gibson Gray passed away peacefully on March 19, 2025, at the age of 95.

Born in Jersey City, New Jersey, to Robert and Ivy Graham Gray on December 18, 1929, Alan grew up in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, where he attended Fair Lawn High School. He went on to graduate from the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) at Kings Point, New York, in 1951. In 1962, he earned a Master of Business Administration from Xavier University.

In August 1952, Alan married Nancy Jane Haas, whom he met in high school. Together, they built a life in New Jersey before moving to Cincinnati, OH, and eventually settled in Alexandria, VA. They shared a loving marriage until Nancy's passing in 2012.

Alan proudly served as a Navy Reservist, including time aboard minesweepers during the Korean War. Following his service, he worked as an engineer with General Electric and Rolls-Royce, contributing to major projects such as space propulsion, the Pegasus engine for Harrier jets, and the Concorde. Around 1980, he left Rolls-Royce to establish the Longington Group and Metro Marine, consulting on various engineering projects both in the United States and internationally.

Alan and Nancy were deeply involved in the Belle Haven community, where they raised their two daughters, Jennifer and Patricia. He was an active member of the Civic Association, Belle Haven Country Club, and the University Club.

In 2018, after 55 years in Belle Haven, Alan relocated to Bellingham, WA, to be with his loving partner and companion, Bonnie Patridge. He is survived by Bonnie, his daughter Jennifer, and her husband, Michael Jones; his grandchildren, Amanda (Trent Smith) and Andrew Jones; his great-grandchildren, Logan and Layla Smith; and several nieces, nephews, and cousins. Alan was predeceased by his daughter Patricia in 1989. Family and friends will deeply miss him in both Alexandria and Bellingham.

Alan will be interred alongside his daughter Patricia at Ivy Hill Cemetery in Alexandria.

To honor his legacy, in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the USMMA Alumni Association, 300 Steamboat Road, Kings Point, NY 11024, or online at www.usmmaalumni.com/donate. Please reference Alan G Gray, '51.

A memorial service will be held on April 25, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 323 South Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA. Interment will follow at Ivy Hill Cemetery, located at 2823 King St, Alexandria, at 2:00 p.m.

To share your memories of Alan and to sign his online guestbook, please visit www.molesfarewelltributes.com

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PHOTO BY FCPA PHOTOGRAPHER DON SWEENEY

Photo taken in September 2010 of the north side of Historic Huntley with the additions still on.

Appreciating the Details of Historic Huntley

FROM PAGE II

The federal register nomination states, "From the front, the broad central gable is crowned by two rectangular interior chimneys which run parallel to the roofline." The house has eight fireplaces and the original random-width, pine-board floors sawed by hand.

The interior has features like a beaded keystone bisecting the arch of the fanlight, an oval medallion on one mantel and ornamented woodwork on the doors and windows.

In one room, visitors can study construction details, including the insides of interior walls from the first crude layer to the smoother, finished outer wall and plaster made from limestone, sand, water and hog and cattle hair.

The exterior bricks are held together by lime mortar, consisting partly of oyster shells. At the underground icehouse, visitors can peer down the ice well. Back then, people of means got blocks of ice from northern lakes, explained Friends of Historic Huntley volunteer J.G. Harrington. "It was a symbol of being rich."

The brick "necessary" is a four-holer, considered rather large for its time. On each side of the privy is a room with diamond-shaped vents, probably smokehouses, Harrington speculated. This building's cornice has the dog-tooth dentil pattern matching the main house.

Wrenn summed up the significance of Huntley, writing, "Whatever the derivation of the mansion house at Huntley, it survives as a notable example of early nineteenth century architecture; as an example of a farm or country house of an early nineteenth century city dweller; as a Mason family house and as part of a well-sited and relatively complete complex. When considered together, these factors make Huntley an im-



The fanlight over the south-facing doors.



An oval medallion on a fireplace mantel in the central room.

portant architectural landmark."

Franconia Supervisor Rodney Lusk stopped by on April 4 and commented, "It's important to preserve historic structures and this is one of the oldest in Fairfax County. I especially appreciate the research to contex-



A bullseye corner block part of a door's trim.

tualize the role of the enslaved people who worked here."

Historic Huntley is on the National Register of Historic Places, the Virginia Landmarks Register and the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites.

Doggone It



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Well, that wasn't much fun at all. What fun that wasn't was those 45 minutes when Burton, our adolescent, two-and-a-half-year-old golden retriever went missing, his first such unsupervised and very unapproved sojourn off-leash this morning. (It might have been fun for him, but it was anything but for us.) Though he has his identification/who to call on his dog tags, as well as a chip embedded (with his owner's name and contact information on it); as any dog/pet owner knows, one of the least guaranteed outcomes in dog ownership is that your dog will return home on his own, some good Samaritan will act amazingly on your behalf and actually call you or that your dog will survive the ordeal (or that you will).

As it happened, Burton was out for his morning walk (his first since his last outing before bedtime) with his mother/my wife Dina as per usual (she does first-thing-in-the-mornings, I do the rest of the day). Typically, Burton's morning walk occurs in the miles of woods directly behind our house ("Belly Acres," I call our house). Never off leash despite the privacy (our house is also at the end of a dead-end street); still, sometimes (how about all the time) Burton likes to play tug of war. And if one isn't careful/doesn't have a secure hold of his leash, he may squirm away and off he'll go. Which is exactly what happened this morning between Dina and Burton. It has likewise happened to me.

What happened after Burton got loose is that I, as co-owner/father received a frantic phone call from Dina (co-owner/mother). Actually, there were multiple calls (I was in the shower at the time and didn't hear a ring). When I finally answered the phone, Dina said those words that dog owners everywhere dread hearing. For me it was: "Burtons' gone." I asked her what had happened. After learning the circumstances and timeline, I said I was still wrapped in a towel, but I'd be outside as soon as possible.

Within 10 minutes or so, I was outside looking and listening for Dina. When I heard her yelling Burton's name, I walked in the opposite direction (to cover more ground). We live on two acres as do most of our neighbors. With woods all around us and a four-lane state road a quarter mile away, the places for Burton to go to get lost or hurt are numerous. Not finding him in the usual acreage, I got in my car and drove north up our street to the state road (shaking all the way fearing the worst that he might have been hit/killed by a car on it) and with the windows down, I started calling his name and looking all around. Fortunately, when I reached the state road, there was no sign of Burton (thank God, if you know what I mean?) so I turned right and drove a few hundred yards ahead and turned down the next road which sort of borders our property thinking Burton might have wandered through the woods attracted to the sounds of cars. Again, no luck so I drove the minute or two back home.

Just before I was to turn left onto our street, my cell phone rings, and when I answer, I hear the words that all pet owners in a similarly panicked state hope to hear: "I got him," said Dina. Can you say sigh of relief with an exhale to match and of course a verbal: "Thank God" by me. A dog on the loose with woods that go on for miles protecting above-ground power lines and a below-ground gas pipeline), animals everywhere, flowers blooming, people dirt biking and some locals even shooting guns and the potential for dog distractions with sounds and scents is everywhere, and the sooner we find Burton the better. Well, we did find him, or rather he found us. We were lucky. Heck, he was lucky - and smart. He knew where he lived, and we hoped we knew where he might be. Sure enough, he was coming home at the same time we were out looking for him.

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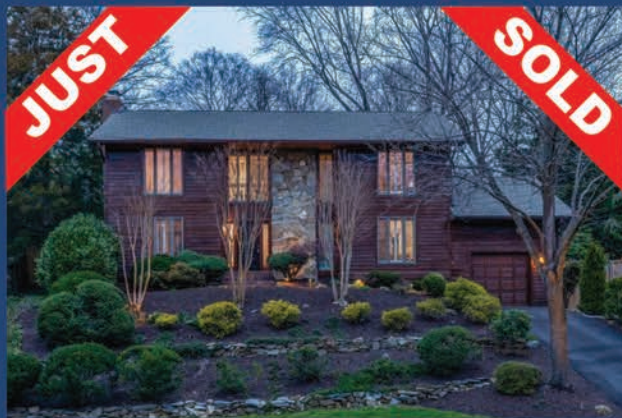
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