

CONNECTION

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Five local women brought their enthusiasm and their homemade signs to the Kamp Washington shopping center at Rt 29 and Rt 50 in Fairfax, VA on Saturday, June 14, 2024.



PHOTO BY JEFF HANCOCK

NEWS



Jay Converse of Fairfax, AKA "Tuba Guy," is a local celebrity from Fairfax, VA, who brought his sousaphone to Fair Lakes Shopping Center to support the No Kings Rally on Saturday, June 14, 2024.

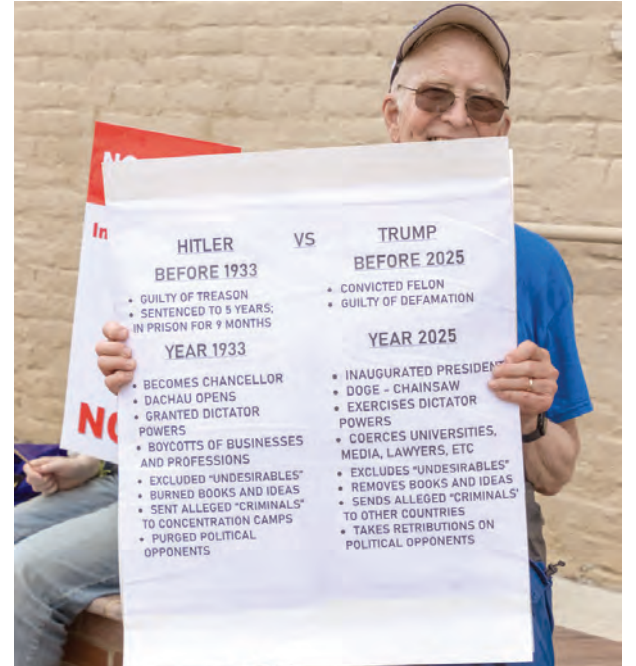


Sherman Greenstein, 80 of Fairfax Station, says he's been protesting since the 1961 House Un-American Activities Committee. He brought his years of experience to the No Kings Rally at Fair Lakes Shopping Center on Saturday, June 14, 2024.

Protesting on No Kings Day

People around the region (and around the country) turned out with their creativity and passion to express opposition to Trump administration actions and policies on Saturday, June 14, dubbed "No Kings Day."

— PHOTOS AND INTERVIEWS BY JEFF HANCOCK



Richard, 74 of Fairfax, VA, a retired teacher, draws parallels between Trump and Hitler with his sign on the 3900 block of Blenheim Blvd, Fairfax, VA on Saturday, June 14, 2024.



Five local women brought their enthusiasm and their homemade signs to the Kamp Washington shopping center at Rt 29 and Rt 50 in Fairfax, VA on Saturday, June 14, 2024.



Local women, 76 and 82, brought a large "No Kings, Blessed Be" sign to the Kamp Washington shopping center at Rt 20 and Rt 50 in Fairfax, VA on Saturday, June 14, 2024.

Large 'No Kings Day' Protests Capture Area Attention

Many messages, all support democracy over autocracy

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Protests against Trump administration actions, expanding in number and participants, spread across the country, including throughout northern Virginia on Saturday, June 14. Local demonstrators brought their pro-democracy messages with signs and flags to multiple area overpasses and thoroughfares to join millions around the nation on "No Kings Day."

Following a quiet non-vehicular roadway near parkland normally frequented only by bikers and runners, led those who had heard

where to look, from social media or word of mouth, to a scene electric with activity. Turning a corner took one from parkland quiet to sounding horns, and shoulder to shoulder protestors standing high above I-495 in Annandale, holding signs, waving American flags, and talking together loudly over traffic noise below. On exhibit, a strong sense of their resistance camaraderie, even as their signs called out many different messages. Drivers on the roadway below answered back in support with horn after horn of encouragement; sounds from sedan sopranos to the heavy blare of big rigs.

The traditionally designated holiday, Flag Day, drew demonstrators from dozens

of local grassroots groups here in Virginia, and in hundreds of cities in every State, as counterpoint to the military parade held in Washington DC the same day. Part of Indivisible's strategy, nationally, is reclaiming use of the American flag in their messaging. One of the largest June 14 protest events was held in Philadelphia; birthplace of the US Constitution and the US flag. Leaders of the pro-democracy movement sought to draw attention to their large Philadelphia event and away from the military parade in Washington commemorating the US Army's 250th anniversary, which also fell on the president's 79th birthday. Indivisible, described their effort: "No Kings' is a national

day of action and mass mobilization in response to increasing authoritarian excesses and corruption from Trump and his allies."

Fairfax Indivisible's lead and local event organizer, Marianna Burke, called the event here a success. She said, "One indicator is the number of minutes network media spent on this versus the D.C. military parade; much increased from past event coverage." She refers to prior protests "Hands Off" on April 5, and "May Day" on May 1, which she said helped Indivisible's national organization leaders to grow their resistance movement as numbers participating increased each time. Burke says the June 14 effort, "has shown we won't take it. A lot of people

SEE NO KINGS PROTESTS, PAGE 3
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No Kings PROTESTS

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Protestors line I-495 overpass with No Kings and other resistance messaging



Dressed for protest, Dianne Tenny, of Fairfax, “Especially with Democrats shot, and the extreme escalation in LA, people need to be held accountable, and people need to take action before it gets worse.”



Protesters lined the intersection corners at Old Keene Mill and Rolling roads, a significant intersection in West Springfield, bringing their message to drivers



Elissa Myers, of Springfield, “Can’t believe what’s going on in my country. We have to stand up. This is America.”



Some drivers carried protest messages of their own in return



PHOTO COURTESY FAIRFAX INDIVISIBLE
County police on hand at some sites to keep protests safe

“We also celebrate the Army anniversary. Lots of veterans came out with supportive messaging. ... What we don’t support is autocratic governance, consolidating power and crushing resistance.”

— Marianne Burke,
Fairfax Indivisible lead



COURTESY FAIRFAX INDIVISIBLE
Fairfax Indivisible lead Marianne Burke foresees future consequences for the current administration



Protest can make friends of those not normally on the same side, as dog Ellie joins cat lady, Susan Riedinger, of Springfield

FROM PAGE 2

not paying attention or not willing to get out before, now are ready to get out.”

When asked about the decision to stage a nation-wide protest on the US Army’s 250th anniversary, Burke noted the participation of many veterans. “We were clear we also celebrate the Army anniversary. We had large signs ‘Go Army’ and tons of flags. Lots of our veterans came out with supportive messaging on their shirts. What we don’t support is autocratic governance, consolidating power and crushing resistance.”

Leading up to the planned demonstrations, national and local supporters of No Kings Day stressed the peaceful intention of their protest. Organizers described a sharp increase in those registering for local visibility.

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ity events immediately following the administration’s decision to send National Guard and Marines to Los Angeles in support of ICE raids. Information to participants included no engagement and de-escalation strategies. Local Indivisible leaders report counting six middle fingers raised by passing drivers at one demonstration location, but were aware of no other local counter protests, violence or arrests.

Fairfax County police plans for proactive, protective presence at protest events were noted and appreciated according to event leaders. State and county police and officials added plans for enhanced police presence at the homes and neighborhoods of legislators and other elected officials following the shooting of Minnesotans, Representative Melissa Hortman, her husband, and Senator

John Hoffman and his wife, in their homes in the early morning hours of June 14.

Elected in 2023, Virginia Del. Laura Jane Cohen (D-15th), is in her first term and running for re-election for her seat in 2026. She shared that she and other legislators received frequent communications from House Speaker Don Scott; head of the Virginia State Police Colonel Matthew Hanley; and Senate Majority Leader Sen. Scott Surovell, on June 14th morning following the attacks on Minnesota legislators. She shared that County police advised not to answer the door to police unless two officers were present, along with other safety pointers, prompted by investigation into the Minnesota event. A communication from Virginia Gov. Glen Youngkin advised legislators to “stay home from protests.”

Cohen and other legislators did attend local protest events without incident. Cohen said, “The irony or juxtaposition, that we have, on Flag Day, a President that makes protestors the enemy, and there are consequences to that when you make us the enemy, with the Fascist regime he seems to want to create; — a sad day.”

Fairfax Indivisible is a political action group created in 2017, affiliated with the national Indivisible organization which engages in legislative advocacy, calls for political action, volunteers in support of progressive candidates regardless of party affiliation and assists with election information and monitoring.

The Flag Day holiday commemorates the 1777 adoption of the United States flag. The US Army celebrates the 250th anniversary of its creation on June 14, 1775.

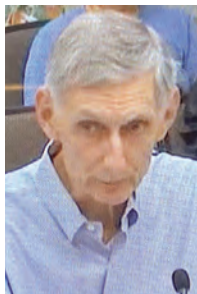
Full Snyder Trail Will Go Forward – Really

Fairfax City Council
OKs project for
second time.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION



Leslie Cullen



Mike Fabio

To create a scenic trail in the woods, lots of trees must be cut down. Otherwise, people wanting to walk, run, bike or push strollers there wouldn't have a path to follow.

Understanding that fact, Fairfax City placed the nearly 2-mile-long George Snyder Trail on its Comprehensive Plan in 2012. Running along the southern side of Accotink Creek, it goes east-west between Chain Bridge Road and Fairfax Boulevard. (See sidebar).

After years of public hearings and work sessions, City Council approved this project in January 2024, and City staff and consultants worked toward making it a reality. Normally, they'd have done so without a hitch. But five new Councilmembers took office in January 2025. And after hearing from some residents angry about the plan, those siding with them threw up a roadblock.

By April, these Councilmembers proposed defying the wishes of past Councils and either just building half the trail or canceling it altogether. The project was still in jeopardy last Tuesday, June 10. But after hearing arguments from residents in support of it, Council finally approved constructing the entire trail.

For the past several months, a vocal group of residents spoke against it at every Council meeting and even had a petition with 3,000 signatures. And, again last week, they reiterated their opposition. They said the trail's paved path would cause more than 500 trees to be felled and would disrupt the birds and wildlife there.

However, they didn't speak for all 25,000 City residents – many of whom were unaware that the previously approved trail project was in danger or that they'd have to go to City Hall to fight for its retention. After all, in Fairfax, it's unprecedented for succeeding Councils to undo the work of their predecessors. And knowing that the entire project was funded by outside sources, it seemed unthinkable that the City would just return the money.

In fact, Fairfax has already been awarded \$20.6 million for this \$20 million trail – with more than \$13.6 million of it from VDOT. That's because it'll also connect to VDOT's shared-use path along Route 123 as part of the I-66 Outside the Beltway improvements, enabling Snyder Trail users to also reach Washington, D.C. and Haymarket along the I-66 corridor.

But if the project was canceled, the money couldn't be shifted to a different City project. And Fairfax would also have to repay from its General Fund the \$3.7 million it's already spent on design, environmental review and right-of-way acquisition.

So on June 10, besides the usual opponents addressing Council, those in favor of the trail also spoke up. For example, Art Hammerschlag, there on behalf of Fairfax City Citizens for Smarter Growth, said, "Building all of it honors the commitment Fairfax City has made to our local-government partners to complete this critical portion of the regional trail network. Building only half of it, with an estimated \$1.7 million payback, is unacceptable."

Stressing that the full-build plan has been "developed by a wide array of City experts, groups and professionals," Mary McDaniel said it's had "extensive public hearings and input over the space of over 12 years. The halfway plan was thrown together quickly in the past month by a few people with limited time to review its consequences and no public opportunity for input until that night."

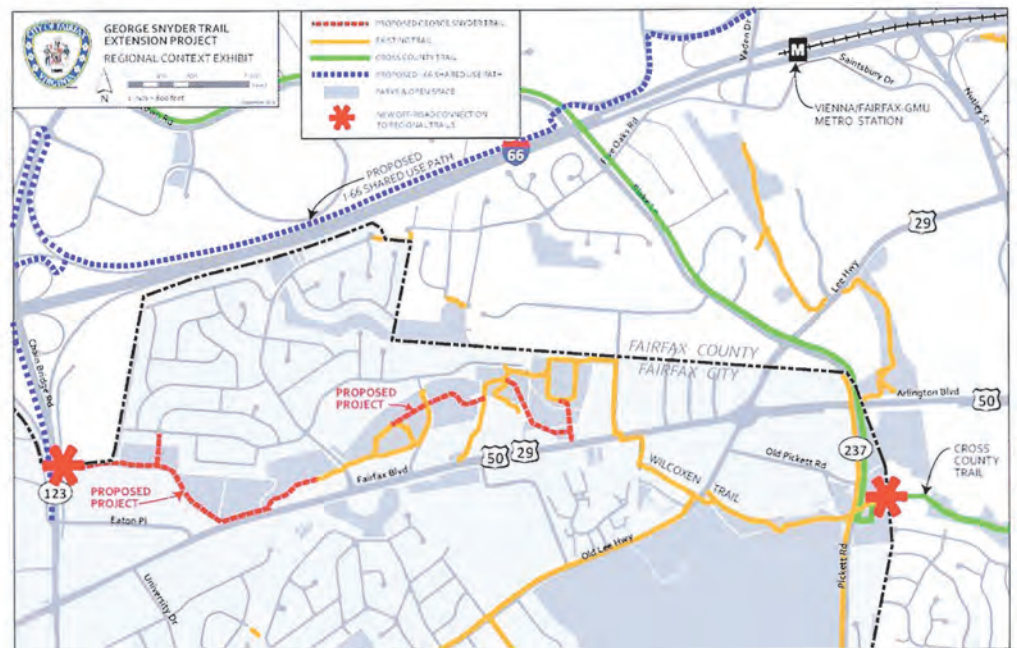
Furthermore, she said, "Not building it would result in a reputational disaster for the City. We made promises to the state and entire region. At the polls in November, the majority of the people showed support for the full build. If the voters wanted the trail cancelled or substantially changed – with all due respect – there would be a different mayor sitting at the dais tonight."

Leslie Cullen called the trail "an investment in a safer, more connected, more vibrant Fairfax. It would provide a safe route for walkers, runners, kids on bikes, and commuters. Right now, we lack a continuous path linking our neighborhoods with schools, parks and downtown. This trail fills that gap and makes Fairfax more livable for everyone. Now, with construction prices rising, we may never get this kind of funding again. This isn't just a trail – it's a statement about who we are."

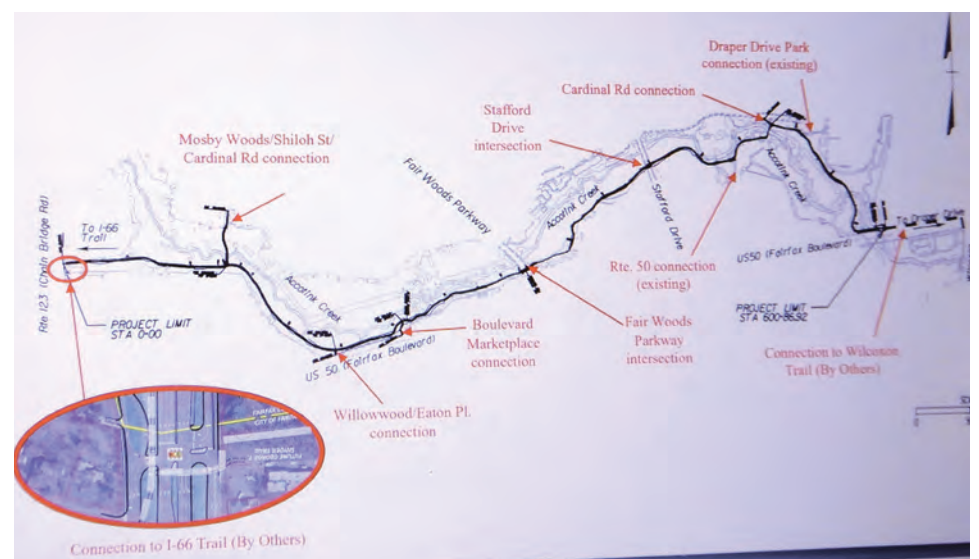
Mom and cyclist Marissa Perrone asked, "Why is this trail – that's been part of our City's public, posted plans on every sign, for years – now being second-guessed, when it offers such lasting value to the residents? Trails create a sense of place, support local businesses and help people fall in love with where they live."

"There have been Comp Plans, area plans, pedestrian and bike master plans, steering committees, design workshops, work sessions, public hearings [about this] over the years," added Beth Ianetta. "We've been telling you repeatedly, in many different formats, what our vision is for the City – and it includes this trail."

"Why would any resident give their time to contribute to a vision – which this body repeatedly asked us to do – if, at the end of



The George Snyder Trail alignment is outlined in red.



The trail will connect residential, recreational, office and shopping areas.

years of implementation, your position is, 'We don't value your input, at all. We'll either cancel it or cut it in half?'"

In light of all the recent budget cuts Council has made, Megan James asked how it could even consider "walking away from the Snyder Trail and handing back to the state \$3.7 million with nothing to show for it. VDOT believed in our vision for a connected community. This is also about equity and long-term value. It also helps seniors stay mobile and gives families an alternative to traffic."

Agreeing, John Russell noted that this trail was "specifically designed to be accessible to all City residents." Referring to its opponents, he said, "Being loud doesn't make it right to shut down a commercial and recreational opportunity to protect access for only a select few. [Nor] is it right for the City to break its word, burning its credibility with partners we may want to call upon in the future."

People walking in that forest today, said William Pitchford, will find "a patchwork of deep, rutted trails with most of the topsoil washed away. The larger trees are gradually dying and being replaced with scrub oak and other invasive species. Without the new trail, the erosion will continue."

Mike Fabio said the trees removed would be replanted at a 3-to-1 ratio, the trail grade would be suitable for all ages and abilities, and the route design would eliminate blind spots. He also said having many trail users would reduce crime, and he had some thoughts about the City's financial losses.

"This Council already cancelled \$9 million for the Country Club Hills trail," said Fabio. "If you include the \$9.5 million for the George Snyder Trail Extension that could be lost – plus the almost \$21 million and \$3.7 million for this project – added together, this Council could be responsible for the loss of \$43.2 million in its first few months [in office]. That's outrageous and a dangerous precedent."

Lastly, former Mayor David Meyer said building the whole trail would "create a legacy for future generations and bring good to our residents, now and for decades to come."

Then it was Council's time to act. Councilmember Billy Bates said he favored a full build over canceling. "At the end of the day, it's a trail," he said. "It's not the end of the world if we all don't get exactly what we want."

NEWS

Details of the George Snyder Trail Plan

Named after a former Fairfax City mayor, the George Snyder Trail will connect Chain Bridge Road to the Wilcoxon Trail at Draper Drive, south of Fairfax Boulevard. It'll be ADA-compliant, with some sections porous asphalt and others, concrete boardwalk.

The goal is to improve regional trail connectivity both within and outside the City, plus comfortable access for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities. Part will be constructed within Fairfax City parks. Five steel-truss bridges with concrete decks will span small tributaries and Accotink Creek.

The trail will be 10 feet wide, with 2-foot-wide shoulders on each side and no blind spots at bridge approaches. Locally, it'll link to existing trail segments at Marketplace Boulevard, Stafford

Park, Cardinal Park and Draper Drive Park, connecting to neighborhoods, as well as to the City's commercial corridor.

Raised crosswalks and new signage will be added to neighborhood intersections, with dark-sky-compliant lighting at intersections and trail junctions. Boardwalk segments along bridge approaches will have retaining walls and railings, and the bicycle/pedestrian bridges will be 14 feet wide, with concrete decks keeping the trail above water.

Four retaining walls, ranging from 3-17 feet high, will be built between the trail and private properties and will also reduce grading impact to the forest. Also planned are viewing areas, educational markers and rain gardens.

— BONNIE HOBBS



James Walkinshaw

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Turn to the experts

2024 PRESIDENT'S AWARD

‘Make the World a Better Place for All of Us’

Fairfax High’s 576 grads represent 62 countries.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

This year’s graduating class of Fairfax High Lions is special for many reasons, including its students’ diversity, empathy and academic excellence. And at the outset of their June 5 commencement, Principal Georgina Aye spoke to the grads from her heart.

“What makes Fairfax High an amazing place are its 576 graduates representing 62 countries and 14 different languages,” she said. “As I stand here today before you, my Lion heart swells. For the past three years, it’s been my privilege to be your principal – and what a transformative journey it’s been.”

Not only have these students changed between their freshmen and senior years, said Aye, but they also transformed the school’s teachers and staff for the better. “When I look at this class, I don’t just see students – I see a pride of Lions,” she said. “And like the jungle’s royalty, the Class of 2025 embodies the characteristics necessary to conquer the hardest paths life will throw at them.”

Aye said this class has taken the most AP dual-enrollment and advanced-certificate classes in the school’s history. But equally



A closeup of a section of Fairfax High grads during the ceremony.

important, she stressed, is that these students “have shown what it truly means to be a lion – not just in your individual strength – but in the power of your collective spirit.”

“The heart of the lion is grounded in empathy and accountability. A pride of lions functions as a unit and supports one another, and you’ve shown immense em-

pathy throughout your time here. Many of you have faced challenges that your peers may not know, or you may have shared with them.”

Besides difficult classes and the “traditional growing pains” of the teenage years, said Aye, these challenges include “leaving behind the familiarity of a country to escape



Georgina Aye

persecution, adapting to a new country’s culture and language, and enduring the profound loss of a loved one.

“Yet through these personal challenges, you leaned on one another, offering support, understanding and kindness. This deep well of empathy has made our school a more compassionate, inclusive and better place to be.”

SEE FAIRFAX HIGH GRAD 2025, PAGE 7

Fairfax High Honors Four Outstanding Students

Awards are presented during graduation ceremony.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

During Fairfax High’s June 5 graduation, four students were honored with special awards. The first three were the Service, Faculty and Fairfax award, and the fourth was for the graduate deemed the Most Outstanding Senior. Fairfax City Mayor Catherine Read presented the first three, which included scholarships from the City.

SERVICE AWARD

This honor went to Zane Geadah. The Service Award is given to the senior who’s been outstanding in loyalty and service to the school. “This student can be described as curious, tenacious and outgoing,” said Read. “He possesses a maturity beyond his years, displaying empathy and understanding toward his peers and staff alike. He approaches his leadership role as an act of service to others.”

“As captain of the Science Olympiad team, he’s led over 100 students through 23 events



PHOTO COURTESY OF FCPS

Service Award:
Zane Geadah

in national invitationals and statewide competitions. He’s also been a student co-leader for the Global Leaders of Fairfax County and vice president of the Computer Science Honors Society. He’ll bring his passion for engineering smarter and simpler solutions to complex problems to Georgia Tech next year.”

FACULTY AWARD

Receiving this award was Kat Pascual. The Faculty Award goes to the senior who’s demonstrated outstanding loyalty, citizenship and service to Fairfax High. “This year’s winner brought infectious positivity and enthusiasm to every class they attended – a quality greatly appreciated by their teachers,” said Read. “They are resilient, creative and passionate about learning.”

“Their greatest impact has been to the Theater Department, where they’ve served in several leadership roles, including president, marketing lead, Cappies critic, improv co-captain and social media head. They value relationships and lead with compassion, inclusivity and respect for all students and



PHOTO COURTESY OF CARRIE DORSEY

Faculty Award:
Kat Pascual

cultures. We’ll miss their smile and bright light when they go to the College of William & Mary in the fall.”

FAIRFAX AWARD

This honor went to Ainsley Buice. The Fairfax Award is given to the senior who’s been outstanding in scholarship, loyalty, service and leadership. “This young woman embodies all the qualities of a student leader – perseverance, discipline, intelligence and an unshakeable work ethic,” said Read. “Her positive and kind attitude inspires all those around her. She’s been respectful of her teachers, coaches and peers; and in return, she’s highly respected. She’s served as president of the Fairfax High Choir and has baked over 7,000 muffins to help the food insecure in our community.”

“She’s also an accomplished athlete and holds the all-time, school record for the 2K on the rowing machine and is one of the top 200 U-19 women rowers in the nation. As a four-year crew captain, she fostered a supportive and competitive atmosphere which helped double the size of the varsity women’s team and led to remarkable finishes in state and national regattas. MIT is getting



PHOTO COURTESY OF CARRIE DORSEY

Fairfax Award:
Ainsley Buice

the best and brightest of Fairfax High.”

MOST OUTSTANDING SENIOR

Director of Student Services Ashley Anderson presented this award to Vy Tran. It’s presented to the senior who best represents the Senior Class as a whole, displays loyalty and dedication to the school and embodies the Fairfax spirit. The recipient is selected by the members of the graduating class and receives an American flag that’s been flown in front of the school during the 2024-25 school year.

“Vy Tran is not only a dedicated student with remarkable academic strengths but can also be described as compassionate and a beacon of positivity,” said Anderson. “She constantly works hard to be kinder and more understanding and embodies the heart of Fairfax High. Her leadership roles include varsity speech captain and president of the Spanish Honor Society and Student Equity Team.”

“She’s increased school spirit by serving as the lead coordinator of the annual cultural celebration. Her kindness and caring personality will be missed at Fairfax, but we’re confident she’ll be a tremendous asset to her next school, Brown University.”



BONNIE HOBBS/
THE CONNECTION

Most Outstanding Senior:
Vy Tran

FAIRFAX HIGH GRAD 2025



Listening while Honor Graduate Vy Tran addresses her classmates are (from far left) Fairfax City Public Schools Chief of Schools Geovanny Ponce, teachers Cheryl Spevak and Pete Peterson, Mayor Catherine Read and City School Board Chairman Carolyn Pitches.

FROM PAGE 6

And, she said, “With empathy comes accountability. You’ve taken ownership of your learning, actions, impact and commitment to our community. You’ve learned that being accountable means not only taking responsibility for your mistakes, but also for your successes and for the wellbeing of those around you. This is the mark of leadership and a true Lion’s legacy.”

Aye said student success is grounded in hard work, self-advocacy and relentless drive. “This isn’t just about grades,” she said. “It’s about developing the discipline and perseverance that’ll serve you in all aspects of your life, moving forward. The average high-school student spends 4,758 hours in class. And if involved in a club, activity or

sport, they’re estimated to be in school for over 10,000 hours. You’ve been here a long time.”

She said the grads have learned to speak up for themselves, ask for help when needed, pursue their goals with conviction and “roar the loudest in the room” when injustice or something unkind occurs. Calling these things “critical skills,” Aye told the students to “never lose your voice and never lose your roar.”

The ability to adapt has also defined this class, she said, from “navigating the aftermath of a global pandemic to [dealing with] new, school cellphone policies. You understood new boundaries and moved forward with grace. You showed change isn’t a barrier, but an opportunity to grow, learn and find new ways to thrive.



Students head back to their seats after receiving their diplomas from Principal Georgina Aye (center, in black gown with red stripes).

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

“The willingness to conquer new terrain is one of your greatest strengths. You’ll always be challenged with two paths – one, easy, and one, challenging. Take the challenging one because you’ll be better for it.” Aye then told the students to remember the Lion within them and let its attributes guide their next endeavors.

“Embrace the challenges that lie ahead with the same strengths you’ve [already] shown,” she said. “Face the unknown with the courage that brought you here, and continue to lead with empathy, accountability and hard work. And always advocate for yourselves in ways that’ll make the world a better place for all of us to live in.”

SEE FAIRFAX HIGH GRAD 2025, PAGE 12

Snyder Trail Approved

FROM PAGE 4

Councilmember Stacey Hardy-Chandler said this project has both a history and a future they should consider. “This is a multigenerational decision,” she said. “We took the baton of the commitment from the Council and mayor that came before us, so I can’t support cancellation.”

“Based on my recent emails and what I heard tonight, I don’t think the community wants half a trail,” said Councilmember Anthony Amos. “They either want all or nothing. Councilmember Stacy Hall said she, too, could no longer support half a trail.

Still, Councilmember Tom Peterson wanted to cancel the whole thing and take money from the City’s already-approved Capital Improvement Projects to fund the \$3.7 million repayment. A vote on his motion failed, 5-1. Council then considered a motion Hardy-Chandler had made to build the entire trail.

“I don’t like paying back millions of dollars during these trying budget times, knowing things will only get worse next year,” said Amos. Bates said he’d support Hardy-Chandler’s motion, and Council’s subsequent vote was 4-2 in favor, with Peterson and Hall voting no.

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Blockchain Tech Offers Economic Diversity Opportunity for Fairfax

BY SUPERVISORS JAMES WALKINSHAW AND
RODNEY LUSK

The Trump Administration's reckless actions to fire and force out dedicated federal workers, freeze or cancel federal contracts, and impose senseless tariffs that raise costs for American families, are already having a negative impact on our local and regional economy. The unemployment rate is rising and local families and businesses are tightening their belts, reducing economic activity. While we must continue to fight against federal job and budget cuts that harm our region, we must also accelerate our efforts to diversify our local economy.

One of the most promising areas of growth? Blockchain technology. Blockchain is, at its core, a secure, decentralized system for recording and verifying transactions that leverages tokens to compensate users and transmit value. Its applications range from supply chain management to digital identity to secure voting systems — technologies that can reshape entire industries and improve public services.

Blockchain startups offer Fairfax a unique opportunity to pivot toward a more resilient economic future. These startups can create high-wage jobs for software engineers, cybersecurity experts, data scientists, and project managers — many with skill sets transferable from federal or contracting roles.

The sector's dynamism continues to attract venture capital, drawing in new investment and fresh talent. In fact, global blockchain venture funding reached over \$10 billion in 2023, with more than 1,000 blockchain startups launched that year alone. Large corporations headquartered here already rely on blockchain technology and can help foster an ecosystem of startups. Capital One, for example, has dozens of patents in blockchain and uses the technology in areas including authentication, data security, and claims management.

Michael Saylor's Microstrategy, recently renamed Strategy B, is the world's largest Bitcoin Treasury Company.

And the technology's applications in public service — like secure digital permitting, property records, or even elections — could bring more transparency and efficiency to local government. On the Board of Supervisors, we've been pushing to allow tax payments to be made via bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies.

Efforts like our Accelerate Breakfast Series are helping catalyze this transition. These gatherings bring together entrepreneurs, investors, and local leaders to share ideas, build relationships, and spotlight the county's innovation potential. A recent breakfast featured a pitch by a startup working to improve regulatory compliance and security for financial institutions utilizing blockchain technology.

The Fairfax Founders Fund, established by

the Board of Supervisors, provides grants of up to \$50,000 to promising, early stage companies poised to disrupt industries and create new jobs. Blockchain-focused founders who choose to locate in Fairfax County can take advantage of this opportunity to help grow their businesses.

Blockchain's potential extends beyond the local economy. Globally, it has been used to deliver humanitarian aid more efficiently and transparently, including during crises in Ukraine and elsewhere. That same spirit of solving real-world problems can drive local innovation too—particularly as we seek technologies that promote both economic opportunity and social impact.

Fairfax should build on this momentum. That means continued investment in incubators and accelerators for emerging technologies, stronger workforce development pipelines through universities and community colleges, and deeper partnerships between the public and private sectors to pilot blockchain use cases.

We can't control every twist in federal policy, but we can shape how we respond. By betting on innovation and backing our entrepreneurs, we can build a Fairfax County economy that is not only more resilient, but more inclusive and forward-looking. Blockchain isn't just a buzzword—it's a tool, and with the right support, it can play a role in ensuring our continued economic dynamism as a county and as a region.

Summer in Springfield

BY RODNEY LUSK
FRANCONIA DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

There are many great ways to celebrate summer this year in the Franconia District! One of the most exciting additions this year is two free children's concerts being held in Springfield, sponsored by my office. The "Kids' Concert on the Green" series is hosted at Springfield Overlook, the new community space located

on the roof of the Springfield CBC Commuter Garage. It was wonderful to see so many folks join us at the first event, which was held Saturday, June 14 and featured "Munit & Z Love Bugs." The next concert is on June 21 from 10 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. and will feature "Rocknoceros," a local Fairfax County band that has released six children's albums since 2005 and won 10 Washington Area Music Awards. This exciting pilot demon-

strates just one potential use of the green space atop the garage.

Springfield Overlook, located at the Springfield CBC Commuter Garage rooftop

The Kingstowne Farmers Market opened on Friday, May 2, and will be open every Friday through Oct. 24 from 3 to 7 p.m. There are several new vendors this year, ranging



Lusk

from produce and flowers to prepared foods and baked goods.

Head to the Springfield Town Center for the 3rd Annual Pride Night Out on June 25 between 5 p.m. to 7

p.m. for family-friendly entertainment celebrating Pride Month and to raise funds for LGBTQ+ youth

SEE SUMMER, PAGE 19



Springfield Overlook.

Submit a Letter to the Editor

To submit a letter to the editor, email editors@connectionnewspapers.com or via the following form <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/>

Ideally, letters will be original, about local issues and less than 300 words. Please submit letters by noon Friday before publication week, although letters received on Mondays can be considered. Letters must include your first and last name, home address and a phone number. Letters are routinely edited for libel, length, grammar, good taste and accuracy.

Your name and town will be published with your letter, other personal information will not be shared. If you are a student, your school name, age and grade will also be published.

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OPINION

Don't Sweat It, Mount Vernon's Got Your Summer Covered!

By Supervisor Dan Storck

Summertime in the Mount Vernon District is one of my favorite times of the year. The days are long, laughter is in the air as kids are out of school and our community comes alive with music, history, art and outdoor adventures. Whether you're looking for fun family outings, ways to explore nature or just want to kick back and enjoy music under the stars, there's something for everyone right here in our backyard.

The Workhouse Arts Center has added an artist-designed art history 18-hole mini golf course. It's perfect for kids and adults alike, and a great way to support local artists. The Workhouse is also keeping the tradition of their annual FireWorks Festival on Saturday, June 28 from 4-9:30 p.m. It's one of the biggest FREE Independence Day celebrations in the County, with live music, food trucks, art exhibits, family-friendly activities, Bun-nyman Brewing and, of course, a dazzling fireworks finale that lights up the night sky.

Our un-beat-able Mount Vernon Nights Summer Concert Series is back. Every weekend this summer, enjoy FREE live performances at Grist Mill Park on Fridays and the Workhouse Arts Center on Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. Bring lawn chairs, a picnic and a few

friends to enjoy one of our special summer traditions that will make you want to get up and dance.

After a little over two years, the newly renovated Mount Vernon Rec Center has reopened its doors. Enjoy two brand new sparkling ice rinks, a two-level fitness center and engaging summer camps. The reopening is being conducted in phases, and the climbing wall opens on June 23. While pool renovations are still underway due to unforeseen construction issues, beat the heat at the Martin Luther King Jr. pool, which is FREE to all County residents.

Enjoy the great outdoors and explore our incredible parks and trails. Take a hike, paddle or look to the sky for eagles flying overhead at Mason Neck State Park and Pohick Bay Park. Bring the whole family for a ride along the scenic Mount Vernon Trail and soak in the unbeatable views of the Potomac River.

Our area is home to some of the most scenic and historic spots in the region, from George Washington's Mount Vernon and Gunston Hall to River Farm and the National Museum of the U.S. Army celebrating 250 years. All our Potomac Banks: Explore Fairfax South tourism sites are excited to welcome you all year long. I hope to see you out and about.



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Isaac Frenza



Mauro Manganello

Fairfax, Woodson Win Four Cappies Total

Fairfax High won three Cappie Awards and Woodson High, one, during the June 2 Cappies Gala at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. For Fairfax's production of "Much Ado about Nothing," Isaac Frenza won the award for Lead Actor, Male Role in a Play, and Mauro Manganello won for Comic Actor, Male Role in a

Play. In addition, Kat Pascual, Libby Hansen, Olive Webster and Devin Linthicum received the Cappie for Marketing and Publicity.

Woodson's Juliana Gurrola won the Cappie for Comic Actor, Female Role in a Play, for her school's production of "Lear."

— BONNIE HOBBS

BULLETIN BOARD

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

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED

Have some extra time to drive a neighbor to a doctor's appointment? You pick the days, times, and places that are convenient for you. There is no minimum driving requirement. Not only do you help older adults in need, you also get to meet wonderful folks, often with very interesting backgrounds and stories to tell. The Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church (SCMAFC), is an all-volunteer, non-sectarian, non-profit organization. Its mission is providing free transportation to seniors for medical and dental appointments or run errands to grocery stores and pharmacies. Visit the website at <https://scmafc.org/volunteer>, or email contact@scmafc.org.

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/healthy-mindsfairfax or www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia Caregivers' Support Group takes place the first and third Tuesdays of each

month, 10-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. This group is for caregivers of family members with dementia. Meetings are gently facilitated. For more information and to get the Zoom link, contact Jack Tarr at jtarr5@verizon.net 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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 18

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SENIOR LIVING

Mobility Company Finds a Fit in Local Chamber

Wheelchairs and walkers are commonplace in this area.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

With the senior population growing in recent years, mobility issues are popping up due to osteoporosis, cancer and other bone density causes, so wheelchairs and walkers are becoming commonplace.

Bennet Helfgot sees it all around and as owner of Mobility City of Northern Virginia, he's there to help with his wide selection of products that help people get around. He opened the franchise in 2019 and just celebrated his fifth anniversary.

"There's a growing need out there," Helfgot said, and many times it takes a bigger effort than just relying on Medicare. "I help people on a daily basis, the system fails people," he said. There are plenty of seniors in the Mount Vernon-Springfield area so Helfgot joined the Mount Vernon-Springfield Chamber of Commerce recently to increase the company's exposure.

Once Helfgot finds the right equipment and fits it to the customer's needs, he remains committed to that transaction. "I'll maintain and repair it," he said. Although

his location is closer to Old Town Alexandria, he likes the Mount Vernon-Springfield Chamber of Commerce. "This chamber does a lot," he said.

Wheelchairs Needed

What Helfgot is seeing is a snapshot of a nationwide situation. According to the Social Security Administration, 12 percent of the total population is aged 65 or older this year, but by 2080, it will be 23 percent. This increase in the senior population is linked to the mobility issue so companies like Mobility City are getting more attention.

<https://alexandriava.mobilitycity.com/>

Vinny Baratta started Mobility City in Long Island, New York. He was raised in a family with several doctors and found himself fixing the wheelchairs in the family medical practice. His wife Diane got stuck in a summer downpour with a wheelchair patient and made an emergency call to Mobility City and they sent out a technician. "I understand what millions of people go through every day when their mobility equipment breaks down," she said. Now she is CEO of the company.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

At this Alexandria store there are all kinds of mobility options.



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FAIRFAX HIGH GRAD 2025

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Senior Class President Ivy Anyango

FROM PAGE 7

Returning to the idea of transformation, Aye left the grads with a lyric from the musical, “Wicked,” telling them, “‘Because I knew you, I have been changed for good.’ May it apply to your friendships, families and faculty. Because I’ve been able to know you, Class of 2025, I’ve also been changed for good. We’re immensely proud of each and every one of you.”

Speaking next was physics teacher Pete Peterson, who offered advice via two physics lessons. First, he said friction moves people forward, when used the right way. “When there’s friction between friends, use it to understand each other better, work together more effectively and, as a result, build a stronger relationship,” said Peterson. “And when learning something new, don’t let friction stall your progress.”

Second, he said, quantum mechanics enables people to consider two opposing ideas at the same time and still function. “As you’re about to graduate, you probably feel both optimistic and a little anxious about your future,” he told the students. “I hope you turn that anxious feeling into the friction that propels you forward.”

Then English teacher Cheryl Spevak introduced honor graduate Vy Tran. “Her unique spirit consistently reminds others to do and be good,” said Spevak. “Vy’s authentic goodness makes her a role model for this community, including its adults. She has a keen understanding of marginalized communities and wants to create a safe space for them. She’s a gregarious and loving senior who’s absolutely going to make this world a better place.”

“The fact that we can say we’re leaving Fairfax High with so much more than we came into it with is something worth celebrating,” said Tran. “As a 14-year-old intimidated by other teenagers, I was an entirely different person from who I am now. I was an introvert terrified of trying new things. But Fairfax transformed me. Each of us carved out our own space; [yet] there’s so much community to be found here.”

“We’ve learned to find each other between our heartwarming hellos in the hallways, in the 6 minutes between bio and lunch,



The new Fairfax High graduates joyfully toss their caps into the air.



Celebrating with grad Amari Brothers are (from left) Zyonn Salmon, Dewaune Allen, Lakeisha Allen, Deon Allen, Eugene Short, Melinda Fallen, Shelia Short and Cynthia Allen.



Grad Joline Wisa is flanked by (from left) mom Nevine Abdelmessih and sister Caren Wisa.



Grad Anna Mawloud with (from left) mom Maura Archetti, Dad Zak Mawloud and brother Adam Mawloud.



Posing with grad Leonardo Cordova Roca (center) are (from left) Isabella Roca, Zorka Cordova, Mauricio Cordova, Katihuska Baqueros, Lady Roda, Jesus Roca, Silvia Cordova Roca, Pedro Roca, Leonor Campbell and Diana Cordova.

FAIRFAX HIGH GRAD 2025



Students standing at the start of the commencement ceremony.

FROM PAGE 12

when we huddle together with friends to talk about how our day has been,” she continued. “We’re a collective of humans who can exude kindness so freely. You can feel it with every teacher, staff member and fellow classmate.

“It’s a testament to how incredible each and every person here at Fairfax is. What defines Fairfax High isn’t our school colors or the Lions plastered [everywhere] – it’s the people. It’s you and me and all of us. Every experience we’ve had here made us



Pete Peterson

who we are. The memories we made are always going to be with us and will allow us to spread our wings and take off. Thank you, Fairfax, for all you’ve done to help us grow and learn.”

Senior Class President Ivy Anyango presented the class gift to the school – an industrial ice cream machine. She then told her fellow grads to “Keep on showing up for yourselves with resilience and persistence. Continue to decorate your stories, just as you’ve decorated your caps – with pride, joy and meaning.”

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VDOT Virginia Department of Transportation

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.

Location	County	Route	Structure Name	Weight Restriction	Effective Date
FAUQUIER	7397	710	RECTORTOWN ROAD	GOOSE CREEK	5/23/2025
BEDFORD	2877	744	VON ROY ROAD/ROUTE 744	WOLF CREEK	5/19/2025
APPOMATTOX	1673	727	RED HOUSE ROAD	MAPLE SPRING BRANCH	5/14/2025
FRANKLIN	7832	613	NAFF ROAD/ROUTE 613	MAGGODEE CREEK	5/9/2025

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.

REMEMBERING



Eric Parkhurst speaks while Earl Seay listens.



Eric Parkhurst salutes Amos Chilcott's grave while (from left) Earl Seay, Jim Price and Al Doebling look on.



VFW's Hank Roeder plays "Taps" in the cemetery.

Remembering Amos Chilcott on Memorial Day

Wreath is laid on his grave in Fairfax Cemetery.



Amos Chilcott's grave.

By BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Following Fairfax City's Memorial Day ceremony, May 26, American Legion Post 177 Commander Eric Parkhurst laid a wreath on Amos Chilcott's grave in the Fairfax Cemetery. First, though, he spoke to those attending, including Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read and City Councilmember Billy Bates.

"In 1944, a group of WWI veterans – Amos Chilcott being one of them – met and decided to start an American Legion post here in Fairfax," said Parkhurst. "Chilcott donated his land for it; and in 1945, it was chartered. They broke ground for its construction in 1951."

However, he said, "It took roughly five years to build the post we have today. Unfortunately, Amos Chilcott passed away in 1954 and did not get to see the completion of the building. He was unable to actually enjoy the post that was built on the property he donated."



From left are Color Guard members Earl Seay, Jim Price and Al Doebling.

"Although it was partially destroyed by fire once, it was rebuilt," continued Parkhurst. "The foundation and part of the original walls still exist. And Amos Chilcott's name still lives on, to this day. From that charter – 80 years ago, this year – until now, we remember him as our benefactor and a true legacy."

Parkhurst noted, as well, that nearby Chilcott Field – built in 1956 and named after Amos – is considered the home of the Fairfax

Little League. So he's remembered for more than one reason.

But most of all, said Parkhurst, "Because of the things Chilcott did for those WWII veterans and the future generations returning from Korea, Vietnam, Operation Freedom – all the way through today – his legacy lives on. And it does so because of his dedication, commitment and love for veterans."

"My challenge to you is, what's your legacy? What are future generations – when

you're long gone – going to remember about you? What did you do to make a difference, just like Amos Chilcott did, in support of veterans and honoring the memory of those who've passed? What's your legacy?"

A three-person, American Legion Color Guard then advanced toward Chilcott's grave. And together, Parkhurst and Legion member Al Doebling laid a wreath on it. Then, as Parkhurst saluted, VFW Post 8469 bugler, Hank Roeder, played "Taps."

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Workhouse Arts center president and CEO, Keith Gordon (hands raised) is joined for the grand opening of Masterpiece Mini-Golf by local artists, members of the Workhouse Arts Board of Directors, and members of the county board of supervisors



Local artist Tim Grant designed the experience along with other Workhouse artists and craftsman

More Than Just Art of the Swing

Workhouse offers art history with mini-golf

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Until recently, the only art on a golf course may have been the ‘art of the swing.’ Now the Workhouse Arts Center offers the experience of an art history-themed golf course; perhaps the nation’s only Masterpiece Mini-Golf.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 13 launched the 18-hole course with what the Workhouse describes as “18 unique hand-crafted holes designed by artists and builders from the Workhouse community.”

Whether your preference is for French Impressionism, Italian Renaissance, Guerrilla, or Pop Art, or just the mini-golf game, the course will be open through the summer and fall to entertain you.

The Workhouse Arts Center, located at 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton, does not offer advance tee times. The mini-golf experience is \$15 per person. While there is no club house at this course, Bunyan Brewery is steps away for after-game refreshment. For information on mini-golf course open days/hours, see <https://www.workhousearts.org/masterpiece-mini-golf>



Artist Fernando Osorio, who once delivered this newspaper, selected Italian Baroque, Counter-Reformationist, Caravaggio’s work, “John the Baptist,” for its realism and use of light and shadow.

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/
THE CONNECTION



Braddock District Supervisor James Walkinshaw is confident he can win, here against Arts Center board member Sharon Bulova, who admitted to never before having played mini-golf

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Angela Vick, of Woodbridge, plays thru hole 13’s paint palette.

ENTERTAINMENT



The Pack Drumline will appear on Thursday, June 19, 2025 at the McLean Community Center.

JUNETEENTH EVENTS ACROSS THE COUNTY

The Fairfax County Park Authority invites the community to honor Juneteenth through a series of engaging events at multiple park locations, highlighting African American history, resilience and cultural contributions.

Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated remembrance of the end of slavery in the United States. Observed each year on June 19, it commemorates the day in 1865 when the last enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, were informed of their freedom—more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

In Fairfax County, the Park Authority recognizes Juneteenth by sharing stories of the African American men, women and children who shaped the region's history through their labor, leadership, creativity and community.

Featured Events

Juneteenth Celebration at Sully Historic Site

Sully Historic Site, Thursday, June 19
Celebrate African American history through guided interpretive tours of original outbuildings and the first floor of the main house. Experience storytelling, music, children's activities, quilt exhibits, touchable artifacts, interpretive displays, and a free health clinic. Food trucks will be available and picnic tables provided. Free admission.

Juneteenth Smudge Stick Floral Workshop

Green Spring Gardens, Thursday, June 19

Join BLK FLWR MRKT, a Black woman-owned business, in creating a floral smudge stick—a botanical bundle used in cultural and spiritual practices. Learn about the historical significance of these plants for Black Americans and engage in reflective activities, such as writing affirmations and sensory play. \$60 per person. Registration required
Exploring Our Historic Meeting House and Grounds

Frying Pan Farm Park, Saturday, June 21

Explore the rich history of Frying Pan's Meeting House, one of the oldest religious structures in Fairfax County. Staff and volunteers will offer informal tours of the building and grounds, highlighting the history of African Americans in the area. Free admission.

FREE GUIDED WALK AT MEADOWLARK

Enjoy free garden admission and a refreshing one-hour walk through Meadowlark's beautiful 95 acres located at 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Ct., Vienna. Each walk will cover hilly terrain, feature a positive focus, and include a silent, meditative portion — plus a few fun facts from the docent along the way.

GARDEN TOURS

Visitors can plan self-guided tours of the region's most splendid gardens, including these not-to-miss sites (check with the individual gardens for hours of operation):

Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, a 90-acre oasis featuring more than 100 cherry trees surrounding a lovely lake, plus an extensive shade garden, native wildflowers, gazebos, birds, butterflies, seasonal blooms and the very unique Korean Bell Garden.

Green Spring Gardens, an outdoor classroom, national historic site, and museum featuring a wooded stream, a valley with ponds, a native plant garden, over 20 thematic demonstration gardens, and a greenhouse filled with tropical plants.

River Farm, a historic 25-acre site on the banks of the Potomac River that was once part of George Washington's original five farms and is now the headquarters of the American Horticultural Society.

George Washington's Mount Vernon, the home to America's first president, features four bountiful gardens to explore and enjoy. In addition, experience wide-open spaces, wooded landscapes, and a quarter-mile-long forest trail — not to mention the vast educational resources available on site.

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



A Tribute to The Man in Black – Johnny Folsom 4: Johnny Cash Tribute will take place on Thursday, July 3, 2025 at McLean Central Park.

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>.

THROUGH JUNE 29

Illuminations: A Retrospective by Rosemarie Forsythe. At Reston Art Gallery. Forsythe's artworks celebrate nature and science, using acrylic, flashe paint, and 23k gold leaf to evoke a sense of magic and mystery.

KIDS ON THE GREEN RETURNS

This summer, families are invited to the Freeman Store and Museum patio in Vienna every Tuesday at 10 a.m. in June, July and August for the 8th annual "Kids on the Green" series. This popular family event features free entertainment designed for children of all ages, such as performances by magicians, musicians and storytellers. Attendees are encouraged to bring a blanket or lawn chair to sit on and enjoy the show. Visit www.viennava.gov/kidsonthegreen.

SENIOR MOVIE DAY

Reston Association presents Senior 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.

Doors: 9:00 a.m., Movie at 10 a.m.

Location: Movie theater at Reston Town Center

June 25: Featuring: Summer Camp Dive-In Movies

June 26, featuring, Kung Fu Panda 4

July 10, featuring, The Wild Robot

Aug. 6 featuring, Moana 2

JUNE 5-29

August Wilson's The Piano Lesson.

At 1st Stage in Tysons Corner. Set in 1930s Pittsburgh, Berniece and her brother, Boy Willie, navigate the complexities of their past and the weight of their future, all centered around an heirloom piano with a story of its own. Show 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. General admission tickets are \$25 (limited availability), \$40 (limited availability), and \$55. Student, educator, and military tickets are \$15. Tickets can be purchased online at www.1ststage.org or by calling the 1st Stage box office at 703-854-1856.

JUNE 5 TO AUG. 3

LEGO Summer of Play. At LEGO Springfield Mall. This summer, families can get ready for a celebration of play like no other at LEGO Discovery Center with an all-new event. From June 5 – August 3, the LEGO Summer of Play event will have new activities to help kids discover their unique Play Mode — whether they love to create, discover, build, dance or simply play their own way.

Event Activities:

- Imagine and design a more playful city in our Creative Workshop with a Master Model Builder
- Spot the summer surprises hidden in MINIWORLD
- Join a FESTIVAL dance party with an awesome LEGO character
- Build a LEGO bee and display it on our LEGO flower cart
- Capture your Play Mode pose in a photo with a LEGO character and share the moment

JUNE 16 TO AUG. 15

2025 Summer Art Camps. At Work-

house Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. 2025 Summer Art Camps at Workhouse Arts Center for ages 6-16. Spots are filling fast—secure your child's summer adventure today! Get ready for 9 unforgettable weeks of creativity and fun! Workhouse Arts Center's 2025 Art Camp kicks off June 16, offering dynamic, hands-on experiences for young artists, performers, and musicians. Whether your child joins us for one week or all nine, they'll explore new passions and build lasting friendships.

Choose Your Track:

Visual Arts — From clay to canvas, campers dive into a world of color and creativity.

Theater — Lights, camera, action! Budding performers learn acting, directing, and playwrighting.

Music & Dance — Let the rhythm move you with vocals, instruments, and high-energy dance.

Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/camps>

THURSDAY/JUNE 19

The Pack Drumline. 7 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. This electrifying performance will have you on the edge of your seat or blanket! The Pack Drumline's renowned blend of southern show style drumming with intense upbeat choreography creates a production that is both powerful and awe-inspiring. Together, dynamic percussionists and dancers create explosive rhythms, intricate patterns and stunning visuals.

JUNE 19 AND 20

Indigo Girls Perform. At Capital One Hall. Grammy-winning duo Indigo Girls will be performing two evenings in Tysons with the Fairfax Symphony at the Capital One Hall on Thursday and Friday, June 19 and 20. For these special symphony shows, the iconic folk duo brought in musical arrangers Sean O'Loughlin (Chris Isaak, Feist, The Decemberists, Josh Ritter) and Stephen Barber (Rosanne Cash, Alejandro Escovedo, John Legend) to write orchestral charts for a selection of

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ENTERTAINMENT



Bennie and the Jets: Tribute to Elton John will appear on Thursday, June 26, 2025 at the McLean Community Center.

songs spanning their career, from the 1980s on.

SATURDAY/JUNE 21
Juneteenth at Frying Pan Park. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Frying Pan Park, Herndon. Uncover stories of free and enslaved African Americans. Learn how Black congregations fought for greater freedoms. Explore how they built a thriving community. Join tours through the church, grounds, and former Lee House site. (All ages) Free but registration recommended.

SATURDAY/JUNE 21
COPA Tysons Soccer Fest. 1 to 7 p.m. at Ken Lawrence Park, 8008 Jones Branch Drive, Tysons. The Tysons Community Alliance (TCA) is pleased to announce the 2025 COPA Tysons Soccer Fest, a free, all ages soccer festival featuring an exciting array of fun soccer activities such as bubble soccer, inflatables, soccer skills stations, photo opportunity with Washington Spirit mascot PK, vendors, a DJ, face painting, food trucks and more. All area soccer fans are invited to attend this family-friendly festival. This year, COPA Tysons Soccer Fest has added its inaugural co-ed small-sided, 4-v-4 adult tournament open to male and female players 18 years and older, featuring two divisions – the Open Division (18+ adults) and a Senior Division (35+ adults). Registration is \$200 (plus fees), which includes four guaranteed small-sided games, a COPA Tysons t-shirt, and an award for the winning team.

SATURDAY/JUNE 21
Rocknoceros. 10-10:45 a.m. At the rooftop of the Springfield CBC Commuter Garage, 7039 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Part of the Kids' Concerts on the Green Series at Springfield Overlook.

SATURDAY/JUNE 21
Vienna's Naturalization Ceremony. 5 p.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., SE, Vienna. Fifteen people will become a part of our nation's fabric during this year's naturalization ceremony. Community members are invited to witness this inspiring event as their fellow foreign-born neighbors take



The Pathway's Artists Reception takes place on Wednesday, July 16, 2025 at the Fairfax County Government Center in Fairfax.

the oath. This year's ceremony will feature live music and entertainment beginning at 3:30 p.m.

SATURDAY/JUNE 21
Play Palooza – The Ultimate Pop-up Kids Festival. Noon to 4 p.m. At Vienna Shopping Center, 180 Maple Ave., W, Vienna. Includes rock wall climbing, a giant bounce house, inflatable obstacle course, truck touch zone, foam and confetti parties, face painting, toddler play zone, virtual gaming experiences and kid vs. parent challenges. In addition, there will be cotton candy and popcorn.

SUNDAY/JUNE 22
Burke Historical Society Meeting. 3-4:30 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Shemika Curvey, a Graduate Research Assistant at GMU, will present What's in a Name? Bethia Fairfax & Sarah Ambrose, Free Women of Color in 19th Century Fairfax County, Virginia.

SUNDAY/JUNE 22
Craft Fun. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Join craft experts at Fairfax Station Railroad Museum for Whirling Wonders. Create a DIY Pinwheel Craft. This fun and easy project is perfect for some summer fun. Just like the wheels on the train, the pinwheels you can create will spin gracefully in the breeze. Or make a 'flower' pinwheel stake for a garden pot, even a pinwheel wreath. Not all will spin, but the beauty of what your family will create is sure to fill all with joyful memories. All supplies are included, one craft per person while supplies last. Admission: Museum Members and children 4 and under, free. Ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older \$5, \$6 for special events. Seniors, \$4. Military, active and retired, \$4. www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, 703-425-9225.

THURSDAY/JUNE 26
Bennie and the Jets: Tribute to Elton John. 7 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Do you remember when rock was young? Even if you don't, you will want to rock with this Elton John tribute. Greg Ransom is every bit as flamboyant, outrageous and entertaining as the Pinball Wizard himself.



An Independence Day Fireworks Celebration takes place on Saturday, June 28, 2025 at Langley High School in McLean.

SATURDAY/JUNE 28
Free Talk. 2 p.m. At Historic Blenheim, Fairfax. Explore "The Creation of Black Mistrust in Police: An Exploration of the White Policing of Black Bodies in Fairfax County"; "A slave caught without a pass." George Mason University graduate Andrew Snowman's ongoing scholarship explores the Black experience with white policing through the study of Fairfax County's Antebellum policing and its evolution through Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and the Civil Rights Movement. New scholarship from African American studies have provided tools that help revisit older examples of historical scholarship to help understand reasons for the current Black perspective toward police.

SATURDAY/JUNE 28
Independence Day Fireworks Celebration. 6:30-10 p.m. At Langley High School, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Come celebrate Independence Day with MCC! The whole family will enjoy music, food trucks, giveaways, and at dusk, a huge fireworks display. There is a limited amount of free onsite parking and additional free satellite parking with shuttle bus service (accessibility equipped). For details and information regarding directions, shuttle buses, weather alerts, satellite parking and site location, visit mcleancenter.org.

SATURDAY/JUNE 28
Workhouse Fireworks Festival. 4-10 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. The Workhouse Arts Center is thrilled to announce the return of Northern Virginia's largest and most anticipated summer celebration—the Workhouse Fireworks Festival. This free, family-friendly festival draws thousands annually for its high-energy live music, carnival games, interactive art zones, food trucks, and a dazzling fireworks finale that lights up the Northern Virginia sky. Headlining this year is local favorite The Outer Loop, bringing danceable hits across the decades, along with DJs, a new art-themed mini golf course, and even a dunk tank featuring the CEO!

SUNDAY/JUNE 29
Oakton-Vienna Veterinary Hospital Celebrates 50 Years. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At 320 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. Oakton-Vienna Veterinary Hospital is thrilled to announce its 50th

Business Anniversary celebration, a community event filled with fun, food, and festivities! This milestone event is their way of thanking the community for their unwavering support and trust throughout the years. Highlights of the celebration include raffle prizes generously donated by our partners, fun crafts and activities for the whole family, music, delicious food, as well as the support from other fantastic businesses in our community.

TYSONS CORNER CENTER SUMMER 2025 PROGRAMMING
May– August on PenFed Plaza
Fridays: Live music offers two distinct experiences:
6/27, 7/4, 7/11, 7/25, 8/8, 8/29 4-6 p.m.
Close out the work week with the laid-back vibes of live acoustic music—perfect for unwinding or singing along with friends. Grab dinner at a PenFed Plaza restaurant patio like Earl's, Shake Shack, or Barrel & Bushel and soak in the sounds of summer.

June 20, July 18, Aug 22 (rain dates: June 26th, July 24th, Aug 28th) 5-8 p.m.
Check out PenFed Plaza for an exciting new concept music series featuring The Flying Ivories, Dueling Pianos, a live, fun, interactive duo performance. From Billy Joel to Aretha Franklin, from Sinatra to Metallica, from Johnny Cash to Taylor Swift, we've got it covered. You control the set list, so no two shows are ever the same.

THURSDAYS: FAMILY GAME NIGHT
June 19, July 3, July 17, Aug 7, Aug 21
4-7 p.m.
Tap into your competitive side with a friendly game of cornhole or ping pong, all set to an upbeat soundtrack curated by a live deejay. Between matches, savor happy hour specials from Barrel & Bushel's summer menu just steps away. Game equipment is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

THURSDAY/JULY 3
A Tribute to The Man in Black – Johnny Folsom 4: Johnny Cash Tribute. 7 p.m. At McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Called "a peerless tribute band to the late, great Johnny Cash," the Johnny Folsom 4 approaches their tribute to Cash with reverence rather than imitation.

We can't think of a better way to spend Independence Day eve than a picnic with friends and neighbors and hits by the Man in Black.

THURSDAY/JULY 10
Everything Old is New – Good Co. 7 p.m. At McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Bringing the roaring '20s into the modern era! Good Co.'s "new-old" sound of electro swing combines the era of jitterbugging flappers and underground speakeasies with the funky beats and the electric sounds of today's dance music.

THURSDAY/JULY 10
The Hot Lanes Perform. 7-8:15 p.m. At Nottoway Park, Vienna. Free. Outdoors. Part of the Fairfax County Park Authority Concert Series. After a seven-year hiatus, they are back with the FCPA Concert Series and will perform one long set of originals and standards. Bring a chair and some hors d'oeuvres while you enjoy some solid music.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 16
Pathway's Artists Reception. 5:30-7:30 p.m. At Fairfax County Government Center, South Atrium, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Pathway Homes is hosting an Artist Reception as part of its 12th Annual Summer of the Arts Exhibit, where Pathway Homes' residents who have mental health challenges showcase and sell their own art, poetry, and crafts. Original art and artists will be on hand at this free reception that gives an opportunity to meet these talented people and celebrate their artistry. Pathway Homes is a nonprofit providing mental health services—starting with safe, stable housing—to individuals marginalized by poverty and inequity.

SATURDAY/JULY 26
Live Summer Concert. 7-9 p.m. At Tysons Corner Mall, McLean. Live on PenFed Plaza is DC's White Ford Bronco, a 90s cover band. This free outdoor concert, sponsored by Lava Technology Services is for all music lovers filled with throwback hits from the '90s. Attendees can expect high-energy, interactive fun at the LAVA section and have the opportunity to snap photos with LAVA's mascot, grab cool swag, and connect with their team.

SATURDAY/AUG. 16
Play Palooza – The Ultimate Pop-up Kids Festival. Noon to 4 p.m. At Springfield Plaza, 7206 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Includes rock wall climbing, a giant bounce house, inflatable obstacle course, truck touch zone, foam and confetti parties, face painting, toddler play zone, virtual gaming experiences and kid vs. parent challenges. In addition, there will be cotton candy and popcorn.

AUG. 23-24
Experience Your Korea. At Tysons Corner Mall, McLean. Experience Your Korea is a vibrant cultural roadshow coming to PenFed Plaza at Tysons Corner Center with the best trend driven Korean content from food and fashion to beauty and live cultural experiences. Attendees can immerse themselves in curated K-culture zones, discover Korea's hidden travel gems and iconic festivals, and enjoy a range of interactive programs.



Spring showers may bring costly home repairs

Spring rain can overwhelm clogged gutters, leading to overflow causing damage to your home.

CALL 1-877-614-6667

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Promo Code: 285

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BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 10

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@scmafc.org. The Center's website is www.scmafc.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/lombudsman/.

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.

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

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OPINION

Summer in Springfield

FROM PAGE 8

in Northern Virginia. Also at the Springfield Town center is the free Foodees Food and Culture Festival held each day between June 27-29 at various times, which include 40+ Food Trucks and vendors. More at www.foodeesfest.com/springfield.

Family Skate Night is back again this year at the Franconia Rec Center on June 21 from 6-9 p.m.. Learn more at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/reccenter/franconia. Additionally, the annual Franconia Nights concert series will begin on Wednesday, July 2, at the Franconia District Park. This free concert series features a variety of different musical acts, such as jazz, ska, blues, and cultural performances.

To round off the summer, the annual Springfield BridgeWalk located at the Amherst Avenue Veterans Bridge and American Legion Post 176 is scheduled this year for Saturday, Aug. 30. This event began in 2009 and celebrates and reaffirms the close connection between Springfield, veterans, military families, and nearby Fort Belvoir. The event is open to all and will feature music, games, refreshments, and vendors. Keep an eye out for more details coming soon!

This year we are also celebrating the 50th anniversary of Huntley Meadows Park, the 200th anniversary of Historic Huntley, and the 75th anniversary of the Fairfax County Park Authority. Celebrate by visiting Huntley Meadows or Historic Huntley any time from dawn to dusk or by signing up for special events like the early morning Birding for Beginners or a late evening Firefly Walk. More information at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows.

The new Franconia Governmental Center and Kingstowne Regional Library is expected to open to the public this Fall and will be located near the corner of Manchester



New Franconia Governmental Center and Kingstowne Regional Library.

Franconia District Park • Leonadus K. Plenty Amphitheater

6601 Telegraph Road, Alexandria • Wednesdays, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

JULY

- 2 Natyabhoomi School of Dance
- 9 The Nighthawks
- 16 Bela Dona Band
- 23 Fast Eddie & The Slowpokes
- 30 The Pietasters

AUGUST

- 6 The United States Army Blues Band
"Pershing's Own"
- 13 Junkyard Band
- 20 Speidel, Goodrich & Goggin

Franconia Nights concert series.

Bldv and Beulah Street. Several local government services will be co-located there, including the Franconia Police Station, the Kingstowne Regional Library, the Franconia Supervisor's office, the Franconia Museum, an Active Adult Center, and a new childcare center.

Lastly, the Fairfax County FY 2026 Budget begins July 1. This budget eliminates the previously proposed 1.5-cent real estate tax rate increase and instead reduces the rate by a quarter-cent from the current \$1.125 per \$100 of assessed value, delivering targeted relief to homeowners while investing in key services and retaining popular programs like the Middle School After School Program.

Additionally, the Board adopted a 4% Food and Beverage Tax. It is important to note that 34% of the revenue is estimated to come from the 267,000 daily visitors to Fairfax County, and 87.5% of the expected funds generated were used to lower the real estate tax rate. The Food and Beverage Tax will be effective Jan. 1, 2026.

Looking forward to future years, I believe the Board must invest more in the growth of our commercial sector, which in certain areas is still recovering from the impact of the pandemic and now faces challenges from tariffs and economic uncertainty. The Board should take additional steps to attract businesses in high-growth industries, such as artificial intelligence, aerospace and space technologies, and quantum computing. At the same time, we must continue to expand and support our startup ecosystem for existing businesses. This will ensure the future success of our commercial sector, build economic resiliency by broadening and growing our non-residential tax base, and reduce our overreliance on residential property taxes.

As always, please feel free to contact my office at Franconia@fairfaxcounty.gov or (703) 971-6262 if we can help you in any way. It is both an honor and a privilege for me to serve as your representative on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. I wish you and your families a safe and enjoyable summer.

Out of Balance



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

When I finally - recently, received my berry-blend-variety of the health supplement I've been taking twice daily for 16+ years, after what seemed like months in arrears - due to a difficult rollout of the company's new computer system, they said, it reinforced my thinking as to why I've felt off lately. It had nothing to do with my thyroid cancer - which seems amazingly in control at present, my marriage which goes along as it mostly has - for nearly 48 years, my family - which consists of my father-in-law and his wife living in New York City and a nephew and spouse and their children all living on Topeka, Ks. our dog, Burton, presently lying under my desk with his jaw on the top of my right foot, and our four cats - all of whom generally speaking other than Andrew (who's in remission from lymphoma after a year of chemotherapy) are progressing "within normal perimeters" to quote Data from "Star Trek: Next Generation," and lastly our 275-year-old home standing up very well against the test of time. No. Why I'm feeling unsettled is I've not seen any Balance of Nature commercials on television lately. For a while there (a month or two or three), at least on the television channels I regularly watch, Balance of Nature was inundating these airways with testimonials from any number and variety of satisfied customers.

I think I must have seen upwards of a dozen or so of these first-person testimonials, in a fairly condensed timeline, saying all the right things about this product and the effect it has had on their lives: amazing, wish they had started sooner, feel like their old selves again, et. cetera. If I hadn't already been taking a competitor's identical product, I would have at the very least, made an inquiry as to cost, frequency and benefits. However, being fully "ensconced" not in crushed velvet (to invoke George Costanza from "Seinfeld") but in a parallel pill universe, I, despite this wave of overwhelming television repetition, have stood pat. I mean, for all I know, my brand's multi-vitamin-triumvirate might very well be the thing which has sustained me all these post-characterized-as-terminal years.

As such, my interest has been solely in noticing that something (the Balance of Nature television commercials) that had been so much a part of my life for the last two to three months, even though it had no direct bearing on my cancer health, was missing. And I felt it deeply enough that I thought I'd mention it. Again, as a 16-plus-year cancer survivor still undergoing treatment and still being seen by my oncologist and still PET-scanned every four months, and lab tested every four weeks, this kind of information interests me. The cancer news/stories of survival I hear, from whomever/whatever source, the better/more positive I feel about my circumstances. Not that any of what I hear has to mirror my health situation. It doesn't. Any example of people/patients overcoming their symptoms and/or returning to a "normal" life, gives me hope and encourages me to "Keep on keeping on." I gain strength hearing other survival stories. It's like we're all one big team and when a teammate does well, we all do well.

In this Balance of Nature experience, familiarity has not bred contempt. It has bred a type of consistency of expectations. And any chink in your consistency sort of affects your wherewithal. I didn't need to see the commercial to gain any knowledge, but not seeing their commercials made me feel as if something of substance in my life was missing. And for a cancer patient, you can't afford to be missing anything of substance. Who's to say what's really keeping you alive? Medicine certainly but one's attitude is huge. And I don't need anything to weaken my resolve. Internally or externally.

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

COMMUNITY NEWS AT A GLANCE

Six-foot Alligator Seeks Lodging at Fairfax County Motel

Fairfax County Police Department reported Monday, June 16, that an alligator was loose outside a local motel shortly after midnight, according to an officer's bodyworn camera footage released on social media. The officer can be heard saying, "Damn, that is an alligator. ... There is actually an alligator outside of the hotel." Asked by dispatch, "How big is it?" the officer responds, "If I lay down next to it, it's approximately six feet."

The incident occurred at the Budget Host Alexandria motel on Richmond Highway after a caller reported seeing the reptile outside their room. Reportedly, its owner was transporting the gator to a zoo in North Carolina. The outcome proved happy for all. Due to Virginia law prohibiting the possession of exotic animals, the alligator and its owner were escorted out of Fairfax County by police.

— MERCIA HOBSON



BODYWORN CAMERA FOOTAGE @FAIRFAXCOUNTYPD

Alligator estimated to be six-feet long at a motel on Richmond Highway, viewed on police body camera.

PET SUPPLY DRIVE

We're experts at helping people find their dream homes—so this year, we're giving back by helping those who care for our furry friends until they find theirs.

Now through June 23, 2025, Long & Foster's Burke office is collecting pet supplies to benefit the Humane Society of Fairfax County. Drop off at our lobby.

Your generous contributions will help ensure local shelter pets feel safe, warm, and loved while they await adoption.

It's a pawstitive way to make a real difference—and we promise, it'll leave you feeling warm and fuzzy, too.



www.HSFC.org



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**9807 Spillway Ct.
Burke, VA
\$615,000**



**10072 Apple Wood Ct.
Burke, VA
\$649,500**



**6005 Makely Dr.
Fairfax Station, VA
\$1,149,900**



**8301 Crestridge Rd.
Fairfax Station, VA
\$895,000**



**7808 Devereux Manor Ct.
Fairfax Station, VA
\$1,699,999**



**6156 Pohick Station Dr.
Fairfax Station, VA
\$1,225,000**



**10438 Collingham Dr.
Fairfax, VA
\$839,500**



**7449 Maple Branch Rd.
Clifton, VA
\$850,000**



Call or scan for more information on our pet supply drive or visit <https://bit.ly/LNFCares>

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