

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

JUNE 19, 2025

Beltway Express Lanes Flawed, Speakers Contend

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Drivers will get “congestion relief,” faster trips and more transportation choices on the proposed I-495 Beltway express lanes between Springfield and Maryland Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) officials maintained at four public hearings held on June 2, 4, 9 and 11 where they presented their “preferred alternative,” adding two toll lanes in each direction.

At the June 9 hearing at West Potomac High School, of the 12 members of the public and three elected officials who spoke, only several people from Maryland appeared to fully support VDOT’s proposal.

VDOT’s Proposal

The I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study proposes several changes in the 11 miles from the Springfield interchange (I-95/I-395/I-495) to Maryland’s route 210 interchange: two new express lanes in each direction, bus service between Prince George’s County and Tysons and new bicycle and pedestrian connections linking Franconia, Alexandria, Huntington and Oxon Hill. Buses and carpools of three people could use the lanes for free. Others would pay a variable toll.

At a construction cost estimate of \$1.4 billion to \$1.6 billion, the express lanes would use what VDOT’s press release calls “unused space on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge previously designed for future HOV [high occupancy vehicles], bus transit or rail use, with a commitment by VDOT to convert necessary space to rail transit in the future, if and when the region is posed to expand rail in the corridor.”

VDOT narrowed down 10 initial options to two “build” alternatives, one with a single toll lane in each direction and one with two lanes, plus what they call a “no-build” alternative. The two-lane option is their preferred approach. Michelle Shropshire, VDOT’s Megaprojects Communications Manager, said that “this is the last section of the Capital Beltway in Virginia without toll lanes.”

Speakers Voice Concerns

Sen. Scott Surovell said that he regularly commutes on that stretch



Del. Paul Krizek spoke to the attendees.

More information

VDOT’s Preferred Alternative: <https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/495southside>. Submit comments until June 26, 2025 at the website and by mail to Michelle Shropshire, VDOT, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030.

of highway and that “expanding car access brings more cars,” noting that it does not make sense “to do the same thing over and over again.” His April 25 letter to VDOT is at scotturovell.org/495letter.

Del. Paul Krizek said that the proposal “does nothing to help us at Fort Hunt Road and U.S. 1, which is now awful.” He urged everyone to “make your voice heard. VDOT works for us.”

Larry Zaragoza from Mount Vernon requested more information on environmental impacts and echoed Krizek’s comments about backups on Fort Hunt Road, saying, “I fear this will make it worse.”

Doug Stewart with the Sierra Club also made a plea for “a more robust analysis,” and said his group’s “number one priority is climate change.”

“Hot lanes will bring more induced traffic and greenhouse gas emissions,” Stewart said.

Jim Klein, a bicyclist, asserted that people avoiding tolls “will congest the feeder roads.”

Mount Vernonite Cisco Minthorn argued, “Traffic is horrendous because we have not funded public transportation.” He believes that highway construction “should not enrich a private company,” referring to a possible public-private partnership that VDOT officials referenced. Currently, the Australian company Transurban builds and operates some Northern Virginia toll roads.

VDOT officials staffed posters spread around the room. Their analyses show that this part of the Beltway has approximately 200,000 vehicles per day, recurring traffic congestion and unreliable travel times that could more than double by the year 2050 without changes.

Under the plan, drivers could access the express lanes at Route



Doug Stewart with the Sierra Club’s Great Falls Group argued that more induced traffic will bring more greenhouse gas emissions.



Cisco Minthorn from Mount Vernon expressed concerns about involving private industry.

1 on ramps that would not enlarge the current interchange’s footprint, at South Van Dorn Street and at Maryland’s I-295. One panel shows “bicycle and pedestrian improvements” at Huntington Avenue and Route 1.

Another shows that five parcels, mostly in “light industrial areas,” east of South Van Dorn Street along Vine Street and Oakwood Road are “anticipated property displacements.”

Others Weighed In

“It’s no surprise that residents at recent public meetings have spoken out against VDOT’s widening and HOT lanes project,” said Bill Pugh with the Coalition for Smarter Growth in an email. “The expanded I-495 would generate higher traffic volumes, meaning more cars would likely clog connecting roads like Route 1 and Van Dorn Street and Maryland 210 as

SEE BELTWAY EXPRESS, PAGE 15

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

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ATLANTIC COAST
MORTGAGE

New Exhibit Honors Revolutionary War Soldiers

PHOTOS NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

Best way to mark the Army's 250th anniversary.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Yellowed by time and brown around the edges, the four- by-seven-inch booklet titled "Regulation for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States" helped transform the Continental Army into a strong military force, notes a placard in "Call to Arms, the Soldier and the Revolutionary War," the exhibit at the National Museum of the United States Army at Fort Belvoir that opened on June 7.

Historians credit the 1779 book, written by Maj. Gen. Friedrich Baron von Steuben, with instilling discipline and training in the colonies' inexperienced soldiers and call it a manual that led to today's Blue Book, also displayed, which is mandated reading for all soldiers entering training. Some units of today's U.S. Army trace their history to the Revolutionary War.

The 5,000-square-foot exhibit has 287 artifacts from the original colonies, England, France and Canada, with many displayed for the first time, including weaponry, uniforms and tools. A six-pound, 1777 Byers gun made in Philadelphia represents one of the first attempts at American-made artillery, as most was then captured or made in France.

Visitors learn that before the war, largely untrained, local militias were the colonies' primary defense. They had no uniforms and showed up "come as you are" carrying weapons like hunting guns and bayonets.

On June 14, 1775, the Continental Congress authorized the establishment of the Continental Army, hence, the exhibit's opening and celebrations this month. Leading up to that action, discontent had simmered as protests, embargoes of British goods and rebellions against British King George III.

Soldiers' Perspectives

Caps, hats, epaulets and other accoutrements help tell the story. George Washington's 1774 gilt brass gorget, engraved with the Virginia coat of arms, still shines as it no doubt did when he wore it



One of ten marked American-made bronze cannons known to exist, this gun was produced by James Byers in Philadelphia in 1777. The six-pounder was one of the most common field pieces used during the Revolutionary War, presented here on a reproduction oak carriage. On loan from the Society of the Cincinnati of the State of South Carolina.



A 1779 original copy of Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States endorsed by Congress which served as an instruction manual for the Continental Army, training Soldiers in the ways of combat and maneuvers.

Information

The museum will feature Call to Arms and related events until the summer of 2027. www.theNMUSA.org

around his neck. One of the rarest items, say curators, is the authentic Loyalist uniform of Jeremiah French who remained allied with the British crown. Other uniforms displayed are replicas.

Real show-stoppers are Washington's actual two gleaming silver-mounted holster pistols and a gold pocket watch he gave to the Frenchman, the Marquis de Lafayette as a thank you for his service at Yorktown.

Several displays are a tutorial in weaponry, like the flintlock blunderbuss, a Jaeger rifle, screw barrel pistols, muskets, scabbards,



During the Revolutionary War, many British grenadiers wore mitre caps. This early example from ca. 1745 belonged to an officer in the 35th Regiment of Foot. They were used to eliminate a grenadier's hat interfering with slinging his musket or throwing grenades.

swords and a Hessian cuttose. There's also 18-pound solid shot, grape shot and sliding bar shot. A real "prize" is the sword of British General Cornwallis, presented to Washington at the surrender at Yorktown, Virginia.

The origin of the advice to "keep your powder dry" comes to the fore with multiple powder horns. Soldiers stored their weapons' black powder in a cow horn with a stopper in the end to keep it dry. Many of the horns have delicately hand-carved, individualized designs.

SEE NEW EXHIBIT, PAGE 12

MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE ♦ JJUNE 19 - JULY 2, 2025 ♦ 3



Sylvanus Wood was one of the minutemen who stood at Lexington. Like many, he wore civilian clothing to the action. He recalled Capt. John Parker saying, "Every man of you who is equipped, follow me." Later that day, Wood became the first American to capture a British soldier.



The powder horn marked "Fort Ticonderoga," is part of a small collection of an enlisted Soldier's personal items, which were scarcely preserved. Pvt. Thomas Halsey was part of the regiment that accompanied Ethan Allen in the capture of Fort Ticonderoga.

Summer Palooza Attracted 2,000

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Where else can you pet a goat, “drive” a firetruck, give blood, lubricate garlic butter chicken with Bunnyman’s beer and get advice on assisted living all in the same place? The answer: Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck’s Summer Palooza,” where for four hours on June 7, 53 vendors, companies, community organizations and government agencies greeted locals at the Mount Vernon Government Center.

After a pounding, 20-minute gusher during the set-up, the skies settled down and the sun emerged for a bright but humid festival that attracted around 2,000 people.

“It was an awesome day filled with laughter, music, the wafting smells of barbeque grills, a petting zoo and true neighborly camaraderie,” said Storck. “I was thrilled so many ... joined us to celebrate community, as we combined our popular Ides of Bark Dog Festival, Environment Expo and Taste of Mount Vernon, with a kids zone, free food, live music and much more to create our first annual Summer Palooza.”

The band Riptide ripped off “Give Me that Old Time Rock and Roll” which “filled the soul” as delicious free food from Dishes of India and Honeygrow filled bellies. An unbroken, 20-person line of diners enjoyed free, grilled-on-the-spot burgers and hotdogs from South County Cares from 11 a.m. to the 3 p.m. end.

Many people delighted in the event’s stars, the alpine and Nubian goats and Suffolk sheep nonchalantly munching on the grass oblivious to all the hubbub. Children of all ages cooed and petted them, the Indian runner ducks and a black silver fox rabbit, animals from Fairfax County’s Frying Pan Park.

Wildlife Rescue League volunteers described rehabilitators’ work and counseled people on how to deal with sick and injured animals. Start at www.wildliferescueleague.org or 703-440-0800.

Fairfax County stormwater staffers helped youngsters make cadisfly cases and explained that these critters are indicators of a healthy stream.

Impressive Vehicles

Patient police officers described how they use cameras, computers and other equipment inside their cruisers, while letting youngsters sit in the driver’s seat and “steer.”



Supervisor Storck and his staff offered free reusable bags and other items at his welcome tent.



Vendors set up tables and tents at the Mount Vernon Government Center and greeted visitors.



The alpine goats were a hit.

Ditto county firefighters who explained their gear and tools. Some tots enjoyed climbing up on a big blue, immaculate, all-electric trash truck. Gerard Mobley said it takes four-to-six hours to charge its eight 1,000-pound batteries and once charged, the truck can operate for eight hours.

Another show-stopper was the gleaming, lemon-yellow, 2025 Corvette Stingray. With a pricetag of \$99,400, it gets 19 miles per gallon of gas offered Jonah Kemp who came from Herndon’s Pohanka dealership. Kemp did not seem perturbed when “Mustang Sal-

SEE SUMMER PALOOZA, PAGE 18



Youngsters loved the Indian runner ducks.

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Klodi Toto with ALine Architecture made kites.



Fairfax County police officers describe their vehicles and efforts to protect the community.



Jonah Kemp from the Herndon Pohanka dealership lured many envious fans to this 2025 Corvette Stingray.



ALEXANDRIA
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Congratulates the Class of 2025!



Back Row L-R: Arjun Srinivasan, William Street, Liam Holley, Bradley Kremer, Tomas Gil de Montes, Elijah Schneider, John King, Caleb Banks, Smith Spivey, Tag Schuerfeld
Third Row L-R: Lucy Thiede, Charlotte Burkholder, Sofia Reyes, Mae Schulz, Payton Rizzieri, Dakota Alvarado, Minnah Usman, Olivia Foster, Easa Mohammed
Second Row L-R: Cole Bowers, Fluorite Burson, Addison Cohn, Emily Tryder, Cate Ingols, Brynn Canel, Charles Tucker, Ben Johnson, Addison Jones
Front Row L-R: Sarah Danshaw, Claire Mikolop, Ashleigh Dunton, Grace Konrad, Parker Lady

Members of the Class of 2025 have been offered admission to and/or will be attending the following high schools:

Alexandria City High School, Bishop Ireton High School, Bishop O'Connell High School, Blue Ridge School, Bullis School, Christ Church Episcopal School (Greenville, SC), DeMatha Catholic High School, Episcopal High School, Flint Hill School, Foxcroft School, Georgetown Preparatory School, Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School, Gonzaga College High School, Maret School, McLean School, Sandy Spring Friends School, St. Albans School, St. John's College High School, St. John Paul the Great Catholic High School, St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School, Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart, The Field School, West Potomac High School, and Woodberry Forest School.

Alexandria Country Day School is a leading K-8, coed, independent school in the Del Ray community of Alexandria. We provide a challenging academic program; numerous arts and athletics offerings; a robust and integrated approach to social-emotional learning; a school-wide service learning program; and an innovative public speaking curriculum. To learn more, visit www.acdsnet.org or call 703-837-1303.

Hashmi, Jones Join Spanberger for November

Unofficial Democratic primary results tallied; trio set to face Sears, Reid and Miyares.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

The Virginia Department of Elections released its unofficial results of the Tuesday, June 17, Democratic Primary, last updated at 10:57 p.m. Democrats are running with the results. All election results are unofficial until certified. The Democratic nominee for Virginia lieutenant governor is Ghazala F. Hashmi and Jay C. Jones is the nominee for attorney general. Hashmi and Jones will join nominee Abigail Spanberger, the uncontested Democratic nominee for governor, in the pivotal November general election.

The primary results between the top three contenders for the Democratic nomination for lieutenant governor, Hashmi, Jones, and Aaron. R. Rouse, were close. In Fairfax County, the Virginia Department of Elections detailed 100 precincts reporting election statistics, with voter turnout at 9 percent, or 75,319 ballots cast out of 802,223 possible voters.

In the crowded field of six contenders for Virginia lieutenant governor, Hashmi declared victory with 131,367 votes (27.29 percent). Trailing closely behind, runner-up Levar Marcus Stoney tallied 127,331 votes (26.65 percent), and Rouse 124,991 votes (26.16 percent).

"I'm honored to be our Democratic nominee for Lieutenant Governor," Hashmi said on X at 10:10 p.m. Tuesday.

"Virginians made history. We didn't just win a primary; we sent a clear message that we won't be bullied, broken, or dragged backward by the chaos in Washington," Hashmi said.

John Reid, a conservative Richmond radio host, will be the Republican nominee for Virginia's lieutenant governorship, after running unopposed in Tuesday's statewide primary election.

With the tight results reported by the Virginia Department of Elections as of 10:57 p.m. on Tuesday between Hashmi and Stoney, 3,996 votes, the margin appears within 1 percent or less of the total votes for the top two candidates. Code of Virginia § 24.2-800 allows the defeated candidate to request a recount.

Stoney has indicated that he's not willing to concede the race for lieutenant governor. The Richmond Times-Dispatch reported that at his election watch party, Stoney said, "There's a lot of votes still left to count." He said they are "going to wait until all the votes are counted" before they say anything. Stoney served as mayor of Richmond, Virginia, from 2017 to 2025. He was in office until the end of 2024.

According to the VA Department of Elections, provisional and post-election incoming ballots are "Not Reported" yet.

In the race for the Democratic nomination

tion for Virginia attorney general, Jerrauld C. "Jay" Jones, a former state delegate from Norfolk, received 242,318 votes, 50.94 percent. His opponent, Shannon L. Taylor, received 233,380 votes, or 49.06 percent.

Jones will face off against Republican Attorney General Jason Myers in November. "The most powerful corporations and special interests believe that Virginia's government should be beholden to them. They will spend more trying to beat us in November by funding Donald Trump's

The November election is guaranteed to produce the first female governor of Virginia.



SCREENSHOT VIRGINIA DEMOCRATS @VADEMOCRATS

From left, the 2025 Virginia Democratic nominees: Jay Jones, Abigail Spanberger, and Ghazala Hashmi, for Attorney General, Governor and Lt. Governor.

2025 June Democratic Primary

June 17, 2025

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS

Last Updated Tuesday, June 17, 2025, 10:26:28 PM
This page auto-refreshes and is updated in real-time.

Select Language

Voters

Virginia > FAIRFAX COUNTY

ELECTION REPORTING STATUS

INCOMING BALLOTS

Early Voting

Fully Reported

Election Day

Fully Reported

Mailed Absentee

Election Night Complete

Provisional

Not Reported

Post-Election

Not Reported

PRECINCTS REPORTING

100%

Fully Reported

264

View status for each precinct

ELECTION STATISTICS

VOTER TURNOUT

9%

Ballots Cast

75,319

Registered Voters

802,223

Because voters in Virginia do not register by party affiliation, this percentage reflects all registered voters and not just likely Democratic voters, making turnout appear even lower than it actually was.

pro-bono attorney, Jason Miyares. And we are ready for that fight because it's not their government, it's yours. As your next Attorney General, I will return the power back to you. To the people of Virginia," Jones said.

The Democratic nominee trio, Hashmi, Jones, and Spanberger, will compete for the top three positions in the Virginia government, which hold significant roles and constitutional importance. Spanberger will face off against Republican Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears.

One history-making change is in the cards, with Spanberger (D) and Winsome Earle-Sears (R) on the ballot for governor, the results of the November election will produce the first female governor of Virginia.



PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME

Poll volunteers report slow voting traffic on June 17, as many Democrat primary voters took advantage of early voting days. Lorton Community Center

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



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 College of Charleston ♦ College of William & Mary (9) ♦ College of Wooster ♦ Colorado College ♦ Connecticut College ♦ Cornell University (2)
 Dalhousie University ♦ Denison University ♦ Dickinson College ♦ Duke University ♦ Elon University ♦ Emory University ♦ Fairfield University (2)
 Florida A&M University ♦ Forest University ♦ Franklin & Marshall College (2) ♦ George Mason University (3) ♦ Georgetown University ♦ Gettysburg College
 Grinnell College ♦ Hampden-Sydney College ♦ Hampton University ♦ High Point University ♦ James Madison University (3) ♦ Johns Hopkins University
 Lehigh University ♦ Loyola University (MD) ♦ Morehouse College ♦ Northeastern University (2) ♦ Purdue University ♦ Rhode Island College
 Rhodes College ♦ Rochester Institute of Technology ♦ Rutgers University ♦ Southern Methodist University ♦ Syracuse University (2) ♦ Temple University
 The George Washington University ♦ The Ohio State University (2) ♦ Trinity College (CT) ♦ Trinity College Dublin ♦ Tulane University
 United States Naval Academy ♦ University of Maryland—Baltimore County ♦ University of Alabama ♦ University of Arizona
 University of California—Los Angeles ♦ University of Chicago ♦ University of Colorado—Boulder ♦ University of Georgia (3)
 University of Maryland—College Park (3) ♦ University of Notre Dame ♦ University of Pittsburgh (3) ♦ University of Richmond
 University of South Carolina ♦ University of Tennessee ♦ University of Utah ♦ University of Virginia (5) ♦ University of Wisconsin—Madison (2)
 Ursinus College ♦ Virginia Tech (2) ♦ Wake Forest University (3) ♦ Wesleyan University ♦ Worcester Polytechnic Institute (2)

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 body-worn 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.



BODYWORN CAMERA FOOTAGE @FAIRFAXCOUNTYPD

— MERCIA HOBSON

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

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.

STEM Professionals Needed.

Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or donaldrea@aol.com.

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2024 PRESIDENTS AWARD

Arrest in Fatal Stabbing in Groveton

Detectives from FCPS Major Crimes Bureau arrested a man for a fatal stabbing that happened on June 10 in Groveton.

Yesterday, Metro Transit Police Department officers located and detained the suspect at the Huntington Metro Station. Officers from our Mount Vernon District responded and took Robert Reed, 56, of no fixed address, into custody.

Through their investigation, detectives linked Reed to the fatal stabbing where an altercation occurred between the suspect and the victim at a bus stop on June 10 in Groveton.

Reed was transported to the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center. He was charged with 2nd Degree Murder and two counts of Possession with Intent to Distribute Schedule I/II Drugs. He is being held on no bond.

Coordination and assistance from Metro Transit Police Department was important throughout this investigation.

June 10 at 1:55 p.m., officers responded to Richmond Highway and North Kings Highway in Groveton for a stabbing. Officers arrived on scene and located an adult male in the road with multiple stab wounds to the upper body. Officers began performing life-saving measures until relieved by fire and rescue personnel. Marvin Waters, 32, of no fixed address, was transported to a local hospital in life-threatening condition, where he was later pronounced deceased. The suspect left the scene before officers arrived.

Detectives preliminarily believe an altercation occurred between the suspect and the victim at a bus stop, and that this was an isolated incident.

Detectives are asking anyone with information regarding this incident to call our Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 2. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone – 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477)

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 8

ALIVE! offers numerous programs that aid low-income families in Alexandria that rely on volunteers: monthly food distributions, furniture, houseware and emergency food deliveries, and community food drives. Individuals, families and groups are encouraged to participate. Students can earn community

service hours by participating. Visit www.alive-inc.org/volunteer.htm or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@alive-inc.org.

Volunteer Drivers Needed. Drivers needed by the American Cancer Society to take cancer patients to treatment in Northern Virginia. To volunteer, call 1-800-227-2345 or go to cancer.org/drive.

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PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Park Authority Director Jai Cole and Supervisors Dan Storck were ready to cut the ribbon.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

The officials cheered the reopening: Chris Herrington, Josh Colman, Jai Cole, Supervisor Dan Storck and Sara Baldwin.



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

Mount Vernon Rec Center New Indoor Climbing Wall, opening June 23rd.

Expanded Mount Vernon Recreation Center Re-opens

Was Closed for a 30-month Renovation.

By GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Though they billed it as a “soft opening,” the renovated, 139,000-square-foot Mount Vernon Recreation Center drew many admiring oohs and ahs on June 9 when local officials and others cut a red ribbon at its re-opening.

When the \$41 million, 75,000-square-foot expansion is fully completed, the center will

have two National Hockey League-sized ice rinks, a fitness area, an elevated indoor track, an Olympic-size swimming pool, a climbing wall and multi-purpose rooms.

The Rec Center closed in December 2022 for the redo. “In some ways it seems like we’ve waited forever to re-open, but it is delightful that we are here now,” said Linwood Gorham, Mount Vernon’s representative on the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) Board of Directors.

A PLACE TO GET HEALTHY

FCPA Executive Director Jai Cole said, “The majority of our recreation centers were built 40 years ago. We want to provide the public phenomenal places to get healthy, to learn to swim and meet others.”

Local resident Aimee Spencer said she was “ecstatic” about the opening because she’s a strong supporter of the Northern Virginia Ice Dogs, a youth hockey group. For eight years, she has promoted “hockey for everyone.” Now, hockey teams will have a place to practice and have competitive games, she said.

Cole commented, “This is the only public ice skating rink in the county, the only place where the Ice Dogs can play. Sports like hockey are very expensive. This center can make ice skating and hockey more affordable to people and be introduced to more people, to sports that otherwise may not be very available.”

The center offers skate rentals and sharpening services, pub-

lic skating sessions and skating lessons. Describing the climbing wall, a county brochure says, “This two-story artificial rock wall features auto-belays as well as boulder areas for additional challenge.”

Only two hours after its 7 a.m. opening to the public, a few people were pedaling bikes and using aerobic and resistance machines in the fitness center.

The Rec Center also offers yoga, Pilates and a weight room.

Summer camp programs include arts and crafts, performing arts, sports and other activities.

The center was built in 1979 with the pool added in 1983. The renovation upgraded the mechanical systems and introduced more natural light.

OUTSIDE

The center’s grounds got a remake too.

The park authority planted American holly, Eastern red cedar, southern magnolia, red maple, swamp white oak, pinxterbloom, azalea, red chokeberry and arrowwood viburnum. All are indigenous to Fairfax County, Daidria Grayson, FCPA’s Communications Division Director, reported, except the southern magnolia which has been naturalized in Virginia. “None have invasive tendencies, as planting invasive species is prohibited.” All were approved by the county’s Land Development Services and Urban Forester.

According to Grayson, swimming pool water will be released into the sanitary sewer system, not

the storm sewer system, so the pool water won’t go into local streams. “Stormwater management is provided via two underground tanks,” she said. “Stormwater (rain) is collected with various storm inlets and directed to the underground tanks, which release the water slowly into an existing storm sewer system,” she said. “The slow release is designed to eliminate a downstream surge that might contribute to erosion.”

STAGGERED OPENING, INFORMATION

The various parts will open gradually, with summer camps beginning on June 16 and the climbing wall and drop-in childcare for patrons, June 23.

“This new prominent landmark

is unparalleled in the County, with a dramatically enhanced entrance, exterior façade and lighting, health, fitness and fun,” said Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck. “We look forward to the rest of the amenities opening throughout the summer and a community grand opening celebration in August.”

Managers will open the revamped pool and host a grand re-opening in late summer. Sands Smith is the center’s manager.

FCPA is offering guided tours for groups of 12 at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. until June 20 and 25 percent off memberships to new members until Aug. 31, which also grants access to all Park Authority Rec Centers. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/reccenter/mount-vernon>.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Cindy Fortuno with the County Park Authority prepared the bow for the ribbon cutting.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

This artwork greets visitors inside.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

A patron was working out only two hours after the center opened.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Clarence Monteiro demonstrated how to use some of the fitness equipment.



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	Route No.	Route No.	Route Name	Crossing	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	MAGGOODEE 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.

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New Exhibit Honors Revolutionary War Soldiers

FROM PAGE 3

When on the march, soldiers carried 45 to 60 pounds of gear, like a musket, powder horn, bayonet, knapsack, haversack and blanket. One exhibit features a wooden canteen, wooden snuff box and a swigler for their rum ration. There're also tools including a knife, axe and digging bar.

Other highlights include the original flag of the 1st Rhode Island Regiment carried by the Army's first African American soldiers and the 1776 Declaration of War.

A muster roll display informs visitors that in 1776 General Washington handpicked some men to be his personal bodyguards, called the Life Guard, men known for their "sobriety, honesty and good behavior" who protected his letters and the Army's money. They could be considered precursors to the original Secret Service, the display notes.

Seven cast figures offer the personal perspectives of real individuals in the war, including Daniel Nimham, the last chief of the Wappinger People, who fought with the patriots in Massachusetts, and

Anna Maria Lane, one of the few women known to have fought in the war.

In up-close looks at war via videos, museum-goers can go back to the 1775 Battle of Bunker Hill, an intense scene of hand-to-hand fighting; the 1776 New York-New Jersey campaigns; and key battles in the South, including Britain's 1780 victory, the Fall of Charleston, South Carolina.

The three-week Siege of Yorktown comes to life, where in 1781 General Washington, having marched soldiers 680 miles from New York to Yorktown, led a "text-book operation" and Cornwallis surrendered. "We are at the end of our tether. Now or never our deliverance must come," Washington wrote.

The rebellion that became a full-scale war, a revolution that changed the world, officially ended in 1783 with the Treaty of Paris.

Information

www.theNMUSA.org

The museum will feature Call to Arms and related events until the summer of 2027.

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



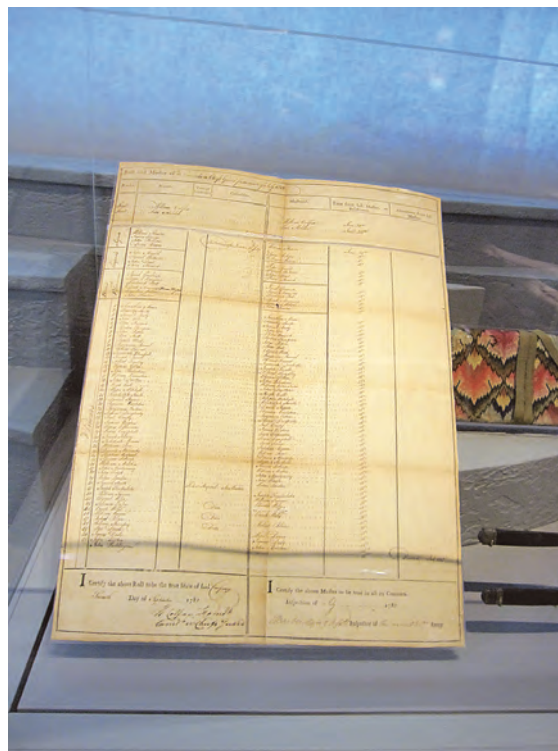
Travis Shaw portrays a Virginia militiaman, 1775, with a fowler, a hunting gun, and a bayonet.



Daniel Boling, a hornsmith, demonstrates horn carving at the museum.



A diorama of the Siege of Yorktown.



George Washington's muster roll for the Life Guard, his personal bodyguards.



William Seymour, a soldier, Delaware Regiment, fought in many southern battles.



The exhibit's sign.



The powder horn of John Fairbanks, evidence that his son successfully used to show that his father had served. The family received a pension of \$36.54 per year.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

West Potomac Wolverines lacrosse team in the school stadium.

West Potomac Wolverines Win State's Lacrosse Title

Lacrosse becoming a thing at one Mount Vernon high school.

By Mike Salmon
The Gazette

The Wolverines at West Potomac High School made their own history recently by beating the Cosby Titans in the Virginia Class 6 Championship lacrosse game on Saturday, June 14, giving West Potomac their first championship since 1990.

Jake Benningfield, the team captain, was proud of their teamwork. Out on the field last Saturday in Richmond, the excitement

was building as they took the lead early but the Titans came back. The last second, game winning goal was something they'll remember for years. "At the end we came back together and held out for the win," he said.

Coach John Stamos was proud of his team that came off a local victory over Robinson High School to advance to the championship game. They did it all following a program motto of REPS - "Re-



spect + Effort = Performance Success."

"They came together improving their teamwork and resiliency throughout the season all the way to the Championship," he said, crediting their defensive coordinator coach John Falvey and their offensive coordinator coach Peter Stamos," he said. Peter is the eldest son of Coach John Stamos.

The previous game against Fairfax County powerhouse Robinson High School was

a good memory for Benningfield too. "To beat them on their home turf was a great moment," he said. Next fall, Benningfield is heading to University of South Carolina where he plans on playing lacrosse too.

Lacrosse seems a little more like a college sport but in Fairfax County it ranks up there with football, basketball and baseball in the list of high school sports. Twenty-five high schools have a lacrosse team. In 2024, Robinson won the Class 6 Lacrosse Championship and Madison High School won it in 2023.

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‘No Kings’ Thousands turn out locally as part of nationwide protest.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Thousands of people flooded Market Square in Old Town as part of the “No Kings” protests that took place across the country June 14.

Hundreds of signs and banners were on display as the crowd cheered speakers that included U.S. Rep. Don Beyer, Mayor Alyia Gaskins, Virginia State Senator Adam Ebbin, Virginia House of Delegates representative Charniele Herring and Alexandria Commonwealth’s Attorney Bryan Porter.

“Go ahead, have your parade and your pomp and circumstance. We don’t care,” said Alexandria Mayor Alyia Gaskins. “We don’t pay attention to it, because at the end of the day, we know we are stronger than that.”

The local event was organized by the Alexandria Democratic Committee as part of the national No Kings coalition, which said that millions of people demonstrated in over 1,500 cities and towns across the country. The coordinated effort was intended to coincide with the Washington D.C. festivities celebrating the 250th birthday of the United States Army.

“I want to bring a message of hope, a message of strength, of resilience and of the millions of ways we are fighting back each and every day,” Beyer said in his remarks. “We are not helpless. We love our country. We love and celebrate the rule of law. We will resist. We will prevail.”

Ebbin, the only Jewish person to speak at the event, was heckled by a pro-Palestinian protestor.

“I couldn’t really hear what was being said but it’s sad that it happened,” Ebbin said. “We’re here to support everyone’s right to speak even if we disagree with each other. We’re living in a democracy and should let people be heard.”

Local attendees turned out to have their voices heard.

“We need to continue raising our voices against all the crazy things happening in our government,” said Taki Sidley. “We need a change as soon as possible.”

Said Joseph Geulah, “What is really driving me out here is seeing all the ICE raids, picking up our neighbors, working mothers, fathers, kids. No one is being spared. It’s like the Gestapo in our communities.”

Alexandria resident John Killeen added, “We are the home of George Washington. We don’t believe in kings.”



Mayor Alyia Gaskins, center, stands with other elected officials prior to speaking at the No Kings rally June 14 at Market Square.



Hundreds turned out holding signs during the No Kings rally June 14 in Market Square.



U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8) speaks at the No Kings rally June 14 at Market Square.



A crowd gathered in Market Square listens to remarks from speakers during the June 14 No Kings rally.



A man holds a sign during the No Kings rally June 14 at Market Square.



A rally attendee June 14 at Market Square.



Alexandria’s Commonwealth’s Attorney Bryan Porter speaks at the No Kings rally June 14 at Market Square.

Advocates Urge Strengthening Fort Belvoir Stormwater Permit

Permit could help monitor, control PFAS contaminants

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Fort Belvoir should monitor and control PFAS chemicals in stormwater discharges into area waterways, multiple speakers argued at a June 2 public hearing held by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) at the Sherwood Regional Library.

The 8,700-acre military installation in southeastern Fairfax County applied for a permit to “allow the release of industrial stormwater into several water bodies in Fairfax County.” The DEQ draft permit indicates that stormwater releases currently go into Accotink Creek, Accotink Bay, Gunston Cove, Dogue Creek and Mason Run, tributaries of the Potomac River.

DEQ representative Sarah Sivers told the 30 attendees that Belvoir has seven stormwater outfalls that release “industrial stormwater” from the “airfield, a hazardous waste storage facility, operations and maintenance, marinas and a contractor laydown area.”

She cited several actions by the state legislature, including 2024 legislation requiring PFAS source assessments for drinking water systems. She said, “Virginia will continue to follow the science and follow applicable federal and state requirements.”

PFAS Chemicals

PFAS stands for perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl substances, a group of over 10,000 chemicals in use since 1940. Long-lasting, (hence sometimes called forever chemicals) they are components of fire-fighting foam and in everyday products like non-stick cookware, clothes, carpets and personal care products. Many industries, including automotive, construction and electronics, use them.

Belvoir Statement

Representing the Army, Richard Santos, Chief of the Environmental Division of Directorate of Public Works, said that Belvoir



DEQ's Sarah Sivers gave background. Each speaker was limited to three minutes.

would comply with all requirements of DEQ, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Defense.

When this writer asked Belvoir representatives if the installation is releasing PFAS chemicals, they provided a 2022, 164-page “preliminary assessment/site inspection report” by Arcadis. Among other findings, the report says, “... the use, storage and/or disposal of aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) is the most prevalent potential source of PFAS chemicals at DoD facilities.”

Based on analyzing 17 Belvoir sites, the report's summary concludes that 12 sites had “PFOS, PFOA and/or PFBS present at concentrations greater than the risk-based screening levels ...” and that “the majority of [Office of the Secretary of Defense] risk screening level exceedances ... can be attributed to historical and present fire station management and firefighter training activity, as well as fire truck maintenance activities.” We encourage readers to read the report at https://aec.army.mil/Portals/115/PFAS/2022_Final_Fort_Belvoir_PFAS_PA_SI_Report_Volume_I_Compressed.pdf?ver=mhQpHyJiIob_3KEfbQnT-gw%3d%3d.

Releases Need Attention

David Sligh with Wild Virginia expressed disappointment that DEQ had “failed in its duty to assess whether discharge from Fort Belvoir would cause hazards to people or



Dean Naujoks, Potomac Riverkeeper and others, argued for stronger PFAS monitoring and control requirements.

wildlife.” He asserted that any “significant amounts of PFAS chemicals” released into waterways “violate water quality standards,” which a more thorough analysis would show.

Mark Sabath, an attorney with the Southern Environmental Law Center, argued for monitoring and technology-based effluent limits. He cited the 2022 Army study and DEQ water sampling that confirmed the presence of PFAS chemicals in groundwater on the base and in Accotink Creek, just downstream of the base's airfields and maintained that “it is reasonable to assume that Fort Belvoir does, in fact, discharge PFAS in its stormwater.” He cited as possible sources firefighting foam, metal-plating operations and pesticide management areas.

Potomac Riverkeeper Dean Naujoks urged that DEQ include “technology-based effluent limits in the permit” or otherwise deny the permit. Virginia has the authority to better control these pollutants, he argued, and could issue fish consumption advisories as Maryland does, but “DEQ continues to sit on its hands,” he charged. The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations approved a resolution in May also urging DEQ to require PFAS discharge limits.

Dr. Laura Anderko, co-author of a 2022 National Academies of Sciences PFAS report, opposed the draft permit based on the likelihood of increased health risks, recommending stronger monitoring and limits on PFAS

discharges. A registered nurse, she described potential adverse human health effects, such as high blood pressure in women, high cholesterol, kidney and testicular cancer and impacts to the developing fetus.

She also referred to Fairfax Water's 2024 report which stated, “For the Griffith Water Treatment Plant, which treats water from the Occoquan Reservoir, the running annual average for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) is slightly above the MCL [EPA's maximum contaminant level] of 4.0 parts per trillion. For all other regulated PFAS compounds in both sources results are below the MCLs.”

“Birds are an early warning system for environmental health,” commented Amanda Robinson with the Northern Virginia Bird Alliance, noting that Accotink Creek is “critical bird habitat” that attracts waterfowl like wood ducks and mergansers. She too urged stronger monitoring.

Sen. Scott Surovell (D-34) on May 27 sent DEQ a letter asserting that “these harmful substances [PFAS] have been acknowledged by the installation to exist in groundwater, surface water and soil on the base.” Urging monitoring and control requirements and other steps, he wrote, “The communities I represent deserve the strongest possible environmental protections, particularly when dealing with persistent contaminants like PFAS that can remain in the environment and human body for decades. Military installations have a responsibility to be good environmental stewards, and our regulatory agencies must ensure they meet the highest standards.”

DEQ will accept written comments until June 18, 2025, at NRO.VPDESPermits@deq.virginia.gov, will then respond to public comments and hold a second hearing in August or September before making a decision.

Bringing it home at the hearing, Rene Grebe, Nature Forward, testified, “We all live downstream from something.”

Information

DEQ Announcement, <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=41701>

PFAS Basics, <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>
Fairfax Water, 2024 Water Quality Report, [https://www.fairfaxwater.org/sites/default/files/ccr/CCR%202024%20\(3\).pdf](https://www.fairfaxwater.org/sites/default/files/ccr/CCR%202024%20(3).pdf)

Beltway Express Lanes Flawed, Speakers Contend

FROM PAGE 1

they access I-495. However, VDOT won't do traffic analysis on connecting roads anytime soon. The project also puts future rail on the bridge at risk.” And he predicted “impacts to streams and significant tree clearing.”

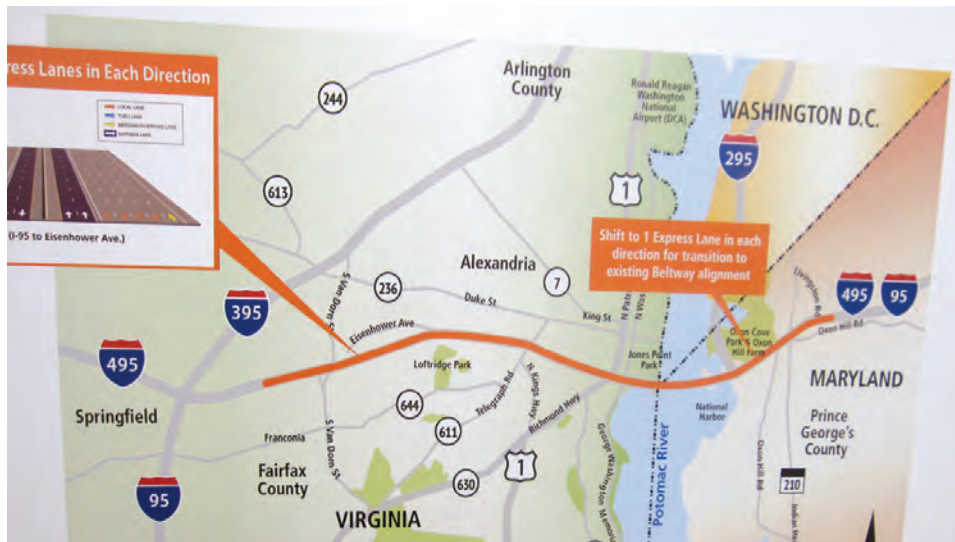
According to media reports, Alexandria Mayor Alyia Gaskins is urging VDOT to delay the plan and to conduct a noise, traffic and air quality analysis and wrote that “a 40% expansion of highway capacity will bring substantial consequences to our local neighborhoods.”

Danny Allman, spokesperson for the Maryland Department of Transportation emailed, “MDOT shares the concerns of Prince George's County and the communities impacted by the project regarding three key policy issues: commitments to near-term transit enhancements, preserving the

opportunity for future Metrorail expansion and minimizing impacts on adjacent local roadways. The Department looks forward to working with stakeholders on both sides of the river to understand how these issues will be addressed and to support solutions that reflect the region's long-term transportation goals.”

VDOT will conduct more analyses and hold another public hearing on the full environmental assessment later this year. Making a final decision requires multiple steps described on their website, with an anticipated federal decision in “early 2026.”

At the June 9 hearing, Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck said he “is still trying to understand how this will beneficially affect the Mount Vernon district. It is not evident at this time.” He urged the public to speak up.



VDOT's poster showing the 11 miles under consideration for express lanes.

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

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, Bunnyman 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.

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 demonstrates 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 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 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!



Lusk

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 Blvd 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

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ENTERTAINMENT



Grab a Slice of History on Friday, June 20, 2025 at Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House in Alexandria.



Visit Wright at Twilight on Friday, June 27, 2025 at Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House in Alexandria.

NOW THRU JUNE 29

Embodied Transformations Exhibit. At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. Through significantly different media — Elsabe Dixon with insect-made materials including silk and beeswax, and Sharon Fishel with richly layered oil paintings — these artists give form to the ephemeral nature of insect and botanic lifecycles in the world around us. Artist's Talk on Sunday, June 29, at 2 p.m.

ONGOING

Revolutionary War Exhibit. At the National Museum of the U.S. Army, Alexandria. The National Museum of the United States Army has opened a special exhibition, Call To Arms: The Soldier and the Revolutionary War. The two-year exhibition commemorates this year's 250th Birthday of the U.S. Army and next year's 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. This 5,000 square-foot exhibition features a rare collection, specially curated by the Museum, that includes Revolutionary War artifacts from the original colonies, England, France and Canada. Among the exhibit's highlights are a pair of General George Washington's pistols, the original flag of the 1st Rhode Island Regiment carried by the Army's first African American Soldiers, and a complete Loyalist uniform—one of the rarest items in the collection. The sword of British General Charles Lord Cornwallis, presented to Washington at the surrender at Yorktown, Virginia, will also be displayed for a limited time.

MAY 30 TO JUNE 29

"Sing Me a Sea Shanty" Art Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. The exhibit explores enchanting artworks inspired by the nautical spirit. Exhibit reception on Friday, June 6, 7-9 p.m. to meet the curators and artists. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits.

JUNE 1 TO AUG. 31

Creative Summer Programs is a series of workshops exploring the arts. Learn



techniques in collage, drawing, mixed media, photography, bead embroidery, and more from local artists. Delve into creative exploration solo or with friends. For children and/or adults, free and paid programs are offered. Sign up for what inspires you! Held at Del Ray Artisans (2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA) unless noted. Details: DelRayArtisans.org/creative-summer

JUNE 2-29

"Vibrancy Unleashed" Exhibit. At Van Landingham Gallery, Torpedo Factory, Alexandria. The Torpedo Factory Artists' Association presents a group exhibition that showcases a stunning array of jewelry, paintings, photography, mixed media work, hand pulled prints, and more during the month of June.

Participating Artists:

Jordana Adelman, Ann Barbieri, Victoria Barnes, Lynn Chadwick, Andrea Cybyk, Eleftheria Easley, Sheila Flanders, Samuel Gyulnazarian, Camille Kouyoumdjian, Michal Mitak

Mahgerefteh, Anna Nazaretz Radjou, Rebecca McNeely, Diana Papazian, Catherine Rubin*, Kellie Sansone*, Karine Sapondjian, Vita Sims*, Antonio Scott, Samantha L. Shelton, Pratibha Srinivasan, Hanin Tawfiq, Ana Tkabladze, Dixon Vergaray, Estelle Vernon, Karen Waltermire, Dina Wise, Guido R. Zanni
Visit <https://torpedofactory.org/todays-hours/>

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATIONS

* On June 19, enjoy traditional African American storytelling and songs reflecting the journey toward freedom at the Washington Revels Jubilee Voices Juneteenth Concert at Market Square then head to Juneteenth Celebration @ The Athenaeum to discover the history of Juneteenth through hands-on activities, art, and poetry readings at the.

Keep the celebration going on June 21 and celebrate African American heritage through music, storytelling, food, and family fun at the Juneteenth Festival at the Charles Hous-



The Potomac Valley Watercolorists "The Painted Garden" 2025 Art Exhibition and Sale takes place June 29 to Aug. 17, 2025 at Green Springs Gardens.

ton Recreation Center.
Tours and Museums

- Reserve your spot for Specialty Tours: Tell Me Your Name at Carlyle House on June 19, focusing on the experiences of the enslaved community at Carlyle House and his plantations.
- Head to Mount Vernon between June 19-21 to take part in Freedom Before Emancipation: Family Day for Juneteenth, remembering how enslaved people resisted enslavement and sought freedom before the Emancipation Proclamation.
- Ride through 90 mins of powerful stories on board an Alexandria Black History Bus Tour from Manumission Tour Company on June 21.

Black-Owned Businesses

- 1799 Prime Steak and Seafood: Dine at this steakhouse, owned by a member of one of the oldest documented African American families.
- Café du Soleil: Relax and enjoy coffee, pastries

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 19

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NEWS

Summer Palooza

FROM PAGE 4

ly” rang out from Riptide’s stage.

Don Cammarata from Re-world touted the Lorton-area, waste-to-energy plant which he said avoids two million tons of greenhouse gases because they burn non-recyclable trash and avoid the landfill where decomposing garbage can emit methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

Local Business Offer Varied Services

There was plenty of practical help around. Representatives from Trademasters, a 30-year Lorton business, touted their home maintenance services, like roofing, heating and air conditioning.

As they crafted kites, Anial Angeli and Klodi Toto discussed how their work provides “delight for all senses.”

At the Let’s Talk Medicare station, Paul Philip answered Medicare questions. Bennett Holfgolt with Mobility City explained that his company repairs mobility devices like wheelchairs and walkers which is cheaper than buying new ones. Sean Maxwell with Assisted Living Locators offered help choosing housing options. Tom Curcio promoted his legal services and gave out free bicycle helmets.

Evan Kaufman, Executive Director of the Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation (SFDC) remarked, “SFDC was a partner and set up the kids zone area complete with several bounce houses, arts and crafts activities and games. We are lucky to have great volunteers like Anila Angeli from ALine Architecture, as well as community advocate Cathy Hosek, who both stepped up to implement a fantastic free kids arts and crafts area, which fits in line with our mission of bringing more arts to the community. Supervisor Storck and his staff did a fantastic job of putting on an event that will likely become a signature yearly event for the community in the future.”

Lisa Dunlop brought her energetic five-year-old to romp in the bounce houses. Sandy Collins with the Friends of Accotink Creek was there to “get people involved and interested in the environment and understand what they can do. “You do it where you are,” she said.

From the stage, Riptide blasted out all-time favorites like “All Shook Up” (No one except bouncing kids seemed shook up.) and “Takin’ Care of Business.” Everyone took care of all kinds of business — meeting, musing, munching, mobilizing, meandering and more.

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 17

and classic French-style dishes at two Old Town locations.

· AR Workshop: This DIY craft studio offers hands-on classes for creating custom home décor.

THURSDAY/JUNE 19

Juneteenth at The Athenaeum.

1 p.m. Join them for this year's Juneteenth celebration with poet, author, and the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association Poet in Residence, KaNikki Jakarta. The event will be held in the gallery of the Athenaeum. Discover the history of Juneteenth through hands-on activities, art, and poetry readings.

FRIDAY/JUNE 20

Civics Pizza Party at Pope-Leighey House.

5:30-8 p.m. Celebrate Civics Season with (free!) pizza and history! Take a self-guided tour and engage in thoughtful reflection and dialogue about our shared past and its connection to today's movements for justice. Visitors will also have the opportunity to view the new exhibit "Saving Pope-Leighey House: How Marjorie Leighey Rescued Her Frank Lloyd Wright Home."

FRIDAY/JUNE 20

Slice of History.

5:30-8 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Hwy., Alexandria. Celebrate #Civics-Season with (free!) pizza and history! Take a self-guided tour of Woodlawn and learn about the site's profound legacy of transformation.

FRIDAY/JUNE 27

Wright at Twilight.

6:30-9:30 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Enjoy the iconic Pope-Leighey House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Sit back with complimentary snacks and a glass of wine, and watch the changing light bring out the architectural details. Visit the website: <https://www.woodlawnpopeleighey.org/upcomingevents>

SUNDAY/JUNE 29

Out and About in Old Town:

Uncovering LGBTQ+ History in Alexandria

A Behind-the-Scenes Walking Tour. 2 p.m. Starting at the Torpedo Factory Art Center. The Alexandria Historical Society invites the public to a powerful new walking tour exploring the city's LGBTQ+ history from the 1970s through the 1990s. Led by graduate students from George Mason University—recipients of the Society's 2024 AHS Golden Grant—this tour uncovers key moments of activism, resilience, and community. Highlights include:

The French Quarter Café, a pioneering gay bar and site of a 1991 court victory overturning discriminatory state policy
Alexandria City Hall, where Virginia's first local LGBTQ+ nondiscrimination ordinance was passed in 1988

The Torpedo Factory's tribute to lives lost to AIDS during the 1993 Day Without Art
Visit: alexandriahistoricalsociety.org

www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



A reading of the Declaration of Independence will take place on Friday, July 4, 2025 at Historic Pohick Church in Lorton.

org/outabouttour

JUNE 29 TO AUG. 17

Potomac Valley Watercolorists

"The Painted Garden" 2025

Art Exhibition and Sale. At Green Spring Gardens Horticultural Center, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. This annual fine art show spotlights many of our region's most highly-skilled and well-known water media artists, and features more than 100 original framed works on display and available for purchase. Special Event: Artists Reception – Sunday, July 13 from 1-3 p.m.

THURSDAY/JULY 3

Art+ Wine+ Cheese Reception.

6-7:30 p.m. At the Nepenthe Gallery at Hollin Hall, 7918 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Stop in Nepenthe to see a patriotic collection by various outstanding artists including Cey Adams, Norman Rockwell, and Pamela Patrick White.

FRIDAY/JULY 4

Reading of the Declaration of Independence.

1-3 p.m. At Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. The community is invited to a free public reading of the Declaration of Independence in the church by historical re-enactor, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Costa, portraying the Rev. Mr. Massey, the Rector of Pohick Church in 1776. The reading will take place at 1:00 PM, with free docent tours of the colonial church of George Washington and George Mason following the presentation. For additional information, call the church office at 703-339-6572, or visit the church web site at <http://www.pohick.org>.

SATURDAY/JULY 5

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.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional> for information on other days and times for the library's ongoing book sale.

JULY 14-18 OR JULY 21-25

Art Camp 2025. Del Ray Artisans invites youth ages 8-12 to Art Camp 2025 for a week of professional art instruction! Campers will have an immersive creative journey: painting, sculpting, journaling and more. During nice weather, campers will have outdoor time to get fresh air, unwind, and replenish their creative energy. All art supplies are provided. Choose July 14-18 or July 21-25 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily). \$350/child; scholarship support available. Registration at delrayartisans.org/art-camp-2025

AUG. 1-30

"Lovely As a Tree" Art Exhibit.

At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans members explore all the ways in which trees impact our lives and the earth and bring aspects of this natural phenomenon to artistic life. Join them for the Opening Reception on Friday, August 1, 7-9pm. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6pm, Fridays 12-9pm, Saturdays & Sundays 12-6pm. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

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JUNE

Wed. 18: Acoustic Alchemy \$35.00
Thu. 19: Tower Of Power \$89.50
Fri. 20: AJ Ghent & His Singing Guitar \$45.00
Sat. 21: Ohio Players \$79.50
Sun. 22: Stacey Kent \$39.50
Wed. 25: Tartan Terrors \$29.50
Thu. 26: Peter Asher: A Musical Memoir of the 60's & Beyond \$49.50

Fri. 27: Pieces Of A Dream \$55.00
Sat. 28: Kasey Chambers w/ Sunny Sweeney \$39.50

Sun. 29: Joshua Redman \$49.50

JULY

Wed. 2: Three Dog Night \$95.00
SOLD OUT! 2nd Night Added on 7/29!

Sat. 5: Donnell Rawlings \$49.50
Sun. 6: The Milk Carton Kids \$45.00

Wed. 9: Big Bad Voodoo Daddy \$65.00

Fri. 11: LAUREL CANYON: Golden Songs of Los Angeles '66-'72 \$39.50

Sat. 12: Classic Stones Live! \$35.00
Thu. 17: OMAR with special guest Tabi Bonney \$45.00

Sat. 19: Tell Me Lies – The Fleetwood Mac Experience \$35.00

Sun. 20: Hubert Laws \$55.00
Thu. 24: Hiroshima \$59.50

Fri. 25: The Bacon Brothers w/ Pernikoff Brothers \$69.50 SOLD OUT!

Sat. 26: The Bacon Brothers w/ Pernikoff Brothers \$69.50 SOLD OUT!

Sun. 27: Judy Collins \$59.50

Tue. 29: Three Dog Night \$95.00
2nd Night Added! (7/2 is Sold Out!)

Wed. 30: Sheila E. & The E-Train \$69.50

Thu. 31: Dave Koz And Friends Summer Horns 2025 featuring Dave Koz, Marcus Anderson, Jeff Bradshaw, Leo P and Evan Taylor, plus Marcel Anderson \$95.00

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.

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