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Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

MARCH 28, 2019

Public Examines Highway Widening Project

VDOT's Design Public Hearing irons out more wrinkles.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Most of the meeting attendees were in favor of the plan that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) laid out to widen a section of Richmond Highway between Jeff Todd Way and Sherwood Hall Lane. The recommended design will widen the road from four to six lanes, provide bike paths and sidewalks on both sides of the road, and reserve the median width necessary to accommodate Fairfax County's future Bus Rapid Transit plans for dedicated bus-only lanes.

"Route 1 in general has needed an uplift, hopefully it will stimulate more business development," said Bill Roper, a Mount Vernon resident who came to see the details of the project.



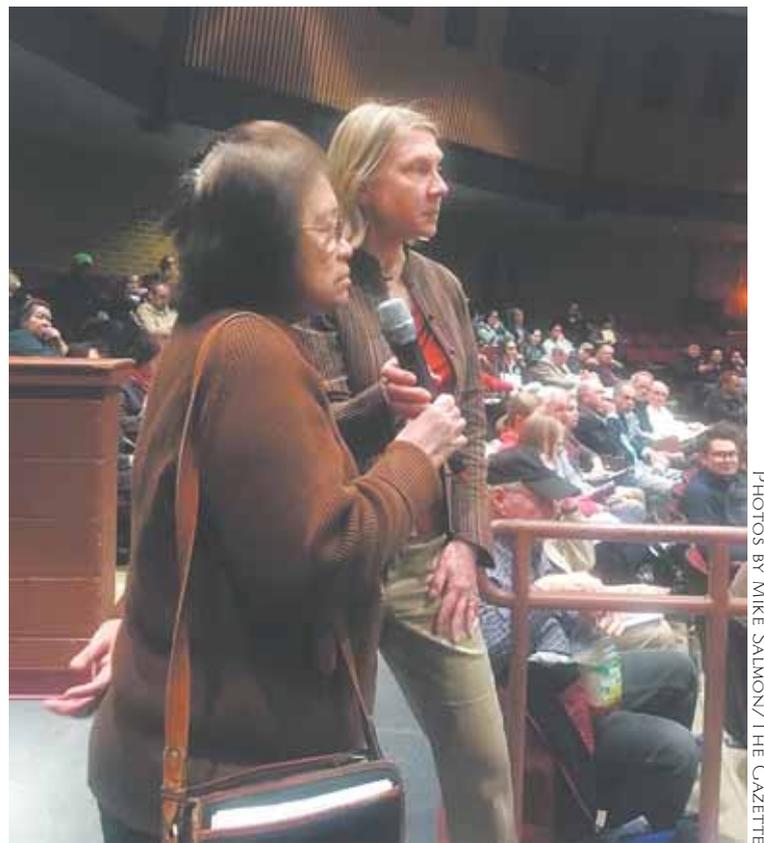
Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck discusses the project with constituents.

"The way they have it designed right now is wonderful," said Anne Street who lives off Mount Vernon Highway. She was looking at the plan near Buckman Road where there is a pedestrian path planned to go under Richmond Highway. "They're going to have to deal with human behavior," she added, noting that people may just run across the highway anyway, as they do now. "It's dangerous and there have been some accidents, but will they go down the ramp to the path under the road?" It's one of the

situations VDOT is addressing.

The path will be under the new Little Hunting Creek Bridge, which is planned to be bigger and longer than the old one but the idea hasn't gone over well with the residents. "There's an expense associated with this," said project manager Dan Reinhard. Another path under the new bridge planned for Dogue Creek is being looked at too — will people take the ramps and walk under there at night? "Especially women at night," said one

SEE WIDENING, PAGE 18



In the auditorium, residents shared their comments.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE



Residents looked at the plans on display.



Map of the Richmond Highway Corridor Improvements Project Limits.

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Celebrating Newest Domestic Violence Shelter

Facility expands the number of beds available in Region 1.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

The number of domestic violence shelter beds went from 54 to 90 in the Mount Vernon area this week, as officials cut the ribbon on pictures of the new Artemis House facility to keep the location secret and its tenants as safe as possible.

“Today is a start for all of us in Fairfax County to move forward,” said Fairfax County Executive Bryan J. Hill at the ribbon cutting on Monday, March 25 in the Mount Vernon Governmental Center. One in four women are victims of domestic violence and one in seven for men, he said.

“This is one step of many steps we’re going to take,” Hill added.

In the conference room at the government center were Supervisors Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon) and Jeff McKay (D-Lee); Toni Zollicoffer, division director at the Department of Family Services Domestic & Sexual Violence Services; Del. Paul Krizek (D-44); Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid; Nannette M. Bowler, director at the Department of Family Services; Vanessa Godshalk, chair of the Shelter House Board of Directors; and community advocates Karen Stone and Lisa Sales.

Stone and Sales were behind this effort early on with the help of Mattie Palmore, and the three earned a nickname in the process. “They were fierce advocates, calling themselves the ‘three musketeers’ and working tirelessly with county staff to get our new area shelter opened,” Storck said.

There are four regions in Fairfax County and Mount Vernon is part of Region 1. There are shelters in Region 2, and none in two of the county’s other regions. “All four regions would be wonderful,” said Zollicoffer. “Domestic violence touches every socioeconomic sector.”

At the Department of Family Services, there may be facilities like the shelters that aren’t known by some, so getting activities like this ribbon-cutting was one way to spread the word, according to Kendra Lee at the department. She credited Storck and McKay as driv-



PHOTO BY CAMELA SPEER

Community advocates Lisa Sales and Karen Stone



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE

The cake decoration reflected the upbeat nature of the event.

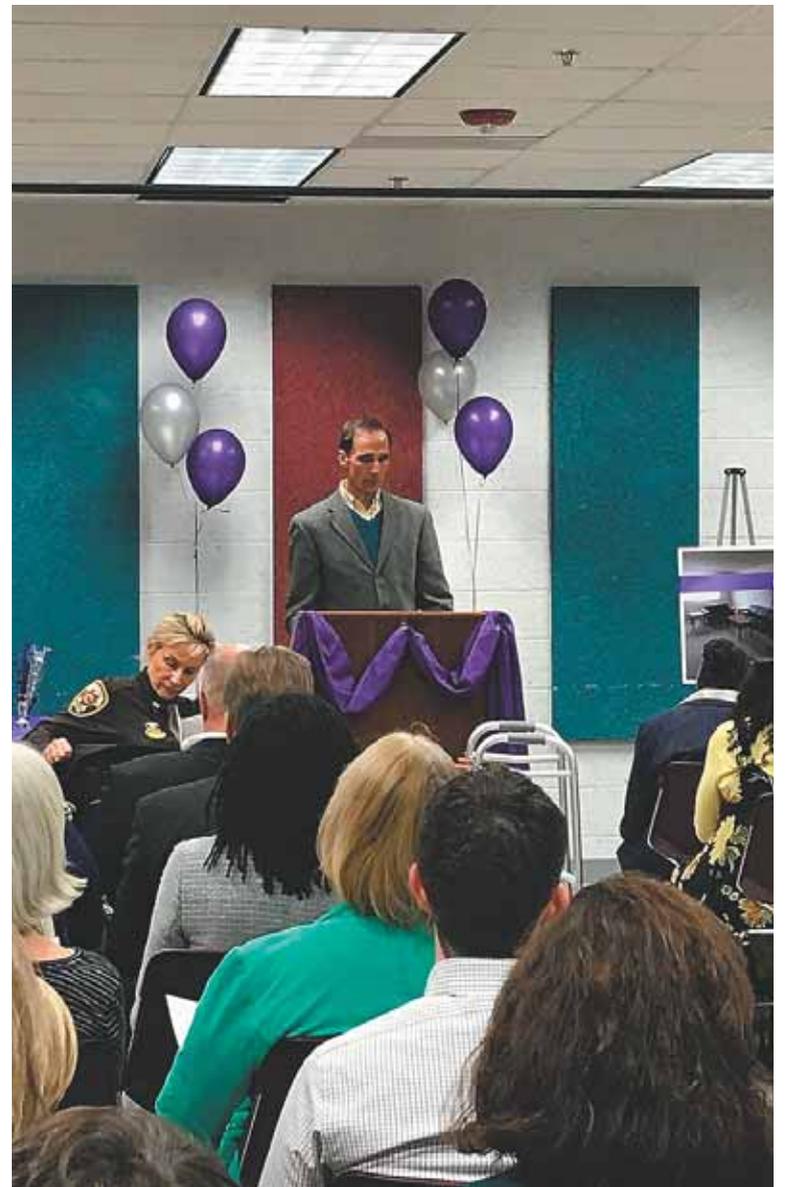


PHOTO BY CAMELA SPEER

Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck addresses those assembled.



Ribbons were placed over photos of the new interiors instead of the new domestic violence shelter itself because the county keeps the location of facilities like this secret.

ing forces behind this new shelter, which actually opened in February. “They’ve been very instrumental in getting this opened,” she said.

There are two domestic violence

shelters in Fairfax County: Artemis House and Bethany House. Both shelters are in undisclosed locations, meaning the addresses of the shelters are not given out to the public. Emergency shelter is



PHOTO BY CAMELA SPEER

Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid



PHOTO BY CAMELA SPEER

County Executive Bryan Hill

temporary shelter available to domestic violence victims that offers a safe and secure environment while victims figure out their next steps and make longer-term living arrangements as they recover from

trauma.

For more information, contact the administrative offices at 703-955-7876 or in an emergency, call the 24/7 Domestic Violence Hotline at 703-435-4940.

'Ides of Bark' Dog Fest Lives On

People and their pets fill the Grist Mill Park.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Carrying on a tradition of the previous county supervisor, Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon) hosted a dog play date for area pet owners under the theme "Responsible Pet Care."

Years ago, this event started with Supervisor Gerry Hyland, and "it grew from there," said Shirley Short, a retired firefighter and volunteer at the Mount Vernon Supervisor office. This was the fourth year they've held the Ides of Bark, a play on words from the Roman days and the Ides of March. In 44 BC, the Ides of March became notorious as the date of the assassination of Julius Caesar and a turning point in Roman history.

There were a few fire trucks, 13 tents with vendors from the pet care arena, McGruff the Crime Dog and dogs of all shapes and sizes. In addition, there were demonstrations by the Fairfax County Police Canine Unit, and milkshakes from "1000 Shakes," a food truck business manned by Vince Sturniolo.

PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/
THE GAZETTE



After biking in, Supervisor Dan Storck talked with residents at the event.



Rascal and Greta are two Vizsla dogs from Hungary.



Christine Morin and Shirley Short from Supervisor Dan Storck's office manned the Mount Vernon staff tent with Morin's dog.



FCPS PHOTOS

Building Their Own Electric Guitars

STEM Design students at Mount Vernon High School learned some practical, career-oriented job skills along with science, technology, engineering, art, and math standards while designing and constructing electric guitars during a six-week unit. Thanks to a grant, the students received basic individual parts of an electric guitar that they were challenged to design. They cut a headstock, sanded, stained, soldered, and assembled the entire guitar. Part of the lesson was to learn safety while using power tools along with the importance of time management, patience, and prepping wood before it is stained. Using Autodesk Inventor, they drew their concepts. As part of the unit, they acquired marketable skills, including the use of power tools, soldering, reading music, playing a guitar, and repairing and building guitars for others. Upon completion, the students were given the guitars so that they may continue learning to play a musical instrument.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

ServiceSource opened its eighth Community Integration Center in Springfield with an official ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 20.

ServiceSource Opens New Center

Serving people with disabilities.

ServiceSource, a disability nonprofit headquartered in Fairfax County, has opened its eighth Community Integration Center in Springfield. The organization's goal is to provide individualized care and better connect people with disabilities to the surrounding community.

In celebration of the newly renovated site, ServiceSource held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Wednesday, March 20. Approximately 75 attendees joined the ceremony including various community members and partners, staff, participants and their families. Several state and local government officials also came to support the ceremony, including Del. Vivian Watts (D-39) and Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck, who both represent the district in which this program opened. Other government officials included state Sen. Scott Surovell (D-44), Del. Kathy Tran (D-42), and members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, including Chairman

Sharon Bulova, Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay and Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity.

Located at 7300 Boston Boulevard, the Springfield program will provide clinical and expressive therapies and community opportunities to approximately 100 individuals with significant developmental disabilities. While discussing how far the field has come in supporting people with disabilities, Storck said, "ServiceSource has proven to be apart of that in Fairfax County. This world is about opportunities for everybody to reach their full potential."

The ServiceSource team is continuing to explore volunteer and recreational activities in the surrounding areas for participants to get involved in, both as volunteers and through paid opportunities.

"Thank you for making this investment in Fairfax County, the Mount Vernon District, and most importantly making this investment in our future, our youth and our adults who need this type of support," said Storck.

In addition to disability supports, the program will rent out office space to community partners whose missions align with the vision of inclusive communities.

CRIME REPORT

The following incidents were reported by the Mount Vernon District Police Station.

STOLEN VEHICLE: 6300 block of Richmond Hwy., March 21, 2:45 p.m. The victims were loading groceries into their car when a man asked if they needed help. As the victims put the shopping cart away, the suspect got into the victims' car and drove away. He struck a pole, drove through the parking lot and hit an unoccupied car, which was pushed into another car. The suspect continued through the parking lot onto Richmond Highway. Officers responded and were unable to find the stolen car. The suspect is described as black man in his 30s, slim build, wearing a burgundy jacket, dark pants and a dark ball cap.

SEE CRIME, PAGE 18



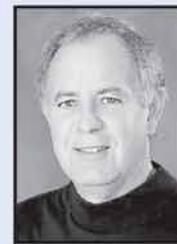
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Mount Vernon Gazette



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NEW LISTING
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Alex/Riverside Estates Mid 500s
8309 Bound Brook Lane
Riverside's largest Colonial model w/4 large BRs, 2.5 BAs & a large 1 car garage. 2000 sq.ft. on the main & upper lvls plus 900 or so sq.ft. in the basement. A great floor plan w/a spacious kit, dining rm, living rm & family rm & half bath greet you on the main lvl. 4 large bedrms & 2 full baths on the upper lvl. The basement has a large "L" shaped rec rm & a separate utility rm w/a stairwell taking you to a beautifully landscaped & fenced bklyd. Updates include a brand new roof, double pane replacement windows, a remodeled half bath & stunning refinished hwd floors on the main & upper lvls. Priced in the mid 500's to allow you to create quick equity w/a fresh paint job & some updates in the kit. Minutes to Ft. Belvoir (S) & Old Towne (N).

NEW LISTING
COMING SOON



Alex/Riverside Estates \$659,000
8332 Wagon Wheel Road
\$100,000+ of outstanding renovations in Riverside Estates popular "B" model Colonial w/garage. New roof, deck, front door & A/C in '18. Kitchen & baths in '17. Kitchen totally gutted & opens to Living & Dining rms, includes: quartz tile counters, six burner gas range by Miece, new hwd floor, SS appliances & beautiful stained cabinets. All 3.5 baths are gorgeous. MBR combined w/another bedrm to offer a beautiful suite including a huge walk-in closet to die for. Beautifully finished lower lvl offers a 4th bedrm & 3rd full BA along w/an inviting Rec rm - perfect for a Nanny or Au Pair. DBL pane windows & 6 panel doors ...of course!!! Totally turnkey, enjoy!!!

NEW LISTING
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Alex/Sulgrave Manor Lower \$500s
4002 Old Mill Road
Beautiful 3 lvl brick split on a large, lovely .5 acre lot w/lots of trees & privacy. Spacious kitchen w/eating area that looks out to a beautiful screened porch & brick patio-perfect for grilling & entertaining. 3 spacious BRs & 2 full updated baths on the upper lvl. The lower level offers a 4th BR, Family room w/walk-out utility room & 3rd full bath. 5 minutes to Ft. Belvoir, 15 minutes to Old Town & 30 mins to National airport. Great price on this Stunning Home!!!

NEW LISTING
COMING SOON



Alex/Riverside Estates \$699,900
8334 Blowing Rock Road
Start with Riverside Estate's Popular "B" Model Colonial; add a 2 car garage, above that large garage add a huge addition consisting of 2BRs, & a 3rd full Bath; not done yet, throw in a large, in-ground swimming pool & separate hot tub, both updated in 2016; last but not least, build a beautiful 12'x9' covered screened porch looking out at the pool & hot tub. Also, freshly painted interior, refinished hwd flrs on main & upper lvls. Furnace & A/C replaced in 2016. Updated kitchen & baths! What you have...a once in a lifetime home which is expanded to offer a wonderful in-law/Nanny's suite, & lastly on a wonderful, quiet cul-de-sac!!!

UNDER CONTRACT



Alex/Stoneybrook Court \$439,900
4411 Coldbrooke Court
Charming 3BR, 1BA, 1 Level Rambler on a friendly and private cul-de-sac. Freshly painted interior, brand new carpeting, replacement double pane windows. Stainless steel kitchen appliances. Lovely, large backyard with privacy fence, perfect for children and the family dog. Sought after community of Stoneybrooke with quick access to shopping, dining, Metro and highways. Enjoy the comfort of one-level living in this wonderful and well-priced home!

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Alex/Riverside Estates \$544,900
8525 Wagon Wheel Road
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UNDER CONTRACT



Alex/Riverside Estates \$589,000
3100 Battersea Lane
Beautifully updated 4BR, 2.5BA Colonial in popular Riverside Estates. Double pane windows, kitchen with hardwood floors, granite counters/SS appliances. Baths all updated and nicely painted interior with newly refinished hardwood floors on main and upper levels. Large walkup basement with fresh paint and new flooring. 8 minutes to Ft. Belvoir (S), 16 mins to Old Town, Alex (N). Beautiful home and just minutes to the George Washington Parkway!!



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SCHOOLS

Partnerships Keep Garden Growing

Outdoor Education gets new start at Hollin Meadows Elementary School.

BY AINSLEY CROWELL
HOLLIN MEADOWS PARTNERSHIP
FOR OUTDOOR EDUCATION

On March 30-31, the Hollin Meadows Elementary School (HMES) Outdoor Education Program will launch a multiphase development plan reestablishing the school's Learning Production Garden by building raised garden beds and installing a solar-powered drip irrigation system using a \$5,000 grant from Index Analytics, LLC, a data analytics and program management consulting firm.

These will be the first of many projects resulting from collaborations between an engaged community, public schools and private businesses supporting the Outdoor Education Program at HMES.

Prior to the three-year renovation of HMES, the Title I Fairfax County school located in Alexandria was known throughout the community for its 14,000 square feet of school gardens, which received national attention during a 2009 visit from First Lady Michelle Obama. When the gardens were forced to go fallow during construction, there was no doubt that re-building them would be a priority in the completed space, which was designed to include a 3,400 gallon rainwater cistern.

The Hollin Meadows Partnership for Outdoor Education reactivated at the start of the 2018-19 school year to work with Jess Buchanan, the newly hired outdoor education coordinator, to plan for and help fund a new and improved Outdoor Education Program at HMES. In December 2018, the partnership launched a successful fundraising campaign to rebuild the Learning Production Garden so HMES students could begin growing and harvesting their own

produce in the spring of 2019. This campaign secured funding for the construction of 20 raised garden beds, which will be assembled and installed by local Cub Scout Pack #888 as its 2019 Spring Service Project.

To solve the problem of how to irrigate the garden beds using the newly installed cistern, Buchanan consulted with experts in the field and identified a solar-powered drip irrigation system as the best solution. The Partnership helped secure funding for the new irrigation system through a \$5,000 grant awarded by Index Analytics. The Index Analytics grant will fund the irrigation system and establish an infrastructure that is reliable, low-maintenance, and eco-friendly.

Seeing the planning of the system as an opportunity for both education and collaboration, Buchanan reached out to the Engineering program at West Potomac High School and Engineers Without Borders to form a team to help plan and design the irrigation system. Together, Adam Neulight, an HMES alum and high school senior, and Julius Duncan, an environmental engineer volunteering through the Northern Virginia Professionals chapter of Engineers Without Borders, worked together and are excited to see their plan come to life this spring.

The Hollin Meadows Partnership for Outdoor Education is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with nearly a decade of service to Hollin Meadows Elementary School. The mission of the Partnership is to enhance the curriculum at HMES through raising funds and community support for the Outdoor Education Program.

For more information and the latest news from the Partnership visit www.hollinmeadowspartnership.com.

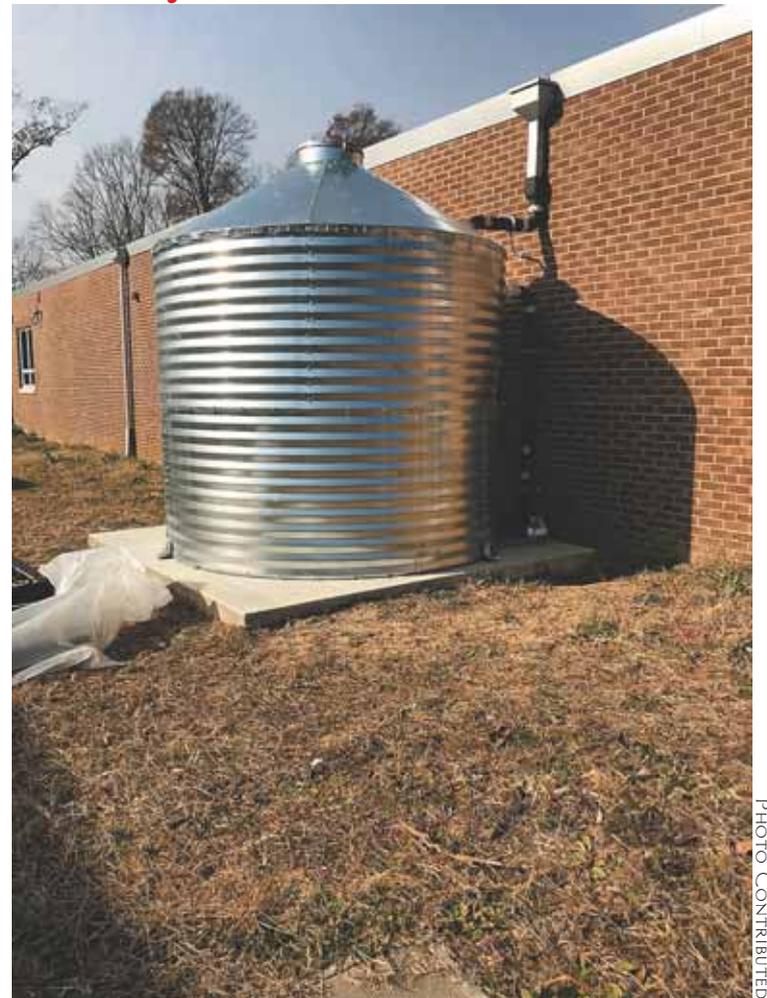


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The rainwater cistern serves Hollin Meadows Elementary School Outdoor Education Program's Learning Production Garden.

Talent on Display at Regional Science Fair

670 students from 27 high schools compete for nine Grand Prizes to go to International Fair in Phoenix, Ariz.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE GAZETTE

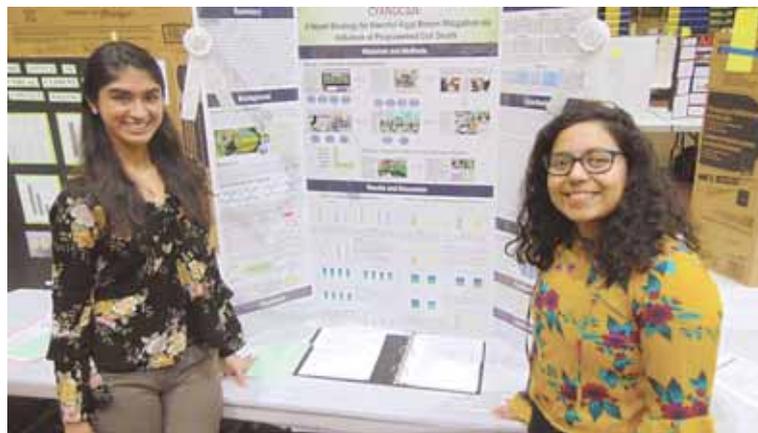
The gym at Robinson Secondary School resembled a mini version of the United Nations. At the 64th Annual Fairfax County Regional Science and Engineering Fair held Sunday, March 17, some 670 students from 27 high schools competed for nine Grand Prize slots and the chance to go to the International Science and Engineering Fair sponsored by Intel in Phoenix, Ariz. later this year.

The categories ranged from chemistry to robotics, intelligent systems to mathematics, earth and environmental sciences, biomedical and health sciences, to STEM disciplines and engineering.

After a public viewing from 1-3 p.m., they held an awards pro-

gram with members of the Fairfax County School Board and Region Superintendents where prizes were awarded to the Grand Prize winners and Corporate and Professional Organization award winners.

The students' 428 projects were judged three times Saturday by 200 category judges. About 250 students won awards from 50 corporate and professional organizations that were sponsored by government agencies, nonprofits and think tanks. Prizes ranged from \$1,000 cash awards to scholarships and internships, gift cards and even a Raspberry Pi Zero Starter Kit. One project on Cystic Fibrosis Wearable Technology from Madison High students Thaissa Peixoto and Alex Gurski won a patent preparation and filing from the law firm Hunton and

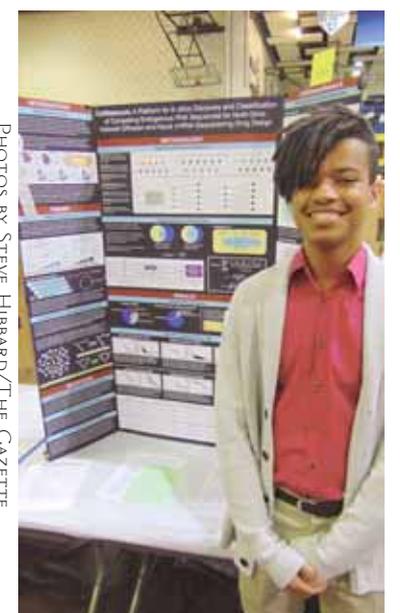


PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE GAZETTE

Hayfield Secondary School students Sarah Syed, Miamar Burgos-Rosario of Alexandria and (not present) Saijai Supanklang won first place in Microbiology and are grand prize nominees. Their project was "Cyanocide: A Novel Strategy for Harmful Algal Bloom Mitigation via Initiation of Programmed Cell Death."

Williams LLP in the District.

FOR THE GRAND PRIZES, nine projects were allotted slots in the



David Toomer of Hayfield Secondary won first place in Computational Biology and Bioinformatics. His project was "CER Network: Network Classification of RNA Interactions for New Drug Design."

International Science and Engineering Fair sponsored by Intel Corporation in Phoenix, Ariz. Be-

SEE BEST, PAGE 7

SCHOOLS

'Best of the Best'

FROM PAGE 6

cause of the size and reputation of Fairfax County, those projects can go straight to the International Fair without having to go through state competition. This includes an all-expense paid trip for students to compete for up to \$4 million in prize money.

According to Dr. Jenay Sharp Leach, fair director and Pre-K-12 Science Coordinator: "In Fairfax County Public Schools, we pride ourselves on providing students with a rich, inquiry-based science experience in the classroom so all of our students have the opportunity to experience science as real scientists where they are asking questions, they are collecting data and analyzing that data and forming their own conclusions. And Science Fair is a really beautiful manifestation of this inquiry process in that the students truly have access to open inquiry and can explore what they want to explore."

She added: "So, the students who come to the fair represent the best of the best from all of our high schools as well as our private schools in Fairfax County. And they are the elite level of scientific investigation."

DR. SHARP LEACH said one of their traditions is to choose a quote from a famous scientist or engineer to inspire the work of

the fair. This year's quote comes from Stephen Hawking who said, "Scientists have become the bearers of the torch of discovery in our quest for knowledge."

She continued: "There are cancer cures in this room right now, there are climate change advocates who are going to stop climate change in this room right now and it's very inspirational."

Added Tim Harazin, Elementary Science Specialist with Fairfax County Public Schools who helped coordinate the fair: "At our Regional Science Fair we are proud to have so many professional organizations and companies provide judges and awards. The benefit is, first, there is an award for the students, many times monetary, but other options, but I think the bigger issues is these organization judges are role models for the students. They show the students that a science fair is not just a one-shot deal, but it could lead to a career in science, engineering or related fields, and I think it's really great that the students get to see the people who are living those careers and get advice from those people. So, that's what I see is the really big advantage. That's why I'm not as concerned that every organization gives us money because I know they're giving us time and they're giving us role models."



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OPINION

Every Year Is Election Year; in 2019 Twice

Primary Election Day, June 11, will determine the outcome of many races in Fairfax County.

First, go to elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation and check that you are registered at your current address. Deadline to register to vote, or update an existing registration, is Monday, May 20, 2019.

On Tuesday, June 11, 2019, Primary Election Day for party candidates in Virginia, there will be an astonishing array of candidates on the ballot in Fairfax County. One reason is that many incumbents in local offices are retiring, and that causes a domino effect because incumbents in other offices will step down to run for something different. Change is coming. Voters must pay attention

EDITORIAL

in the primary, so much will be determined. On the ballot: Chairman of the Board of Supervisors; Sharon Bulova is retiring and there are four candidates in the Democratic primary. (We will miss Bulova, but that is a discussion for another day.)

All nine members of the Board of Supervisors are on the ballot, and in addition to Bulova, Cathy Hudgins, John Cook and Linda Smyth will be stepping down, and Jeff McKay will give up his seat as he is running for chairman. That is guaranteed change for five of nine seats, and more is possible.

All 12 members of Fairfax County School Board are on the ballot, three at-large and nine District members. Several school board mem-

bers will give up their seats to run for other offices. (4-year term)

All 40 seats in the Virginia Senate (4-year term) are on the ballot, nine in Fairfax County.

All 100 seats in the Virginia House of Delegates (2-year term) are on the ballot, 17 seats in Fairfax County.

There is a rare challenge to the Fairfax County Commonwealth's Attorney on the primary ballot. (4-year term)

Fairfax County Sheriff is also on the ballot. (4-year term)

Parties control information on primary candidates. See Fairfax County Republican Committee at <https://fairfaxgop.org/voter-toolkit/>; Fairfax County Democratic Committee at <https://fairfaxdemocrats.org/2019/01/14/candidates-running-for-office-in-2019/>.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Danger of 'Vaccine Hesitancy'

BY PAUL KRIZEK
DELEGATE (D-44)

Lifespan in the Commonwealth has increased dramatically over the last century. Today, it is 76.6 years for men, and 81.3 years for women. Virginia ranks 24th of all the states and the District of Columbia, and first among our immediate neighbors. Much of that can be attributed to well run government with sound public health measures resulting in clean water and food, proper sanitation and workplace safety. Yet, nothing has had a greater impact than the reduction of vaccine-preventable infections, especially when it comes to our children. Unfortunately, there is a growing and disturbing trend across the country of parental rejection of life-saving vaccines for unscientific reasons.

I think that most of us are aware that childhood infections were the leading cause of death and disability from the Colonial era well into the 20th century. In the United States, childhood deaths caused by infectious diseases de-

creased from 30.4 percent to 1.4 percent between 1900 and 1997. Therapeutic advances such as antibiotics saved many lives, but preventive measures had a much greater impact.

America's immunization history began with the English physician, Edward Jenner, who demonstrated in 1796 that smallpox could be prevented by inoculating healthy persons with cowpox. He is the one who coined the terms "vaccine" and "vaccination." It is said that his work saved more lives than any other human. Our very own George Washington strongly believed in the efficacy of inoculation. I spoke about this on the floor of the General Assembly this session, that General Washington, himself a smallpox survivor, mandated a mass immunization of the Continental army, to not just increase its effectiveness fighting the British, but to have an army able to fight at all. Among the Continental army, 90 percent of deaths were caused by disease and smallpox was the most deadly. After the immunizations not one regiment was incapacitated by the disease.

President Madison signed the Vaccine Act of 1813 – the first of many federal government actions in support of a comprehensive immunization program. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, crippled by polio, established the March of Dimes; their research led to the eradi-

cation of that disease and transformed child health in mid-century America. Many Presidents since have endorsed legislation supporting vaccine research and deployment, epidemiologic surveillance and intervention and evidence-based mitigation of vaccine-related problems and liability. Make no mistake though, vaccine preventable diseases are still a menace. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has already reported seven outbreaks of measles for 2019 – three in New York and one each in Washington, Texas, Illinois and California. And more than 100 cases of measles were diagnosed in 2018 throughout 21 states and DC. The cause is exposure of a person without immunity to another infected with measles. UNICEF projects outbreaks of diphtheria, mumps and pertussis. Basic biology requires that, to be safe, we must keep immunization rates up – something we are failing to do. The World Health Organization identifies "vaccine hesitancy" as one of the top 10 global health challenges of 2019. The number of non-medical exemptions granted for mandatory immunization requirements is rising; and in Virginia, the rate of these exemptions has more than doubled. We don't want to be the next state to report an outbreak. Virginians have been lucky so far. We may not be lucky forever.

Subsidizing Economic Development

BY SCOTT SUROVELL
STATE SENATOR (D-36)

The 2019 General Assembly Session ended on Feb. 28. In the last two columns I covered my personal legislative agenda and the state budget. In this column, I will highlight some other important bills that passed.

We enacted two significant economic development packages. While I am generally skeptical of using taxpayer dollars for economic

development incentives such as movie production tax credits, I am supportive of projects that can generate long-term jobs.

The Amazon project is projected to create between 25,000 and 37,500 jobs with average wages of \$150,000 or more. The Commonwealth has committed to fund \$22,000 per job for the first 25,000 jobs and \$15,564 per job for the second 12,500 jobs after they are created. Tax revenue will pay for each commitment within a few years of creation and will have a 6:1 lifetime return on investment for taxpayers over \$1.2 billion of new tax revenue overall.

COMMENTARY

The Commonwealth has also committed to \$295 million of transportation investments into Metro, National Airport, and U.S. 1 which will make the community truly multimodal. Virginia Tech has also committed to build a \$1 billion Innovation Campus next door.

This project will also generate significant returns to the 36th District. The Amazon campus is designed for transit users and many employees will choose to live south of Alexandria along the U.S. 1 Corridor or use the Virginia Railway Express and live in Woodbridge, Dumfries, Stafford and even Fredericksburg.

SEE MUCH STILL. PAGE 9

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A Connection Newspaper



Much Still To Be Done

FROM PAGE 8

I am hopeful this project will create pressure to create robust transit options including extensions of the Yellow and Blue Lines and funding to expand the Long Bridge over the Potomac.

The Commonwealth also committed to invest \$50 million in the Micron microchip plant in Manassas in exchange for Micron's pledge to invest \$3 billion plant expansion. Microchips are actually Virginia's second largest export and this project will likewise create jobs.

We passed long overdue legislation allowing for no-excuse early voting 10 days before each election starting in 2020.

The General Assembly enacted numerous measures to reduce Virginia's eviction rates. The bills require a written lease, more time before an eviction is allowed and more time for a tenant to pay rent after commencement of an eviction. The bills passed unanimously.

We removed the age cap on health insurance for autistic adults. This long-sought change will help families continue to provide quality services for adult chil-

dren.

Due to legislation I co-sponsored, cooperative preschools such as Tauxemont and Fort Hunt Cooperative Preschools got a legislative reprieve from administrative rules that would have required volunteer parents to obtain dozens of hours of training before volunteering to watch children during preschool classes.

Starting July 1, Virginians will be required to keep tethered dogs on ropes at least 10 feet long (or three times the length of the dog) and provide the animal adequate shelter in cold weather — instead of just leaving the animal outside.

We passed legislation prohibiting drivers from having a phone in-hand in a work zone. We increased penalties for drivers who fail to move over for vehicles with illuminated emergency lights parked on a shoulder.

We raised the purchase age for tobacco products to 21. The Kings Dominion Law — prohibiting a pre-Labor Day school start — was repealed, and we passed legislation setting up a process to begin the legalization of casinos in three jurisdictions Central, Southwest

and Hampton Roads.

While the session had many positives, we also left doing absolutely nothing about firearm violence prevention. Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment was blocked in the House of Delegates once again leaving 160 million American Women without equal rights.

Virginia still has the lowest minimum wage in the nation. Criminal justice reform saw virtually no victories and if anything, some backsliding.

Bills to prohibit discrimination against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgendered Virginians went nowhere. Our attempts to backfill \$300 million of transportation funds monies lost to Metro last year were killed.

We are poised on the verge of some very important elections this November where control of both chambers will be determined. Republicans hold the majority in both chambers by one vote.

A change in control will bring significant change to the Commonwealth.

Please send me any feedback at scott@scottsuovell.org.

On a Roll

Betty Crews Graves is celebrating her 81st birthday with a bowling party. She bowls in three leagues for recreation and exercise. An avid bowler, she was twice nominated to the MSBC local Hall of Fame.



Betty Crews Graves turns 81.

She is a retired Fairfax County Public Schools

teacher, having spent 39 years in the classroom from West Virginia to Virginia, Hawaii, Ohio and back to Virginia. She retired in 2001.

She has traveled extensively to England, France and back to Hawaii plus South Africa.

She was in the Ms Senior Virginia Pageant in 2005 winning talent, community service honorable mention, and most ads in the souvenir book. She was also in the 2016 Pageant, winning first runner-up, Ms Congeniality, and most ads sold for the souvenir book just as in 2005.

She is the mother of three, Debbie, George and Mke, eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren. She enjoys spending time at the senior center at Gum Springs, attending Alfred Street Baptist Church, and, of course, bowling.

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Planning for Disaster

County publishes
Emergency Response Guide.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE GAZETTE

High winds are tearing through Fairfax County. Maybe a tornado? There is structural damage to a number of local businesses. Power lines are down, so there are outages being reported. No lights, so traffic is snarled at several major intersections, and some of those downed lines sparked a fire along a heavily-travelled “back road” in the area with the danger of trees falling, as well. The sudden, lashing rain will probably help extinguish the fires, but the overflowing stream on your route has blocked your way home with dangerous flood waters and debris. Is that other road similarly affected? How will you know before you try it?

It's almost four o'clock in the afternoon. Did your kids get home safely? What about your spouse? Will he or she be able to find a way home, and soon? You keep trying to call them all, but the cell phone system is overwhelmed. And what about your parents? They live in an area prone to flooding with lots of old trees that may not stand up to this onslaught from Mother Nature. Your mom just had knee surgery. She can't get around too well. Will anyone in her neighborhood check on them and help out if need be?

ALL OF THE ABOVE may sound like the plot line from a disaster movie, but Fairfax County government and emergency management personnel know that one emergency event can easily trigger another, and another, and within minutes that fictitious script can become reality with chaotic, and potentially deadly, consequences.

They want you to be prepared to help yourself and help others by asking yourself “what if?” instead of “now what?” and planning ahead for those often unexpected moments of danger.

It was no accident that county officials chose Tuesday, March 19 — the same day that the Commonwealth was conducting a state-wide tornado drill — to launch CERG, the Fairfax County Community Emergency Response Guide.

Tornadoes are one of the deadliest and most damaging of natural disasters. They can be the trigger for more causes for concern — and they are one of 14 natural and human-caused hazard scenarios, and three “everyday” emergencies, covered in the CERG.

From extreme weather incidents like tornadoes, hurricanes or tropical storms, to man-made actions including cyber attacks, acts of terrorism and danger from chemical, biological or other agents, to structural fires, power outages and medical emergen-



The calm before the storm. Staff from the county's Office of Emergency Management “at work” in the Office of Emergency Management's Alternate Emergency Operation Center, giving insight into the department's operations before a state-wide tornado drill.

PHOTO BY ANDREA WORKER/THE GAZETTE

cies, there are practical steps to take to mitigate many of these events, and important actions to take during and after the crisis. The CERG outlines them all and offers additional resources to help citizens prepare and produce the best possible outcomes for themselves, their families and their neighbors.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova opened the session to launch the guide. She was followed by Braddock District Supervisor John Cook, who also chairs the board's Public Safety committee.

“We're proud that Fairfax County is once again taking a leadership role,” said Cook. “We are only the second county in the nation to put together such a comprehensive and accessible resource for our citizens.”

One of the key reasons for their efforts to provide the information was the need for everyone to do their part in working for the safety and wellbeing of the community, Cook said.

The Office of Emergency Management coordinates all hazard mitigation, response and disaster recovery for the residents of Fairfax County. Depending on the severity and the scope of the situation, Cook noted that local emergency services could be stretched to their limits.

In the event of a major disaster, residents may have to act as their “own first responders” and the guide discusses how to be ready to do just that for the first three to five days of a large-scale event.

While not suggesting that private citizens would, or should, assume the major duties of rescue and other responders, Cook, and Seamus Mooney, the OEM's director, both offered that lives could be saved and the impact of any such catastrophe be reduced if residents prepare and plan for themselves, and look out for others around them.

“The call to 9-1-1 is still the first order of business,” said Mooney, but, again, if the event is severe and/or wide-spread throughout the region, those emergency personnel will be handling hundreds – if not thousands – of calls and prioritizing individual needs and the actions required to bring the situation under control.

The county has a comprehensive plan for response to these and other emergency scenarios and they are highlighted in the CERG, but, more importantly, the guide offers practical before, during, and after advice and resources for our citizenry. It all starts with “Make a Plan.”

THE GUIDE discusses the planning as-

sumptions residents have to make. That could mean dealing with no water, no power, limited communications and possibly no access to retail, including pharmacies, no gasoline, and possibly no ATMs for cash or even the ability to use a credit card.

The CERG provides a basic checklist to help develop your plan for yourself, your family, your neighbors, your pets and even your business, if you are a business-owner.

Step 2 in the preparation stage is to “Practice Your Plan” since a plan is only useful if everyone knows it and can execute it quickly during a stress-filled situation.

The final ingredient to the planning stage is to assemble and maintain an Emergency Kit – and again, the CERG is your guide to knowing just what to include and how to safeguard lives and protect important items and documents. All this valuable information is covered

in the first 20 or so pages of the more than 120-page reference book.

Next comes the “what to do's” of response — the “during phase” — covering evacuation strategies, lock-downs and sheltering-in-place as safely as possible.

Resources for the recovery phase are next, from physical clean-ups to how to apply for assistance from local and federal agencies.

Before getting into the specifics of the different emergency scenarios, the CERG offers practical tips on how to mitigate the effects of flooding, fire, and high winds and what you can do to promote a continuity of utility services. There are also mitigation

SEE EMERGENCY RESPONSE, PAGE 11



PHOTO BY ANDREA WORKER/THE GAZETTE

Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management director Seamus Mooney talks about the new Community Emergency Response Guide. Board chair Sharon Bulova and Braddock District Supervisor John Cook also spoke at the launch.

County Launches Emergency Response Guide

FROM PAGE 10

recommendations for shoring-up financial resilience and preparing to make insurance claims to lessen that pain and possibly shorten the wait for benefits.

After the “cheat sheets” for the different types of emergency, the CERG offers more resources, more checklists and templates to make the process as simple as possible, and encourage its use.

Mooney urges residents to sign up for Fairfax Alerts at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts. For residents with physical, sensory, mental health and cognitive and/or intellectual disabilities, as well as women in late-stage pregnancy and seniors, Mooney strongly recommends that they register with the Fairfax County Functional Needs Registry.

The registry is an opt-in list of names, addresses and needs that the county uses to deliver targeted emergency alerts and updates in the event of an emergency.

“With information like this, if permitted, we can train communities to make connections,” Cook said. “We can help connect neighbors like these with each other and help create a plan to assist.” Sometimes, the call to duty can be as simple as just checking in on the neighbor during an emergency to be sure they



PHOTO BY ANDREA WÖRKER/THE GAZETTE

Sheltering-in-place when a tornado warning is issued. Avery Church with the county’s Office of Emergency Management demonstrates just what to do. Until the all-clear is given Church was huddled under the desk, hands behind his head and curled over for added protection.

are informed and not in any immediate need or danger.

There is a lot of information in the CERG, but “it can be consumable in pieces as most relevant to you,” said Mooney, and as Ma-

son District Supervisor Penny Gross noted, there is a “cliff notes” version of the guide available for review at each district supervisor’s office.

Volunteer corps, under the direction of

Mooney and the OEM staff, are “trained to train” others on emergency preparation and planning and are available for outreach to homeowners’ associations, civic groups or faith-based communities, businesses and others.

After the press conference, Mooney invited the media to join in the tornado drill at the OEM’s Alternate Emergency Operation Center, located inside the government center.

Staff demonstrated a typical day, monitoring events and potential emergencies from the secondary command post, then followed protocol when the tornado “warning” notice was heard, advising all to shelter-in-place. Into the most interior room with less equipment and items that could become deadly projectiles when directed by tornado-force wind marched the OEM staff – and straight under desks for added protection.

“Everyone should have a plan. Everyone should practice,” was Mooney’s final recommendation — even those who plan and prepare for and respond to emergencies every single day.

The Fairfax County Community Emergency Response Guide can be downloaded from the county’s website and will be available for review in public libraries and governmental district offices.




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ENTERTAINMENT

Meet Vaso Volioti: Chef and Owner of Vaso's Kitchen

BY SHIRLEY RUHE



Vaso Volioti's shrimp sautéed with garlic.



Brandy flames shoot up in the skillet with Vaso Volioti's shrimp.

PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE



Spaghetti cooked al dente to accompany shrimp.

Vaso Volioti pours a scoop of liquid margarine into a sizzling hot skillet. "It has to be on high." While Volioti waits for the oil to heat to the proper temperature, she shakes two thin veal scallops into a container of unseasoned flour and then immerses each in a container of beaten eggs.

"Hear the oil crackle?" Volioti places each piece of veal into the skillet side by side. "We don't leave it long, about three minutes total. It's veal." She turns each piece over in the skillet. "See, we wait for it to look like this. OK, I'm going to dump the oil out."

She places the skillet on the counter and takes the next step. "I place a thin slice of picnic ham on top of each piece of veal." Then she places four pieces of asparagus parallel on top of the ham and tops it with a round slice of provolone folded in half "so it doesn't melt and fall out in the pan." Finally she tops off the layers with a whole slice of provolone.

After a sprinkle of salt and pepper she adds two 2-ounce plastic cups of Fairbanks California sherry, 1/2 cup of heavy cream and two one-inch cubes of butter. Back on the heat while the sauce cooks down. "What I will do now is put the skillet in a 550 degree oven for about 3 minutes while I turn to Vaso's Shrimp, my original recipe." When ready to serve, she plates the veal on a large oblong white dish with a puddle of sauce dripping over the edge.

Volioti again waits for the oil to heat up, this time Greek olive oil, "so that it cooks the shrimp right." She has cleaned (deveined) and cut five large shrimp. "I put in two handfuls of chopped garlic and wait for it to get full color." In a couple of minutes Volioti adds the shrimp and swirls them around in the olive oil before adding diced tomatoes and a large mixing spoon size of whole artichoke hearts.

While the mixture is cooking, she adds a large accent of oregano and a sprinkle of mixed salt and pepper. "Now I'm using a pinch of red chili peppers. And now I'm going to use brandy for the flavor is really good." She inches back as flames skyrocket from the stove while she tosses the shrimp. Volioti finishes the dish off with 1/4-cup heavy cream and a ladle of her homemade



Vaso's Shrimp.



Vaso Volioti stirs homemade tomato sauce, which is added to shrimp.

tomato sauce. "Now see. I'm sprinkling on finely crumbled feta. Let's cook it a little bit, still on high."

Volioti has started a large pot of boiling water for the pasta. She puts in two full handfuls of salt.

"We'll cook the spaghetti three minutes until it's al dente. It depends on what kind of pasta you are making." Volioti drains the spaghetti. "We don't want any water," and tosses it with the shrimp and sauce in the skillet, then carefully places the pasta in a large white bowl and arranges each shrimp and artichoke on top.

Volioti says the favorite customer dish at her restaurant, Vaso's Kitchen, on Powhatan Street is the seafood marinara with shrimps, scallops, clams, calamari, mussels, herbs and white wine. Also the fresh branzino. Her daughter Lia Volioti, who has worked in the restaurant with Vaso for 13 years this Saturday, says that customers these days try to eat healthy and some will order the fish and substitute rice or the vegetable of the day for the pasta. Vaso says, "Me it's hard to decide. I love everything I cook. Really. Or I wouldn't cook it."

Vaso said she worked for 35 years as a waitress at an Italian restaurant on Richmond Highway but when her son wanted to go to New York to become ... "an actor," her daughter supplied the word, Vaso decided to quit and start her own restaurant. Lia who had worked at Delta came to help because "a restaurant is very busy." Vaso came to America from Cyprus when she was 10 years old, and the whole family in America was in the restaurant business.

Vaso has just returned from a trip to Australia where she went to meet the family of a man who had rediscovered her on Facebook from their childhood. "And look what I came back with," she said, sporting a heavy left hand with a large sparkling diamond.



Vaso Volioti sautés floured veal on high heat.



Veal is layered with picnic ham, asparagus and provolone.



Veal primavera topped with cream-sherry sauce.

ENTERTAINMENT

Dates to Circle in April

BY HOPE NELSON

Oysters, beer, happy hours and giving back to the community — April is full of food-and-drink events for every palate and persuasion. Here are some of the month's best picks.

Barks, Brews and Bites at the Alexandrian, April 4

The Alexandrian hotel is kicking off a happy hour in support of the Alexandria Police Foundation. With an aim to help the organization support its active and retired police dogs, **APPETITE** Barks, Brews and Bites is itself a dog-friendly event where visitors can meet some of the police department's active-duty K9 officers as well as play games and win prizes. Each ticket earns guests a beer from Port City Brewing. 480 King St. 5:30-8 p.m. \$10.

Ideaal Tripel Release Party at Port City Brewing, April 5

Out with the heavy, spiced winter beers; in with the honey-gold brews of spring. Port City Brewing is tapping its Ideaal Tripel, a Belgian-style tripel that's at once light and complex, and is taking advantage of the warmer weather to celebrate. Plunk down on the patio or take a seat inside (for March Madness viewing, of course) and get a taste of spring. Staff will host a brewery tour at 6:30, and the Borinquen Lunch Box food truck will be parked outside the brewery for a taste of Puerto Rican fare. 3950 Wheeler Ave. 3-10 p.m.

Vola's Spring Oysterfest, April 6

As the weather warms up, what better time to take advantage of Vola's Docksider Grill's new patio space

and mow down some oysters? Vola's has you covered with all things mollusk. Your entry ticket gets you a feast of fresh-shucked oysters, oyster stew, fried oysters, broiled oysters, beer and wine. The fare is unlimited, so bring an appetite. 101 N. Union St. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. \$80.

Volunteer Alexandria Sandwich-Making at Great Harvest Bread Company, April 6

Move over, parents — this volunteer event is for children only. Volunteer Alexandria is hosting a peanut butter and jelly sandwich-making event for children ages 6 to 12 with the aim of putting together 75 sandwiches for a local school. Citing a report that nearly 29,000 Alexandrians live at or below the poverty threshold, Volunteer Alexandria aims to help feed local students in need by encouraging young volunteers to help their peers. Great Harvest Bread Company is donating the space for the event. 1711 Centre Plaza. 10 a.m.-noon. Register at www.volunteerallexandria.org.

Blackboard at Pizzeria Paradiso, April 14

Join owner and Chef Ruth Gresser and executive beer director Drew McCormick for the second of Pizzeria Paradiso's spring "Blackboard" classes, "All About Pizza Dough." The class will lead off with a pizza dough-making and stretching demonstration and will encourage students to try their own hand at the process. In case all that pizza-making induces some hunger, Paradiso's New York-style pizza will be available for snacking. Wash it all down with some beers selected by McCormick. 124 King St. Noon-1:30 p.m. \$40.

Hope Nelson owns and operates the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.

CALENDAR

Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

"Daddy Long Legs." Through March 30, at the Ainslie Arts Center, 3900 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. The play tells the story of Jerusha Abbott, her mysterious young benefactor and the affection that grows between them by way of handwritten letters. Monumental Theatre Company will be partnering with the English Department at Episcopal High School in Alexandria to give students a "behind-the-scenes" look at "Daddy Long Legs." Visit monumentaltheatre.org/daddy-long-legs.html.

Art Exhibition: High School Students. Through March 30, at The Gallery at Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. The Alexandria All City High School Art Exhibition hosted by the Convergence Arts Initiative returns for its fourth year. This year's experience features more than 90 Alexandria high school students. Visit ourconvergence.org.

Art Exhibit: For The Artist. Through March 31, at Del Ray Artisans gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. The "For The Artist" exhibit features artworks that Del Ray Artisans members have always dreamed of creating. The diversity of expression and creativity in this exhibit is inspiring to artists and art appreciators alike. Two and three-dimensional works, paintings, mixed

media, and photography are on exhibit. Visit DelRayArtisans.org/ exhibits for more.

Still Life Alive. Through April 2, 9-5 p.m. at River Farm, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria. Patricia Uchello One Woman Art Show, featuring 100 original oil paintings of flowers, fruit, landscapes and seascapes. Uchello's work has been collected by IBM, the International Monetary Fund and more. Email pmuchello@aol.com or visit www.patriciauchello.com for more.

Good Luck Charms. Through April 14, at Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery, 105 N. Union Street, Studio 29, Alexandria. A very special found object, a four leaf clover, a rainbow, a wishbone, a charm on a bracelet - these objects all serve as inspiration to gallery members when creating pieces for this show. Visit www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com.

Art Exhibit: Waterworks. Through April 14, Thursday-Sunday, noon-4 p.m. in the Athenaeum main gallery, 201 Prince St. Water Works features paintings by Lisa Tubach and Suzanne Yurdin, and prints by Rhonda Smith. Each artist explores varied interpretations of water and aquatic environments. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

Art Exhibit: Checks & Balances. Through April 14, Thursday-Sunday, noon-4 p.m. in the Athenaeum rear gallery, 201 Prince St. Alexandra N. Sherman stumbled onto a cache of 1930's checks in an antique writing box and was inspired to make use of the printed engraving, beautiful handwriting from a bygone era, and stamps that marked their passage

through the banking system in a series of collages. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

THURSDAY/MARCH 28

Film Screening: "Bucks Against the Wall." 7-9 p.m. at Christ Church Alexandria, 118 N. Washington St. A screening of Bucks Against the Wall: The Howard Thurman Story, is followed by a conversation with director and producer Martin Doblmeier. The grandson of slaves, Thurman became a "spiritual foundation" for the Civil Rights Movement, inspiring many of its leaders including Martin Luther King, Jr, Jesse Jackson, and U.S. Rep. John Lewis. \$5 suggested donation. Visit www.historicchristchurch.org or call 703-549-1450.

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/MARCH 28-30

Used Book & Art Sale. Thursday, 1-5 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane. Gently used art, children's books, record albums, rare/old books and individually priced books in the church building. Books, puzzles, CDs and DVDs in the Old Mansion. Priced at \$2 for hard backs, \$1 for large paperbacks, and 50 cents for small paperbacks. Puzzles, CDs, and DVDs are \$1 each. Saturday is half price in the Church and \$5 a bag in the Mansion. Visit www.mvuc.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 29

The March150 Art Party. 7-10 p.m.



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ENTERTAINMENT

at The Target Gallery, Torpedo Factory. The March150 Art Party, presented by the Factory Society, is the closing reception for Target Gallery's March150 Special Exhibition and Art Sale. All remaining artwork is priced at \$100. Tickets are \$25 in advance/\$30 at the door. Visit www.eventbrite.com/e/2019-march150-art-party-tickets-56460314320 for tickets.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/MARCH 29-30

"Curtains." Friday-Saturday, 7:30 p.m. in Garwood Whaley Auditorium at Bishop Ireton. Bishop Ireton Theater Arts presents the musical comedy whodunit "Curtains." \$10 adults, \$8 students, \$8 seniors. Visit www.bishopireton.org/tickets.

SATURDAY/MARCH 30

Multiply Your Plants. 9:30-11 a.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. (Adults) Multiply plants through the simple, money-saving techniques of stem cuttings and plant division. Horticulturalist Peggy Riccio will walk participants through this hands-on workshop where they will learn to propagate house and garden plants. Take the starter plants home to grow or share with a friend. \$22/person. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes/ using code 586.37E6 or call 703-642-5173.

NoVaTEEN Book Festival. 9:30 a.m. at Marshall High School, 7731 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. The NoVaTEEN Book Festival is back with a day full of panels, games, and signings with over 30 bestselling and emerging Young Adult authors. Learn more on the official festival website. The event is free and open to the

public; tickets and a full schedule are available at novateenbookfestival.com.

Documentary Film and Discussion Series. 10 a.m.-noon at Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. The Office of Historic Alexandria will host a six-week program series called "Becoming American: A Documentary Film and Discussion Series on Our Immigration Experience." This series is a six-week public program featuring documentary film screenings and scholar-led discussions designed to encourage an informed discussion of immigration issues against the backdrop of our immigration history. The series is open and free to all members of the community, but pre-registration is requested through Alexandriava.gov/Shop.

Guided Tour of Friendship Firehouse Museum. 11 a.m.-noon at Friendship Firehouse Museum, 107 South Alfred St. Learn about the Friendship Fire Company's Prettyman hose carriage, one of Virginia's Top Endangered Artifacts. The ornate 1858 hose-reel carriage that was made in Alexandria in the North Pitt Street shop of coachmaker and Friendship member Robert F. Prettyman. The docent-led tour is for ages 10 and older. \$5 for adults and \$4 ages 10-17. Reservations are required, space is limited. Purchase tickets at shop.alexandriava.gov or by calling 703-746-4994.

Made in Virginia Goodies. 12:30-2:30 p.m. at The Old Town Shop, 105 S. Union St. at King Street. Sampling of made in Virginia products, featuring: Byrd Mill Baking Mix tasting. Call 703-684-4682 or visit www.TheOldTownShop.com.

The Marital Misadventures of



An Afternoon with Groovy Nate

Groovy Nate is a children's entertainer and Wolf Trap Teaching Artist who creates fun and educational shows using exotic musical instruments and ventriloquism. Saturday, April 6, noon at The Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. All ages are welcome, but most suitable for children 3-8 years old. Cost \$5; \$3 for those who attend Story Time for Little Historians at 11 a.m. Seats are limited, reserve tickets at shop.alexandriava.gov. Call 703-746-4356 for more.

Henry VIII. 1-3:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. (Adults) Divorced, beheaded, died, beheaded, divorced, survived. Smithsonian scholar and popular speaker Carol Ann Lloyd Stanger traces Henry VIII's wild matrimonial journey to secure the succession. Afterwards, solve riddles of the king's many queens at a mystery afternoon tea, where clues are hidden in plain sight! \$45 (program + tea); \$22 (program only). Programs are by reservation only. Call 703-941-7987, TTY 703-324-3988.

Chili Cookoff. 1 p.m. at Hopsfrog Grille, 6030 Burke Commons Road, Burke. Hopsfrog Grille's annual Chili Cookoff benefiting the Fort Belvoir Fisher House (www.fisherhouse.org) features chili tasting and raffle. Contestant pre-registration by March 17; \$10 per chili entry. Chili tasters: \$10 and a vote for best chili. Call 703-239-9324 for more.

Book Signing: Char McCargo Bah. 1 p.m. at Barnes & Noble, 8117 Sudley Road, Manassas. Author Char

McCargo Bah, of Alexandria, will be available to sign copies of her book, "Alexandria's Freedmen's Cemetery: A Legacy of Freedom." For nearly 80 years, the cemetery lay undisturbed and was eventually forgotten. Rediscovered in 1996, it has now been preserved as a monument to the courage and sacrifice of those buried within.

Introduction to Punch Needle Embroidery Workshop. 3:30 p.m. at Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Join "The Comptoir" herself for this super fun punch needle embroidery workshop. Learn the basics of the tool and technique as well as the ins and outs of selecting the best fabric and yarns for a beautiful piece every time. Create a design with guidance, and gain the skills to make beautiful pieces again and again. All supplies included. Ticket required, includes show admission. Visit www.woodlawnpopeleighey.org.

GenOUT Ensemble. 5 p.m. at St.

Luke's Episcopal Church, 8009 Fort Hunt Road. GenOUT is a youth ensemble of the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C. It operates under the two-fold mission to give LGBTQ+ and allied youth a voice, and to connect that voice to the community. Featuring music from their Spring Tour to Nashville. Free-will offering collected. Visit www.saintlukeschurch.net/events or call 703-765-4342.

Concert: Anders Lundegård. 7 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Conversation Piece concert featuring Swedish Saxophonist Anders Lundegård. Visit classicalsaxophonist.com/concert.

Love Avian-Style. 7-8:30 p.m. at Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Bring a flashlight and come for an evening walk through the woods to one of the park's large meadows. This family program is designed for participants age 6-adult. Children must be accompanied by a registered adult. The program includes an approximately 1.5 mile-walk on uneven terrain. Meet at the South Kings Highway entrance to the park. Call 703-768-2525 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows.

SUNDAY/MARCH 31

Artist Reception: "On the Edge." Noon-4 p.m. at Fiberworks (Studio 14) at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. The March exhibit, "On the Edge," at Fiberworks Studio 14 features the work of Cindy Grisdela, an award-winning fiber artist, through April 1. Visit cindygrisdela.com for more.

Walking with Washington. 2-4 p.m. at the Alexandria Visitor Center (Ramsay House), 221 King St.

*Savings based on comparable pricing. Cannot be combined with any other offers. Financing available. See store for details.

ENTERTAINMENT

Explore important sites associated with George Washington in his hometown of Alexandria. This two-hour guided walking tour of historic Old Towne covers significant people and events in Washington's life and in American history. No reservations required. Free. Call 703-379-7460 or visit www.washingtonbirthday.com.

The Awesome Women of

Alexandria. 3 p.m. at Ivy Hill Cemetery, 2823 King St. Join Ivy Hill's historian for a walking cemetery tour of the famous Women of Alexandria that are buried at Ivy Hill Cemetery. Learn about the saving of Mount Vernon; the maker of a battle flag; the local librarian; and more. Wear comfortable shoes, and dress in layers, as some areas of the cemetery are shaded. Admission is \$10. Reserve and pay in advance online at PayPal.me/IHCHPS, or cash is accepted at the event or RSVP to info@ihchps.org.

Eclipse Chamber Orchestra. 3-5 p.m. at Alexandria Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Cecilia Cho, piano; Paul Cigan, clarinet; and Eric deWardt, viola; will perform Schumann: Fairy Tales; Bruch: Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano; and Mozart: "Kegelstatt" Trio. \$25 suggested donation, students and children free. Email contact@eclipseco.org or visit www.eclipseco.org.

Embroidering with Buttercream: Mexican Motif Cake Decorating. 3:30 p.m. at Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Learn how to "embroider" a small cake. In this class Mayra Garcia from CelebrateMe! will teach participants how pipe beautiful Mexican embroidery designs, with

buttercream icing. The workshop will begin with a demo on how to build, fill and ice a cake properly, then move on to teaching participants how to create beautiful embroidery-inspired traditional Mexican patterns. All supplies included. Ticket required, includes show admission. Visit woodlawnpopeleighey.org.

Durham County Poets plus Emi

DeLia. 7 p.m. at George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. The Durham County Poets are a lively and soulful group, who write and perform an eclectic blend of blues, folk and rock, with tinges of country, gospel and swing tossed in for good measure. With an almost 4 octave vocal range and electronic pedals on her harp, Emi DeLia creates a unique sound that blends pop, soul, R&B, jazz, blues, and world music. Tickets are \$18 in advance at www.focusmusic.org/buy-tickets and for FocusMusic members; \$20 at the door.

TUESDAY/APRIL 2

Author Event: Randon Billings Noble and Xu Xi. 6:30 p.m. at Old Town Books, 104 South Union St. Join authors Randon Billings Noble and Xu Xi for an evening devoted to the essay at Old Town Books, Alexandria's newest independent bookstore. Both authors will be reading from their essay collections, out this month from the University of Nebraska Press. They will discuss the challenges and opportunities of the essay form and will open the discussion for audience participation. The event is free and open to the public. Both books will be available for purchase and signing. Visit oldtownbooks.com.

Small Space Gardening for

Pollinators. 7-8:30 p.m. at Barrett Branch Library, 717 Queen St. Research has shown the importance residential gardens play in providing environmental support for wildlife. Learn which plants will attract and fill the needs of native pollinators even if garden space is limited to a small yard, a patio, or a balcony. Best gardening practices for pollinators. Free. Advance registration requested at mgnv.org. Call 703-228-6414 or email mgaralex@gmail.com.

THURSDAY/APRIL 4

Garden Club Meeting. 10 a.m. at Mount Vernon Yacht Club, 4817 Tarpon Lane. Yacht Haven Garden Club will meet. The program will be "Design on a Grand Scale" by Anne Boucher, florist and Master Flower Show Judge. New members are welcome. Email pmuchello@aol.com.

Anniversary Open House. 3-6 p.m. at the Alexandria Health Department's main location, 4480 King St. The City of Alexandria invites the community to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Alexandria Health Department. The open house will feature kiosks spotlighting each division, fire trucks, free giveaways and light refreshments. The community is invited to take a tour of the facilities, learn about services provided and meet employees who make these services possible. This event is free and open to the public. Visit alexandriava.gov/Health.

FRIDAY/APRIL 5

Annual Dundee Sister Cities Whisky Tasting. 7-10 p.m. at the historic Gadsby's, 134 N. Royal St. This annual fundraiser supports

cultural and educational activities with Dundee, Scotland and Helsingborg, Sweden. \$50-\$75. Get tickets at ticketsatwww.eventbrite.com/e/annual-scottish-whisky-tasting-wine-tickets-57858095120. Email Alexsistercities@gmail.com for more.

Fundraiser: Annual Dinner. Lindsay Cadillac, 1525 Kenwood Ave. Support Dunbar-Alexandria Olympic Boys & Girls Club at their annual dinner event. Help build the future for youth in the Alexandria community while enjoying cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, silent auction, dinner and dancing. \$125-\$225. Visit one.bidpal.net/starsofbgc/welcome for tickets.

APRIL 5-28

Art Exhibit: "(No) Comfort Zone." Gallery hours at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. The "(No) Comfort Zone" exhibit reflects people, places and things that are in and/or out of their comfort zone. An opening reception takes place April 5, 7-9 p.m. Visit DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits.

SATURDAY/APRIL 6

Writer's Workshop for Adults. 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron St. Popular Simon and Schuster author Sheila P. Moses will conduct a workshop for those interested in writing for the young adult market. Learn how to tell a good story, what a publisher looks for in a new author and how to make your story ideas a reality. This workshop is limited to 20 people. A light breakfast and snacks will be provided. Bring lunch. Reservations are required, and the \$75 registration fee must be paid

online by April 1 at www.alexandriava.gov/webtrac and select the activity number 455201.01.

Hamilton's BFF & Frenemies Specialty Tour. 10-11 a.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal St. Inspired by the musical Hamilton, hear about Washington, Lafayette, Jefferson, Madison, and Burr, who all came to the tavern, and delve into the issues they faced and how their choices impacted local citizens. This specialty tour is offered every Saturday in April. \$15 per person, \$12 for museum members. Call 703-746-4242 or visit www.alexandriava.gov/shop for tickets.

Floral Design Workshop-Ikebana. 10-11:30 a.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. (16-Adult) Ikebana is a Japanese art of flower arrangement. Learn its rich symbolism and fundamentals, and take home an arrangement. Materials provided with \$25 supply fee. Program fee is \$39/person. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes/ using code 3FB.OBF3 or call 703-642-5173.

Avenue Poems Walk. 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Duncan Library Meeting Room, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. Renée Adams of Del Ray's poetry fence will lead a walk of some of 65 poems placed outside businesses and other locations in Del Ray for April, poetry month. Get a list of the businesses and poems from the Duncan Library and lead your own poetry walk any time in April while the poems are up. Free. Call 703-746-1705.

Story Time for Little Historians. 11 a.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St., Alexandria. Enjoy cultural stories and creative

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ENTERTAINMENT

Return to 1955 at ACCT's 'Bus Stop'

Comic exploration about four types of love.

BY STEVE HIBBARD

Aldersgate Church Community Theater (ACCT) will present "Bus Stop" from March 29 to April 14. The play is set in a roadside diner near Kansas City in 1955. A freak snowstorm has halted the progress of the bus, and the characters have a layover in the diner in the middle of the night when romantic relationships ensue. The play was made into the 1956 film starring Marilyn Monroe.

According to Director Eleanore Tapscott: "Bus Stop" is a thoughtful and comic exploration about four types of love: young romantic love, loyal friendship, emotionless physical love, and deviant infatuation. In this play, we examine how people find and fail in love. A cross-section of people (town locals and visitors are trapped in a tiny rural diner during a raging snowstorm) are searching for meaning, searching for substance, searching for love sometimes in some of the wrong places."

Added Producer Charles Dragonette: "Having pushed to have ACCT take on 'Bus Stop' and then having heard Eleanore Tapscott's vision for the play, I could not turn down the chance to be more fully involved in bringing this mid-century American story to life. As a producer (and stage manager) I have had the continuing excitement of watching this show develop and to see how each of its interwoven stories resolve with warmth and heart."

Drew Cannady is playing the role of Will Masters, the local sheriff. "He is a devout Christian but isn't judgmental, as shown by his gentle ribbing of Carl and Elma for their, um, dalliance. He takes his job seriously and stands up for those who need help, but he also strongly believes in fairness and forgiveness," he said. "Will is a pillar of his

community, and I think he is the most settled (and perhaps happiest) of all the characters in Bus Stop," he said.

Elizabeth Replogle plays the role of Grace who owns the diner where the travelers are stranded. "She is technically still married, but her husband has been out of the picture for quite a while, and she's okay with that," she said.

She added: "Grace is really a character ahead of her time. Today, we don't think twice (at least I hope we don't) about an independent woman running her own business, and being unapologetic about the way she lives her life. But it would have been a huge struggle for a woman to assert herself that way 50 years ago without being portrayed as an object of pity or sympathy, which Grace definitely does not want. I try to keep her backstory in mind when I am playing her."

Emily Golden plays the role of Cherie, a nightclub singer in Kansas City. "Bo has forcefully put her on the bus with the intention of taking her to Montana and marrying her. Although she is attracted to Bo, she feels conflicted because of his rough approach. During the course of the show, we learn more about Cherie's past, as well as her hopes for the future," she said.

Joel Durgavich is playing the role of Virgil Blessing, a father figure for Bo. "Bo's parents died when he was 10 and Virgil has been raising him since then. Virgil himself is unmarried and does his best to keep Bo on the straight and narrow," he said.

He added: "I was initially playing the character of Virgil Blessing as too passive. I had to balance being stern with Bo when he is being unruly and being more compassionate to him when I am trying to teach him how to respect authority and Cherie."

John Paul Odle is playing the role of Bo



PHOTO BY HOWARD SOROOS

From left: Drew Cannady (Will, the Sheriff), Emily Golden (Cherie), John Paul Odle (Bo), Joel Durgavich (Virgil), and Madeline Byrd (Elma) star in ACCT's production of "Bus Stop."

Decker, a young buck untested outside of his Montana ranch. "His sheltered life is informed by what he reads, and what he watches on his 24-inch color television. Having inherited his parents' ranch at 21, the power has gone slightly to his head. On his first rodeo tour outside of Montana, Bo feels the urgent need to find himself a wife, and is enraptured by Cherie, a singer at a nightclub he frequented every night after the rodeo. With little experience towards women, he acts outwardly in a brash, abusive way, although his inward reasoning is much more authentic and genuine. Bo is head over heels in love with Cherie, and will stop at nothing to marry her," he said.

Madeline Byrd is playing the role of Elma Duckworth, the young and innocent waitress who works at Grace's Diner. "She is very intellectual, but a bit naive in the ways of love. She eagerly creates connections with strangers without any judgement or preconceived notions. She has an idealistic worldview that expands beyond the confines of Grace's Diner in rural Kansas," she said.

Richard Isaacs is playing the role of Carl, the bus driver, who he describes as "a good old boy who goes through the motions ...

he was, is, and always will be a bus driver. And he's happy with that."

He added: "It was a different world in 1955 when the play came out, but I believe that the 50-plus-years-old humor in this show stands the test of time, so I'm hoping that the audience leaves with a smile on their face."

Tom Solman is playing the role of Dr. Gerald Lyman, a candid, highly educated yet dysfunctional character. "Married and divorced three times, he could never trust himself or others around him to find lasting love and true meaning. He will not be controlled by anyone or anything. He is on a mission to be 'free' by traveling the country on a bus, both running away from pain and through pain via alcohol, young women, humor and intellect. He never escapes," he said.

Aldersgate Church Community Theater will present "Bus Stop" from March 29 to April 14. Show times are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.; and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$15 general admission; \$12 for students and seniors; and \$10 for groups. The venue is located at 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria. Visit actonline.org.

CALENDAR

craft activities that introduce world history and folklore. Afterwards, explore the museum exhibits to learn about local Black history. All ages welcome, but most suitable for children 4 and older. Admission is \$3 per person. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 703-746-4356.

An Afternoon with Groovy Nate. Noon at The Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Groovy Nate is a children's entertainer and Wolf Trap Teaching Artist who creates fun and educational shows using exotic musical instruments and ventriloquism. All ages are welcome, but most suitable for children 3-8 years old. Cost \$5; \$3 for those who attend Story Time for Little Historians at 11 a.m. Seats are limited, reserve tickets at shop.alexandriava.gov. Call 703-746-4356 for more.

The "Grandest Congress." Noon-4 p.m. at Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax St. Spring, 1755: Major General Edward Braddock,

Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in North America, landed in Alexandria on March 26th to assume command of all North American military forces. He lodged at the grandest dwelling in town, Carlyle House. Admission is free, but donations are welcome. Free admission. Visit www.novaparks.com/parks/carlyle-house-historic-park or call 703-549-2997.

Ikebana Floral Design Workshop for Kids. 1-2 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. (9-12 yrs.) Kids can try their hand at creating a Japanese-style floral design influenced by the flowering cherry trees. \$15/person. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes/ using code E7B.F075 or call 703-642-5173.

"Spring Beauty on Duty." 1-2:30 p.m. at Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd. What are those colorful flowers that carpet the forest floor at Huntley Meadows Park each spring? Hear the Indian lore

associated with the flowers and learn about their important place in animal life. View the flower's fascinating parts under a microscope. Designed for ages 4-12. \$12 per child. Call 703-768-2525 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows.

Tree Printing Workshop. 1:30-3 p.m. at River Farm, 7931 East Boulevard Drive. Join Dan Scott, Associate Director of Horticulture and River Farm, in an educational hands-on workshop about tree rings. Attendees will learn the art of wood printing. \$65 AHS members; \$75 non-members. Space limited to 20 participants. Email ksomerville@ahsgardening.org or visit www.ahsgardening.org.

Country-Western Dance. 6-9:30 p.m. at Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 North Chambliss St. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a Fisher House Benefit dance. There will be a potluck dinner (please bring a dish to share) and no lessons. A DJ provides

music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Admission \$20 per person. No free passes. Net proceeds from the dance go to Fisher House Foundation. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. Fundraiser raffles including chance for ballet tickets. Visit www.nvcwda.org.

ASO Presents: Rachmaninoff. 8-10 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, 4915 East Campus Drive. Join the ASO and Maestro James Ross for the 2018-2019 season finale, featuring Rachmaninoff's famed Piano Concerto No. 3 and Robert Schumann's poetic Symphony No. 1 "Spring." Pre-concert talk at 7 p.m. \$20-\$80 adult, \$5 youth, \$10 student. Visit www.alexsym.org or call 703-548-0885.

SUNDAY/APRIL 7

Spring Open House. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at CARE Actor Arts Space, 129 South Royal St., Suite 5. CARE Actor is hosting a spring open house with activities for all ages. (2 and older),

including storytime, face painting, arts & crafts, an improv workshop and more. Free; get tickets at www.careactorkids.com/special-events.html.

Opening Reception: "Ranch Life." 2-4 p.m. at Multiple Exposures Gallery, The Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N Union St., Studio 312. Sandy LeBrun-Evans visited Eaton's Ranch in Wyoming last year and was enamored with the lifestyle and how easy it was to forget the troubles of the world and to get lost in the past. Visit multipleexposuresgallery.com or call 703-683-2205.

ASO Presents: Rachmaninoff. 3-5 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Join the ASO and Maestro James Ross for the 2018-2019 season finale, featuring Rachmaninoff's famed Piano Concerto No. 3 and Robert Schumann's poetic Symphony No. 1 "Spring." Pre-concert talk at 2:15 p.m. \$20-\$80 adult, \$5 youth, \$10 student. Visit www.alexsym.org or call 703-548-0885.



The winner – at least according to the Straw Poll. Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay “won” his election to chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors with 57.5 percent of the 500 ballots cast at Connolly’s St. Pat’s Day Bash. “But it’s a great start,” said the candidate.

PHOTO BY ANDREA WORKER/
THE GAZETTE

Biden, McKay Win Dems Poll

More than 50 Democrats will vie for Fairfax County offices on June 11, primary election day.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE GAZETTE

Equal parts fundraiser and fun-raiser, U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) hosted a packed house at his 25th Annual St. Patrick’s Day Bash at the Northern Virginia Community College’s Ernst Cultural Center in Annandale on March 15.

What started as an intimate gathering at Connolly’s Fairfax home when he was first elected to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in 1995 has evolved to become one of the largest Democratic gatherings in the Commonwealth.

“We’ve been coming to this event for years,” said Marvin Solberg of Fairfax. “We love the energy, being around people who are interested in, and working to help, the community and for the country.”

People mixed and mingled and enjoyed the corn beef and cabbage fare.

“I promise, we’ve gotten special dispensation to eat meat tonight,” joked Connolly, referring to the Catholic tradition of abstinence from meat during the Fridays of the Lenten season.

In case there were attendees of that religion who did not quite believe the congressman’s declaration and wanted to keep the faith in this regard, salmon was also on the menu, along with plenty of desserts and beverages to keep the high spirits flowing.

AMID THE CROWD of Connolly’s constituents, friends and family, the greater majority of Democratic candidates running for local offices in 2019 were on hand, as well. From incumbents to opponents, the diverse mix of locals seeking seats for Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, State Senators and Delegates, Fairfax County Commonwealth Attorney, Fairfax County Public School Board and Sheriff worked the room.

After the welcoming speech, Connolly gave equal air time to the four candidates running for the Board of Supervisors chairmanship – a seat long held by Sharon Bulova who will retire after her 10th year in the position and more than 30 years in service to the county.

Vying to head the board are Jeff McKay, currently the Lee District supervisor and the candidate endorsed by both Connolly and Bulova, Ryan McElveen,

the At-Large FCPS board member, Alicia Plerhoples, a law professor at Georgetown and co-founder of progressive grassroots organization Virginia Democracy Forward, and Tim Chapman, a Fairfax businessman who has served on the Virginia Housing and Development Authority, initially as an appointee by former Gov. Terry McAuliffe.

Part of the evening’s action was a Straw Poll for both the position of Board of Supervisors chair, and for the attendees’ choice for President of the United States in the 2020 election. More than 500 “ballots” were cast at the bash – “Now let’s see this kind of turn out for the local June 11 primaries, the Nov. 5 elections, and definitely for next year’s Presidential selection,” said Connolly.

As the ballots were being counted, Connolly and Bulova took to the stage and began reading the names of all of the candidates from Fairfax County and even Prince William.

“Come on up,” Connolly instructed, as Bulova kept reading the long list of candidates. The assembled group challenged even the widest-angle lens when it was time to snap the photo.

TO CHEERS from his supporters, Jeff McKay was the clear winner among the party-goers for the chairman’s post with 57.5 percent of the votes. Plerhoples took second place with 29.4 percent. McElveen and Chapman came in third and fourth respectively, but McElveen said he wasn’t concerned. As an At-Large School Board member, McElveen says he is the only candidate for the position who has run for a county-wide office. “I have support from all parts of Fairfax County.”

As for the “election” for United States President, former Vice President Joe Biden was shown the love, defeating his closest opponent, U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA), by a margin of 38.3 percent to 17 percent. Newly declared candidate Beto O’Rourke of Texas came in third in the Straw Poll.

Sadly, “no luck of the Irish tonight for O’Rourke,” laughed a Bernie Sanders supporter, whose preferred candidate finished sixth in the shortened-to-eight field.

Connolly is serving his sixth term representing Virginia’s 11th District, “but there is still so much to do, and with more Democrats, and more new energy, I know we can accomplish so much more.”

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Weight For It ... Wait ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I don't like interacting with artificial intelligence. Nor do I like interacting with artificially-intelligent emailers.

And I especially don't like when there's an attempt by these "a.i.s" to modify my behavior by suggesting a pre-programmed, presumptive course of action – or inaction on my part, based on some survey I may have completed or some list that I've recently been added to – without my consent, or most likely due to a purchase or service I likewise recently paid for.

To that end, which does not justify their means, today I received an email that goes above and beyond the "a.i.s" purview. And how this particular email came my way is "curious," as Spock from the original "Star Trek" might say.

On March 1, moments before my last infusion, I stepped on a scale which registered my "overweight," which along with taking my blood pressure, pulse and oxygen levels are part of the usual and customary vitals I provide each and every time I go for treatment. Other than my "overweight," my vitals are completely normal.

Treatment start-date to date, 10-plus years now, my "overweight" has never been a problem (truth be told, I'm hardly obese, just pleasingly plump), just a factor in determining how much medicine is dripped by my IV.

The oncologist and medical staff has seemed more concerned with a patient losing weight – which I rarely have. Although during the early days of six-plus hours of heavy-duty chemotherapy, I did lose weight and it was a concern and can portend a serious complication.

Fortunately for me, whatever weight I did lose did not portend anything other than I wasn't eating. Eventually, that lost weight – and more – was definitely found.

A few days later, I received an email from my health care provider; not my doctor, not a nurse and not personalized by any medical professional, but rather sent from some artificially-intelligent thing offering me information on varying diets and their respective benefits. At first I laughed at its location – in my inbox, and then I began to question its legitimacy and then I got mad at its presumptive intent.

Was this a coincidence? Was this merely a continuing outreach to the HMO's patients like its colon-rectal screening program, sent to patients of a certain age, seems to be? Or was it something more insidious like "Hal" nearly became in the movie "2001: A Space Odyssey"?

The nerve. The bypassing of protocols. The attempt to circumvent the human element. Is this what medicine has become?

Not calls or personalized messages from your doctor/medical staff but instead an electronic missive emailed with the cold, insensitive precision of Pentium chips?

Putting aside the obvious fact that I do need to lose weight, even though as my brother Richard says so often when he sees me: "The weight looks good on you," I am not doing so because a computer told me to.

In fact, I may not do so at all just to spite that computer, and by association, the system that exists/was put in place (presumably by some human) that believes that communicating with its members electronically is the wave of the future rather than the bane of my present. I cannot, I will not be a pawn in this game of clones where the same messages get sent to millions of semi unsuspecting patients by uncertified non-professionals as a matter of some coarse level of routine.

If you want me to change my behavior, or at least consider changing my behavior, you have to try a little harder than by sending pre-programmed message to patients who meet/exceed a certain threshold.

And how did my personal information actually get known anyway? Is there a system in place that automatically reviews patient's private histories by cross-referencing who had appointments and what the new details were? Was the scale and blood pressure machine in on it? If so, is my medical care becoming more automated and less individualized?

I realize I'm just a number but I didn't think they'd take it literally.

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

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NEWS

Widening

FROM PAGE 1

woman during the comment period at the meeting.

The audience for this "design public hearing" filled the auditorium at Mount Vernon High School on March 26, as engineers discussed the particulars of the project. The purpose is "to increase capacity, safety and mobility for all users," said the project pamphlet that was handed out in both Spanish and English at the meeting.

Keith Kerr, from Mount Vernon Manor, was worried about their trees but was glad something was being done. "We're anticipating more noise and light," he said. The sound wall plan is still being finalized as well. There was talk of putting the utility lines underground as well, which would add to the final price tag.

When it came time for questions from the audience, the line went back to the door. Topics included bike paths, access to public transportation, turn lanes, signal patterns, and excess traffic on Telegraph Road which runs parallel to Richmond Highway a few miles to the west.

"We are looking at making some improvements at Telegraph and Hayfield," said Tom Biesiadny at Fairfax County Department of Transportation.

The schedule for the \$372 million project is to complete the design this spring, begin utility relocation in the winter of 2020, begin construction in summer 2023. The new lanes are scheduled to open in 2026.

Comments will be accepted through April 26 by email to RichmondHighway@vdot.virginia.gov or by mail to Dan Reinhard, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030.

CRIME REPORT

FROM PAGE 5

STOLEN VEHICLE: 7300 block of Richmond Highway, March 19, 3:49 a.m. Our officers found a stolen Honda Odyssey being driven on Richmond Highway. Officers stopped the car and the driver got out and ran away. After a short chase, a 38-year-old man from Washington D.C. was arrested and charged with grand larceny. The passenger, 32 years old from Maryland, was arrested and charged with petit larceny.

MARCH 25 LARCENIES
 1900 block of Elkin Street, tires from vehicle
 6700 block of Richmond Highway, wallet from location

1900 block of Rollins Drive, bag from vehicle
 6300 block of Tracey Court, tools from vehicle

MARCH 22 LARCENIES
 9100 block of Richmond Highway, documents from location

MARCH 21 LARCENIES
 7800 block of Audubon Avenue, wheels from vehicle
 2500 block of Parkers Lane, checks from residence
 8600 block of Richmond Highway, property from residence
 6300 block of South Kings Highway, beer from business
 5600 block of Telegraph Road, merchandise from business

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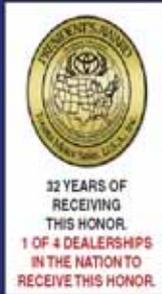
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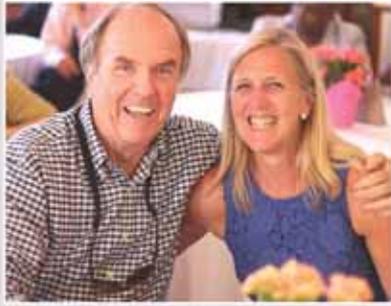
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2207 Lakeshire Dr.

Classic Colonial! | \$945,000

Just listed in desirable Manors at Mount Vernon community! Curb appeal abounds with distinctive front porch. Exceptionally bright and open floor plan highlighted by updated kitchen opening to spacious family room with soaring cathedral ceiling. Other features include: 4 Bedrooms, 3.5 Baths, main level office/library, upgraded trim detail, and two car garage. Near Stratford Landing School. Unique combination of size, location, & attractive price in premier location!



9402 Mt. Vernon Circle \$875,000

Unique property in highly desired Mt. Vernon on The Potomac Neighborhood! Classic 3 level Colonial in prime location just steps from neighborhood private marina. Features inc: Open Floor plan, large room sizes, family room off nicely updated Kitchen with stone fireplace, hardwood floors, elegant trim detail, and true oversize two car garage. Community includes private waterfront grassy area, 2 tennis courts with hitting wall, fire pit, bathrooms, and docks/boat slips (for additional fee)

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4021 Colonial Ave \$1,130,000

Incredible brand new build in desirable Mount Vernon area. Almost 5,000 square feet on a flat level half acre lot. 5 Bedrooms and 4.5 Baths with long list of builder selections that set this home apart from your average build. Rare opportunity for a brand new build in Mount Vernon!

SOLD!



8826 Black Alder Dr \$665,000

Incredible value for Classic Colonial style on established street adjacent to Mount Vernon Country Club. Many features including: 3 finished levels, 5 Bedrooms including main level master, 3.5 baths, open kitchen to fam room, 2 fireplaces, oversize 2 car garage. Extensive list of recent updates including: Kitchen, roof, master bath, wood floors, powder room, basement bath, interior paint, garage doors, and the list goes on. Turn key opportunity!

SOLD!



8902 Beauchamp Dr. \$550,000

Expanded and updated contemporary on gorgeous half acre lot near Mt. Vernon Estate. Fabulous features include: bright open floor plan, glass window wall, gorgeous hardwood floors on two levels, and oversize two car garage. Large deck overlooks private grounds. Freshly painted interior makes this one move in ready!

SOLD!



8314 Wagon Wheel Dr \$665,000

3 level Colonial situated on serene elevated lot overlooking natural wonderland. Private dock for your canoe, kayak, or small motor boat! Home has huge potential & features: 4/5 Bedrooms, large room sizes, hardwood floors, fully finished lower level w/ outside entrance, sunroom overlooking creek. Won't find another one like it!

SOLD!



9416 Old Mt Vernon Rd. \$789,000

Incredible opportunity to own a brand new 5 Bed/5.5 Bath home on 4 finished levels! Economical Gas appliances include: fireplace, cook top, heat and hot water. Hardwoods on main level, open kitchen to family room w/ large island & breakfast area, 4 BR's on upper level w/ 3 baths including luxurious master suite, finished basement w/ rec room, bedroom, & full bath. 10 year builder warranty!

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