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# Great Falls CONNECTION

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Michael J. Kearney, proprietor of The Old Brogue (back row, third from left) joins Franz and Sally Jaggar as they enjoy their lunch outdoors during Phase One of Governor Northam's reopening plan. Restaurant manager, Frances Duggan (front row, third from left), Kearney and staff show heart hands appreciation to all.

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## A Message for the Museum

Great Falls resident Maddie Fiorenini in St Michael's over the weekend: St Michael's has asked if they can take her sign from yesterday and display it at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum in Baltimore. "My friends deserve to feel as safe and respected as I do!"

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# NEWS

## Celebrating Reopening in Great Falls

Great Falls food establishments, old and new, open under Phase One.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

At the Village Centre in Great Falls near the corner of Georgetown Pike and Walker Road, The Old Brogue stood reopened for outdoor canopy dining on its courtyard and continued curbside pickup and delivery. The iconic local haunt is a classic Irish tavern, beers on tap, friendly atmosphere and lively bands. It has served the Great Falls community since 1981, under Proprietor Mike Kearney's leadership. Seven days after reopening under Phase One of Governor Northam's Forward Virginia plan, it drew a steady stream of lunchtime diners.

"We love The Old Brogue and supporting small businesses in our neighborhood," said Helga Morris of Great Falls as she waited with children at the hostess table. "And I'm so glad to be out of my house." Sally and Franz Jaggar sat in the courtyard, enjoying their lunch. Franz said, "If The Old Brogue didn't come back, we'd just have to leave."

Kearney said, "The Old Brogue and Katie's Coffee House has been blessed with the Great Falls Community support for over 39 years! Over the last 12 weeks, the community love and support have really shown through for all of our 84 employees. We have been trying to keep all of our employees active through these trying times, so we have reinvented ourselves with curbside pickup and delivery as well as 'Feed the Frontliners' program. Over the last 12 weeks, we have been able to feed more than 1800 people through our 'Feed the Frontliners' community support program. We have been able to feed doctors, nurses, Safeway employees, postal employees, local police officers, firefighters and needy homeless people at the Missionaries of Charity in Anacostia, Washington D.C. We are also proud to say that through our safety program we've had zero primary cases of Covid19 in our staff. We are thankful to the state for allowing us to go into Phase 1 which allows our outdoor patios to be occupied with cheerful and familiar faces and we look forward to Phase 2 in the upcoming weeks where we can actually get our loyal customers back inside. We hope to see you soon."

### Thelo Greek Bakery & Grill Prepares To Open

Some people may think it crazy for a new food establishment to open now. The novel coronavirus caused so many restaurants and cafes to collapse with others screeching to a halt and pivoting to survive. Then again, they haven't met scrappy John Panas, owner of Thelo Greek Bakery & Grill, located at 10123 Colvin Run Road in Great Falls. Panas



John Panas, owner Thelo Greek Bakery & Grill in Great Falls, samples bread made by Master Artisan Baker, Javier Fuentes as his friend, Peter Firippis takes home a sample loaf.



Michael J. Kearney, proprietor of The Old Brogue (back row, third from left) joins Franz and Sally Jaggar as they enjoy their lunch outdoors during Phase One of Governor Northam's reopening plan. Restaurant manager, Frances Duggan (front row, third from left), Kearney and staff show heart hands appreciation to all.



At The Old Brogue in Great Falls, hostess Sophie Tesfai uses an infrared thermometer to take the temperatures of prospective patrons, screening them for possible COVID-19 symptoms.

refused to let COVID-19 shatter his dream. For more than 50 years, restaurants and authentic Greek food have been Panas' passion. He is a step away from the soft opening of his newest establishment planned the week of June 14. "I believe in wonderful food...a four-star value but at \$10-\$21. I want people to get their money's worth," Panas said. "Our food reflects my taste, my travels, my restaurants, my background."

According to Panas, what will enable his new food establishment to be viable is its business plan and model. The bakery and grill occupy a small physical footprint with no indoor dining but a daily menu of authentic Greek carryout/delivery and artisan bakery choices, augmented by a catering service. If the customer wants something specific and it can be done, we will do it," he said.

**"The Old Brogue and Katie's Coffee House has been blessed with the Great Falls Community support for over 39 years! Over the last 12 weeks, the community love and support have really shown through for all of our 84 employees."**

— Michael J. Kearney,  
proprietor of The Old Brogue

Croissants, muffins, village bread, square cakes, pastries and more are some of the bakery's stars. Coffee and drinks will be available with the option for patrons to enjoy the fare at the bistro tables out front. "The bakery will open at 7 a.m. Fresh bread every day," Panas said. "Then at 11 (in the morning), we begin carryout (and delivery) until 9," he said. On Friday, June 3, Panas and others continued putting the finishing touches in place, checking the ovens and then sitting down for a morning break of crusty Greek bread. Check the website <https://www.thelogreek.com> for updates on opening day and time.

# OPINION

## Fairfax NAACP: Police Must Be Held to a Higher Standard

Fairfax NAACP calls for major changes for FCPS following assault charge for FCPD.

On Friday, June 5, Fairfax Police responded to a call about a man in distress in the Mount Vernon area of Fairfax County. Body-cam footage and bystander video reviewed by the Fairfax NAACP appears to show a man in distress, however, he does not appear to be a danger to himself or others. FCPD Officer Tyler Timberlake arrived on scene and immediately deployed his taser. The first officer on scene, who spent the first few minutes of the tape trying to calm the man down, is confused and says, "Does he have warrants?"

Timberlake then put his knee on the back of this man's neck, while both cops and at least two EMTs piled on to the man as he cries out: "Deedee, I can't breathe."

Timberlake used his taser on the man at least two more times while he was already facedown on the ground.

The Fairfax County Police and Common-

wealth's Attorney moved swiftly to charge officer Timberlake with assault and battery, announcing the charges at press conference on Saturday night.

**"The community needs increased accountability and transparency for its officers."**

— Sean Perryman,  
Fairfax NAACP President

Fairfax NAACP President Sean Perryman:

"I commend Chief Roessler and Commonwealth Attorney Descano for moving quickly to charge and arrest the officer that assaulted a

man clearly in distress and in need of help. This latest video is a testament that Fairfax County is not immune to police violence. We already know that use of force is disproportionately used against Black members of the community.

"Although we saw the county move swiftly to arrest this officer, we do not know what the official story would be without body cam and bystander video. Most officers in Fairfax are not equipped with a body camera and the Board of Supervisors has chosen to delay the roll out of body-worn cameras.

"The community needs increased accountability and transparency for its officers. And we need to reduce the interaction of Black people with armed officers because we see time and time again that we are viewed as a threat. This incident should never have happened."

The Fairfax NAACP is working with individuals and ally organizations to develop a host of changes to the way policing is conducted in the county. Advocating for how police respond to people in mental health distress is just one such change, and we will be unveiling the full list of our proposals in the coming days.

## Reflections on a 'Bad Place'

Praying for a nation that will move from being 'not racist' to affirmatively becoming antiracist.

BY RICSHAWN ADKINS ROANE

One week after George Floyd was executed in broad daylight on a busy city street over an alleged \$20 dollar counterfeit bill, we crossed into South Dakota's Badlands National Park. My 7-year old's joy was unrestrained. It was probably the joy of being unleashed after a 10-hour RV ride. To me, the photo my 12-yr old took captured a hopefulness and enthusiasm for life that was wholly inconsistent with the last week.

We had reserved the RV the previous Sunday - a seemingly fail proof plan to travel self-contained during a global pandemic with me, my husband and our three kids and two nieces (all aged 7-14). For the previous 11 weeks, the kids had been confined to a narrow 2 mile existence between our home and my sister's. This trip was meant to be an escape from our Coronavirus-necessitated confinement.

The excitement our family felt as they sent us off was tempered by something else: a wearied wariness embedded in exhortations to be careful, stay safe, and call us when you get there; and fear - they were fearful for us, an African-American family planning to visit state and national parks, long seen as the purview of White America, when the country was erupting around us. We had already been laboring under the disproportionate impact COVID-19 was having on the lives and livelihoods of Black and Brown communities. And then we all watched as a White police officer, sworn to protect and



The photo capturing a hopefulness and enthusiasm for life that was wholly inconsistent with the last week.

serve, knelt for 9 minutes on the neck of a Black man who pleaded for breath while handcuffed and facedown on hot asphalt.

As we left Virginia, there was a common refrain: Avoid Michigan - the armed White militias that stormed the capital might be looking for trouble. Avoid Minneapolis where White po-

lice officers can execute Black men with seeming impunity (it had taken 5 days for the officer who had squeezed the breath out of George Floyd to be arrested).

While at Cuyahoga Valley National Park, I found myself making sure I smiled harder than necessary, trying to appear less threatening to the White folks we passed. Not necessarily for my safety, but for that of my African-American husband and my son, the same age as Tamir Rice was when he was gunned down in nearby Cleveland over a toy gun. Everything about the trip was fraught - from the interstate highway system that made our journey possible but whose creation had torn apart thriving Black communities to what should have been an innocent bird watching expedition (remember what happened in the Brambles). From the "Police Lives Matter" sticker on the back of a pickup at one of the campgrounds we visited to the utility vehicles blocking exits to downtown Chicago as we traveled along I-90/94 West. At every stop for gas or other necessities, the Coronavirus pandemic wasn't my primary concern, the pandemic of racism and possible assault on the brown bodies traveling with me was. Would the crisp \$50 bills the ATM dispensed be mistaken for counterfeit tender?

As we crossed into South Dakota from Minnesota, my 7 year old son asked if we were close to "the 'Bad Place,'" the name he recalled for the Badlands. The nation's first peoples, whose lands were systematically dispossessed and whose people were systematically exterminated, named this area mako sica (land bad) because of the harsh and unforgiving landscape.

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Great Falls  
CONNECTION

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:  
greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com

Kemal Kurspahic  
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414  
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

Andrea Worker  
Contributing Writer  
aworker@connectionnewspapers.com

Jean Card  
Production Editor  
jcard@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:  
For advertising information  
sales@connectionnewspapers.com  
703-778-9431

Salome Howard-Gaibler  
Display Advertising  
703-415-5394  
salome@connectionnewspapers.com

Debbie Funk  
National Sales  
703-778-9444  
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin  
Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment  
Advertising  
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher  
Mary Kimm  
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com  
@MaryKimm

Executive Vice President  
Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Managing Editor  
Kemal Kurspahic  
Art/Design:  
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,  
Ali Khaligh  
Production Manager:  
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CIRCULATION  
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-Werner Heisenberg

**NEWS**

# Great Falls Residents Question Proposed Grocery Store

**M**ore than 50 Great Falls residents participated in a virtual town hall meeting on Wednesday, June 3, 2020. Hosted by Great Falls Citizens Association, the meeting focused on plans by LIDL USA to build a 29,000 sq. ft. supermarket with a 175-car parking lot at Springvale Road and Leesburg Pike (Route 7). The nearly 6 acre, residentially-zoned site has been occupied by Meadows Farms Nursery since the 1980s under a special exception. This meeting followed LIDL's initial unveiling of its proposal in November 2019 to the GFCA Land Use and Zoning Committee.

At the GFCA meeting, two LIDL representatives and their attorney made a presentation that included concepts of what the store and its parking lot might look like. They said that Great Falls residents have few grocery shopping options, and that they investigated other nearby sites but found that there is a scarcity of available, commercially zoned real estate in the area.

LIDL had commissioned a survey of 14,000 nearby residents along the Route 7 corridor within a 2.5-mile radius of the proposed store. Of the 900 responses, 46 percent reportedly favored a new LIDL store; the LIDL representatives did not discuss the views of the other 54 percent of respondents.

While LIDL's survey focused on consumer preferences for a particular grocery chain, a survey conducted by the GFCA Land Use and Zoning Committee (LUZ) reported that a separate survey of GFCA members found that 91 percent opposed the zoning change. Several questions arose among the virtual townhall participants.

**DO GREAT FALLS RESIDENTS NEED** another grocery store? What would be the store's impact on noise, traffic, and safety along Springvale Road? The only access to a new store will be an entry point on Springvale Road. Lidl said they had only begun to look at possible traffic impacts. Nearby residents from Springvale Woods HOA expressed concern that their children, who board county school buses in areas adjacent to the store, may be jeopardized with the introduction of much more traffic in and out of the Lidl store. Jennifer



Architectural Rendering Courtesy of LIDL USA

Falcone, LUZ Chair, expressed doubts about locating a major retail operation at this busy intersection and said it would most likely aggravate traffic conditions and contribute to gridlock, even with the new Route 7 widening.

Neighbors also noted that the noise, stormwater and litter from a large paved parking lot are likely to rise; Meadows Farm is not open at night as this store would be, and noise from daily overnight deliveries and garbage pickups would mar this section of Great Falls. LUZ has been monitoring storm water issues for other county-approved developments and has found that even with the use of "Best Management Practices", significant failures still occur.

How would it affect the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan? Residents noted that the comprehensive plan does not permit the commercialization of Route 7 from the Loudoun County line to Tysons. Allowing changes such as those proposed by Lidl could convert this stretch into a series of strip malls like those in Sterling. Other residents pointed out that if the Lidl store were to fail, no one knows what type of store, if any, would replace it. Another resident said that the precedent this zoning exception presents is unfavorable for the type of community Great Falls residents have been trying to preserve. Others mentioned that there are vacant retail spaces in the area and urged LIDL to consider those.

SEE LILD, PAGE 7

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# Reflections

FROM PAGE 5

I looked into his beautiful, searching eyes and silently prayed a prayer of protection for the little brown boys who will grow into Black men and wondered how long I would be able to keep him and his brother safe from the bad place that would follow them their whole lives, just as it has for my husband, my father, and their fathers before them. How do you protect someone from the bad place when it is all around us: the water you drink, the equitable health access and treatment you don't receive, the justice that is consistently denied, and for far too many, the use of force too capriciously and extremely applied.

For all of our sakes, I hope this moment doesn't end up being just the latest in a long string of state sanctioned violence against Black and Brown bodies; I pray instead for a nation that will move from being "not racist" to affirmatively becoming antiracist and developing the moral conviction and political will to exterminate the bad places.

If you have the opportunity to visit the Badlands, I highly recommend it; it is terrifyingly beautiful, harsh and life giving at the same time. Come to think of it, it's not unlike the gauntlet Black bodies run daily in this bad place.

*Ricshawn Adkins Roane is an African-American daughter, sister, wife, and mother living in Great Falls.*

## LIDL

FROM PAGE 6

NOT ALL PARTICIPANTS opposed a LIDL store. One resident said a Great Falls location would mitigate lengthy drives to Lidl stores further west. A local architect and Great Falls resident also offered supporting comments, noting that any rezoning should include criterion of traffic volumes and patterns, light and sound transmission, and appropriate visual and sound screens.

Lynne Strobel, LIDL's attorney, noted that an evaluation of the property is still being conducted and the company continues its current outreach to the community. Should LIDL proceed with the project, Lidl would seek an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, and then a rezoning.

## GFCFA Position

On May 21, GFCFA sent a formal expression of opposition to Dranesville Supervisor John Foust and Fairfax County Planning Commissioner John Ulfelder. GFCFA's position is that redevelopment along the Route 7 corridor would create substantial adverse impact on adjacent residential communities and would change the character of the road, leading to the erosion of its natural appearances. Action by Supervisor Foust on the proposal would be the first step in the process of amending the County's Comprehensive Plan. That action could redefine the stretch of the Route 7 Corridor between the Tysons area and the Loudoun County Line.

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## "The News of My Death ..."



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... is greatly exaggerated." So said Mark Twain. So said W.C. Fields. And so said Kenny Lourie. And the reason I am now saying it is because of what correspondence I received in my personal inbox accessed through my HMO's online site. What I received was a condolence letter (sort of a form letter, quite frankly), addressed to the Lourie family from my oncologist expressing his sadness at my "passing" and his "privilege to have participated in the care of Kenneth Blacker Lourie" (me). Then, a bit later in the day, I received a cell-phone call from an unknown number (so I didn't answer it) but apparently, it knew me as a voice mail message was indicated. I entered my code and listened in associated shock as I heard my oncologist speak in a very heartfelt way about his "sadness" yet again concerning the death of yours truly. He spoke for nearly a minute, hemming and hawing and occasionally hesitating as if at a loss for words. Compared to the email, this message was personalized. Reading and then hearing what I have just written was an out-of-body experience of sorts, almost as if I was attending my own funeral and listening to the eulogies while standing off in the distance.

This experience was not totally unfamiliar to me. In fact, once before, pre-cancer, something similar happened though it was more curious than morbid. Scanning the Obituary section of The Washington Post, I noticed - for the first time, photos of the many of the deceased were a part of the page. They were located above the agatetype and mostly in black and white. Catching my attention as they did, I randomly went to the top right corner of the right-side page where I saw a photograph of an African-American man. Unknown to me except for one extraordinary fact. Printed below his photo was his date of birth: 9/30/54. The same as mine. It took my breath away. I have to tell you, seeing one's date of birth listed in the obituary section is a peculiar kind of the-future-being-now.

Subsequently, I was diagnosed with "terminal" non small cell lung cancer, stage IV and given a "13 month to two year" prognosis. And though my presumptive death was not listed in the obituary section, its inevitability was implanted in my brain where it has been gnawing at me since late February, 2009. And for the last 11-plus years, as you regular readers know, I have ebbed and flowed with the varying medicines and protocols which have amazingly managed to extend my life way beyond my oncologist's expectations, and never once had I being given last rites, so to speak, or advised to "get my things in order." Until today, that is.

After I thought a bit about what I had read and heard, a part of me drifted back in time to the 1999 Bruce Willis movie "The Sixth Sense" and whether unlike Haley Joel Osment, I was actually dead already. Being alone in my house with nobody to snap me out of my delusion, for all I knew, this is what death feels like. Nevertheless, I continued with my normal routine, presuming I was still alive and sure enough, it soon became clear that I was indeed still alive.

But my oncologist and maybe even my endocrinologist - with whom I have an appointment Monday, June 8th might think otherwise. And not that their thinking 'otherwise' will change their lives, but knowing what they think they know rather than what is actually true might blip their radar and cause some emotional misdirection. After all, they're only human and even though I might not be their most memorable patient, given my unexpectedly long life post diagnosis, I feel I'm not so easily forgettable either. Not dying does that to a person's "pagh," to invoke "the spiritual force inherent in all sentient beings" as believed by the inhabitants of Bajor. (See Major Kira Nerys from "Deep Space Nine.")

For the moment/immediate future though, I am still present and accounted for. I just hope all my medical appointments haven't been automatically cancelled since I'm still a living and breathing cancer patient, and that's no exaggeration.

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

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