

# CONNECTION

Reston ♦ Oak Hill Herndon ♦ Chantilly ♦ CENTRE VIEW



The Farmers Market in Herndon is stocked with fresh fruits, vegetables, baked goods, specialty items and more. The weekly seasonal Thursday market is located in the Historic District, in front of the Town's landmark Big Red Caboose that sits between the Herndon Municipal Center at 777 Lynn Street and the W&OD trail.

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OPINION, PAGE 4 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 6

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JUNE 24-30, 2020

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FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE & RESCUE DEPT.

Flames are pouring out of this Franklin Farm garage.

## Improperly Discarded Fireworks Cause House Fire

Fire officials say improperly discarded fireworks caused a house fire, June 13, in Chantilly's Franklin Farm neighborhood. Fairfax County Fire and Rescue units were dispatched, around 9:46 p.m., to the 13100 block of Rounding Run Circle.

There, they saw fire coming from the attached garage of a two-story, single-family home. Crews quickly extinguished the blaze, preventing it from reaching the home's interior. Four residents, home at the time, noticed smoke and flames coming from the

garage; all were displaced.

According to investigators, the fire was accidental and was caused by improperly discarded fireworks in the garage. Damage was estimated at \$80,000. It was the second house fire this year caused by improperly disposed fireworks. Fire officials

urge all residents to dispose used fireworks the same as fireplace ashes. Place them into a metal container, douse with water, cover with metal lid and place container away from the house.

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# NEWS

## Don't Touch the Veggies

### COVID-19 Safety Guidelines in place as Herndon Farmers Market reopens.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The 2020 Herndon Farmers Market operated under Fairfax County Park Authority opened for the season later than normal, not on the usual third Thursday in April but on June 18. Markets throughout the County are starting on a phased basis due to COVID-19 and as health conditions and resources allow.

Some things never change, though. The producer-only market sold fresh fruits, vegetables, baked goods, specialty items and more offered by its ten vendors. Farmers and producers may only sell what they raise on their farms or make from scratch. Market Manager John Dudzinsky opened the season, clanging his big cowbell. It remained his reminder to the public of the now long gone dairy farms around Herndon. Steps from where Dudzinsky stood, the farmers shipped their milk to the railroad daily to Washington D.C. for processing and distribution.

The first Farmers Market of the season enticed Jessica Banikiotes and her children. "It's something we can do," she said. Greg Drost of Herndon brought his sons, Sawyer, 7, and Emmett, 9. "I want peaches," said Sawyer. For Emmett, it was salsa. "I like salsa with tortilla chips," he said.



Farmers Market Manager John Dudzinsky opens the Herndon 2020 Fairfax County Park Authority Farmers Market at Herndon, by clanging his big cowbell. Joining him are Town of Herndon Vice Mayor Sheila Olem and Scott Robinson, Public Works.

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PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The Farmers Market in Herndon is stocked with fresh fruits, vegetables, baked goods, specialty items and more. The weekly seasonal Thursday market is located in the Historic District, in front of the Town's landmark Big Red Caboose that sits between the Herndon Municipal Center at 777 Lynn Street and the W&OD trail.

Nearby, Town staff Adam Walsh and Kimmie Alcorn, Herndon Department of Parks and Recreation controlled market access to comply with capacity restrictions, 2020 Market Guidelines infographic. To give everyone the best shopping experience as possible, Market Manager John Dudzinsky said shoppers were being asked to abide by the one-way path through the market and maintain 6 feet of distance from others.

In the market, bright red safety tape wrapped around vendor booths prompting shoppers not to handle the produce, fruits and vegetables but instead allow vendors to select, bag and give them to shoppers. All vendors took credit cards. The County encouraged shoppers to preorder their items directly from the local vendors. Go to the Farmers Markets website and click on the Vendor Preorder List for a list of all market vendors and their ordering policies.

Tate Rusby of Arlington operated one of the new vendor booths of family-owned and operated Family of Nuts in Chantilly. According to Rusby, the company was noted for its premium dry roast process free of preservatives and oils. The booth offered raisins and apricots as well.

Long time vendor Grace O. Banahene, owner of Grace's Pastries in Herndon, brought her baked goods and savory treats to the market as she had been doing for 31 years. "It's been a long wait, and I missed the market," she said, referencing the late opening. "God made a way for us to come back."



The Banikiotes family of Herndon checks out the specialty nuts and dried fruits at the Herndon Farmers Market offered by Tate Rusby of Arlington, the market operator for Family of Nuts based in Chantilly.

The Black Lives Matter banner shown here along with its posts were reported stolen from church grounds of the Unitarian Universalist Church Reston on June 19 (June-teenth).

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



## Black Lives Matter Banner Stolen from Church

### Theft reported Juneteenth 2020.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

A large banner reading Black Lives Matter was reported stolen along with its supporting posts on Juneteenth 2020 from church grounds of the Unitarian Universalist Church Reston. "We will not be deterred by this hate crime. We have ordered a new flag, and we will continue to hang a Black Lives Matter banner on our property," said Rev. Dr. Debra W. Haffner, who is the church's minister. Less than a week before, the congregation held a silent protest vigil along Wiehle Avenue in front of the church to support Black Lives Matter.

According to Haffner, Church Board members approved and installed the Black Lives Matter banner on posts sunk deep in the ground "in response to the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis." She said that putting the banner up demonstrated the congregation's support of those who protested the murders of black people by police and as a visible symbol of the

congregation's commitment to ending racism and white supremacy.

Steve Ewart is a member of the church. "We're happy people have taken notice as they drive by the church. We have received positive affirmation from local African-American churches, and obviously, detractors have taken notice. We, as a community, will support the re-establishment of the affirmation that Black Lives Matter," he said.

"Our congregation's vision is to work for justice and equity for all people, especially those who have been marginalized and oppressed," Haffner said. "We hope that other churches, synagogues and mosques will put a Black Lives Matter banner on their property as well so that our Black neighbors know that we stand with them in their quest for freedom and justice," she said.

According to Second Lieutenant John M. Lieb, Fairfax County Police Department, he understands no arrests have been made, but officers will investigate any available leads.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

On June 5, a week before the theft of the newly installed Black Lives Matter banner, church members and others stand in solidarity during a silent vigil to show their support that police brutality and killings of Black people must end.



## Words Have Meanings

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM  
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)



**W**ords have meanings defined in the dictionary that can take on other meaning within the context in which they are being used. Never has it been more important that we understand the meaning and use of words than in present day politics.

Last week I wrote about "Black lives matter" and the importance that we hear the message that is being conveyed with that sentence. It is a group of words whose meaning has been ignored for too long. The current demonstrations literally around the world are intended to place an exclamation point at the end to emphasize that they must finally be heard and understood. I believe with each demonstration of thousands of people and with each statue that comes down the message that black lives matter is finally coming through. We need to get on with the changes that are needed in society and in our laws that show that we understand that

### COMMENTARY

black lives do matter. There is no turning back now.

When the grossly disproportionate number of black persons are killed by white policemen that videos have made totally clear, the need for major and immediate changes to our policing system have become obvious. We need to make sure that the words

we use to bring out those changes are not used against us. The societal needs for which our current police forces have been given responsibility in recent years are too broad and need to be reimagined and redefined. We cannot allow those who view societal challenges in law and order terms to use the term "defund the police" against those who understand that policing policies need to change. While some people mean a total defunding of police departments when they use the slogan, "defund the police," many of us believe police departments will continue to need to exist but be demilitarized and not be the sole responders to community incidents. We need to define a role for public safety and com-

munity personnel who can keep our communities safe without confrontation and expand the availability of mental health workers in our communities. You can be sure that there will be a war of words over public safety and policing in the next several elections, and we must work hard to get our message clear.

In 1993 the first woman attorney general of Virginia was up by 20 points in a race to be the first woman governor of Virginia by defeating the Republican candidate, George Allen Jr. An incident of a person committing a crime while on parole from a Virginia prison during the political campaign led to Allen adopting an "end parole" theme to keep Virginians safe that led to his upset victory. The resulting end parole policy led to filling the jails and prisons, a massive prison building program, and lengthy prison terms for persons who were no longer a threat to society. We have only recently begun to undo the damage done by that simple bumper-strip term "end parole" that led to many lives—disproportionately black—being destroyed by a terrible public policy.

Words do have meaning, but we need to be clear what those words truly mean as they impact public policy.

## Lake Anne Audit—Mismanagement, Appearance of Self-Dealing

BY JOHN LOVAAS  
RESTON IMPACT PRODUCER/HOST



**O**n June 11 the Forensic and Integrity Services group of the audit firm Ernst & Young presented the findings of its forensic audit of the prior Board of the Lake Anne Condominium Association (LARCA) to a membership meeting. The audit covered the last three years of that Board, 2017-19. And it was not pretty.

The audit was a major step by LARCA's new President to fulfill her promise to address the deplorable financial condition of the Association. The members who elected her wanted to know why assessments are so high and the finances so poor, including a depleted reserve fund. EY's review of payments to the top 10 vendors contracted by LARCA offers some clues. The 10 vendors alone made \$2.68 million from LARCA and, according to EY, there were no written bidding, contracting or payment requirements for those activities. Thus, there is little assurance that LARCA gets best price or quality, or that contractors in fact get the job done! The auditor recommended the obvious: that LARCA assess current contracts' products, consider rebidding larger contracts, and in the future obtain at least 3 bids on larger contracts.

An examination of one long-time contractor, Gardner Engineering, revealed mileage billings and other direct costs in excess of standards. Now, a proposed 5-year project would pay Gardner between \$1.8 and \$2.2 million, "...at

### INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE

least 15 times the amount it was paid 2017-19." Looking for savings? Here's a candidate.

In May 2019, a LARCA resident was paid \$25,877 as reimbursement for overpayment of monthly assessments from September 2017 to April 2019, a period of 20 months, an error of \$1300 per month. A major internal control glitch.

Then there are the continually morphing organizations associated with LARCA hosting programs on the Plaza. The organizations are: Friends of Lake Anne; Friends of Lake Anne II (FOIA II), LLC; and The Reston Market (Craft Market). The auditor had a devil of a time sorting out the status of these entities. It was unclear what, if any, legal status they have; or whether they are genuine non-profits...or not. However, they have had free use of the LARCA-owned Plaza, a benefit granted under the prior President for FOIA, FOIA II, the Reston Market, all controlled by him and his wife.

The auditor calculated LARCA's "potential lost fees" at \$243,000 for 2017-19 alone! While FOIA's request for "free" use of the Plaza indicated that no LARCA labor would be used for setup or take down, a LARCA employee said they were used and paid by LARCA. In addition, on each of the 27 days of the Craft Market per year, these entities collected about \$1800 (60 vendors @ \$30) weekly or \$48,660

per year themselves for many years. The Reston Community Center, not FOIA, paid LARCA directly for some special events. The audit findings note: 1- "numerous organizations involved in use of Plaza at no cost ...all controlled by"... former President and his wife.; 2- LARCA Board minutes approving activities are non-existent or unclear; 3- LARCA may be foregoing revenue & assuming added liability [e.g., for questionable liquor licenses]; 4- "There was appearance of self-dealing..., of their financially benefiting from the events." Talk about bleeding money! NOTE: A far more transparent and less risky way to manage Crafts Markets and special events would be for LARCA to contract with a competent, legally established and transparent entity to organize, manage and account for the events. All proceeds for use of the Plaza should come directly to LARCA, not through questionable, confusing intermediaries.

Lastly, the auditor reported on a questionable property improvement action on quayside. The project involved a \$30,810 no-bid proposal for additions to that area. The Board approved it in March 2017. The auditor defined 3 risk areas for this project: 1 - Potential for self-dealing; 2 - lack of proper bidding process; and, 3 - Lack of vote by residents (required in By-laws for projects over \$25,000). The wife of a Board member submitted the proposal for the work fronting their business. He voted to approve the project. LARCA apparently has no bar to such an apparent conflict of interest. The audit recommends LARCA adopt such a policy.

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by  
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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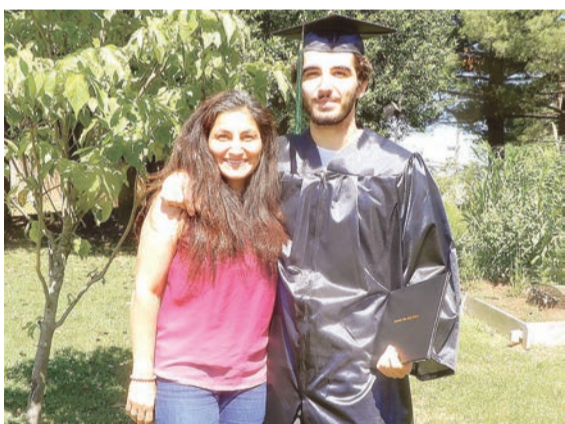
Grad Rodrigo Ramirez with (from left) brother Jonathan Ramirez, dad Reyes Ramirez, mom Elena Arias, brother Erick Ramirez and sister Fabiola Ramirez.



# Mountain View High Students Graduate

Mountain View High held a social-distancing graduation outside the school, June 8-9. Students wearing caps and gowns carried their diplomas, and Principal Joe Thompson announced their names as they walked to the stage. Then they turned their tassels while teachers, staff and family members applauded.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Claire Roque and son Thomas Roque.



Graduate Leslie Rodriguez with (from left) mom Blanca Haynes, stepdad Richard Haynes and half-sister Ashley Haynes.



(From left) are Mountain View grad Karla Ramirez Pineda and stepsister Alejandra Zelaya.



Marcus Braxton proudly hoists his cap in the air.



Tenzin Tsering with his diploma.

Artist Ben Volta talks with James Tafel Shuster as he paints panel edges to ensure color consistency in the massive Colts Neck Road underpass mural, a commissioned artwork in Reston.



FILE PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

## Reston Mural Judged Among Top 100 Globally

**People's Choice voting open.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Public Art Reston's commissioned mural, Thoreau's Ensemble, (2019) by Ben Volta, located at the Colts Neck Road underpass in Reston, is a Top 100 Finalist in the prestigious annual CODAwards. In the international competition, jurors chose it as one of the 2020 finalists recognizing the most successful integration of commissioned art into interior, architectural and public spaces.

During the jury process, eighteen world leaders in design and architecture spent weeks reviewing and scoring hundreds of entries from 30 countries. Working remotely, jurors evaluated the projects on three criteria- integration of commissioned artwork into the space, the strength of the collaborative process between the artists, designers and others, and how the art and design blended seamlessly "to create a place as art, rather than a place with art."

While jurors selected one winner from the 100 finalists for each of the ten space categories: commercial, education, healthcare, hospitality, institutional, landscape, liturgical, public spaces, residential and transportation, the public can rally behind their favorite finalists by casting votes at <https://www.codaworx.com/codawards> for winners of the two 2020 People's Choice Awards.

Anne Delaney is Executive Director of Public Art Reston and was Team Project Manager.

"We are so thrilled and honored that Thoreau's Ensemble by Ben Volta is among this year's Top 100 finalists for the 2020 CODAwards... We submitted... (it) to the 2020 CODAwards to share this exceptional work that brought the community together through participatory inter-generational workshops... We hope people will not only vote for Thoreau's Ensemble for the People's Choice award, we also hope they will...experience the public artwork," she said.

Co-founder and CEO of CODAworx, Toni Sikes, said, "The 12-day People's Choice voting sprint (June 18 - 30) becomes quite heated, and the heavy traffic occasionally brings the website down! It is an exciting race to the finish line," she said. The two projects with the most votes at the end of the voting period will be announced as the 2020 CODAwards People's Choice winners in the August issue of Interior Design magazine.

Volta led eight workshops. He tasked approximately 650 participants from Reston's elementary schools and community organizations to "draw a path (however wide, narrow, straight, jagged, crooked, curly and winding) in which we can all look at and enjoy with love and reverence." He incorporated 710 individual path drawings into the final design of panels that cover the exterior and interior walls of the underpass with a layered and lyrical multi-colored composition creating a permanent public artwork. "2020 has proven to be a winding and crooked path - but it is a joy to see our intergenerational artwork amplified in this way," said Volta.



## Car Crash Kills Centreville Man, 53

A Centreville man has died as a result of injuries sustained in a crash last Thursday, June 18, in Centreville. Fairfax County police responded shortly after 1 p.m. to the vicinity of Westfields Boulevard and Sully Park Drive for a single-car crash involving a 2017 Chevrolet Malibu.

Police say the vehicle was traveling south on Westfields Boulevard when it left the roadway and drove over a sidewalk and across all lanes of Sully Park Drive before striking a tree. The driver, Andrew Riley, 53, was taken to a hospital where he died Saturday, June 20.

He was the only person in the car and no other injuries resulted from this crash. Detectives have yet to determine whether speed or alcohol were factors. Anyone with information about this event or who may have witnessed it is asked to call the Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543.

### BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

### RESTON FRESHFARM MARKET OPENS

The Reston FreshFarm Market has opened at St. Johns Neumann Catholic Church, 11900 Lawyers Road, Reston. The market runs every Wednesday from now through November, from 3-7 p.m. This neighborhood staple brings back known favorites, and some exciting new vendors as well. Find fresh, local produce, fresh-pressed juices, delicious prepared meals and more. For the health and safety of customers, staff, and vendors, visitors should wear a face covering while shopping and practice social distancing.

### HERNDON FARMERS MARKET OPENS

The Fairfax County Park Authority's Farmers Market in Herndon opened for the season on Thursday, June 18. The county's producer-only markets sell fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, baked goods and more. Farmers and producers may only sell what they raise on their farms or make from scratch. Herndon's market is on the 700 block of Lynn Street, by the Red Caboose. It will be open on Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

### SUNDAY/JUNE 28

Love and Unity Prayer Rally. 12 p.m. At Herndon Fortnightly Library Town Green, 786 Center Street, Herndon. Life Ticket Church will be hosting a Love and Unity Prayer Rally. The purpose of this rally is to join with other faith leaders in a demonstration of love to pray for unity for our police and community. Email Life Ticket Church at

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-Werner Heisenberg

**Announcements**

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## MCLEAN BRANCH AAUW USED BOOK SALE CANCELED

For the first time in 51 years, the McLean Branch AAUW must cancel the 2020 Used Book Sale due to the impact of Covid19. The branch's annual fundraiser raises thousands of dollars for substantial scholarships for women returning to college, local high school STEM awards, and AAUW fellowships and grants for women. There are plans for fundraisers that will partially compensate for the book sale proceeds. Watch for one in early July. It will not only enable contributors to support the scholarships and fellowships but will also please Nationals fans.

## PHASE 3 DATE NOT YET SET

Governor Ralph Northam presented the third phase of the "Forward Virginia" plan to continue easing public health restrictions while mitigating the spread of COVID-19. The Commonwealth does not yet have a targeted date for entering Phase 3. He added that the earliest that the Commonwealth can enter Phase 3 is Friday, June 26.

In Phase 3, the Commonwealth will maintain a Safer at Home strategy with continued recommendations for social distancing and teleworking, and the requirement that individuals wear face coverings in indoor public settings. The maximum number of individuals allowed in social gatherings will increase from 50 to 250 people. All businesses should continue to follow physical distancing guidelines, frequently clean and sanitize high contact surfaces, and keep enhanced workplace safety measures in place.

Restaurant and beverage establishments are required to maintain six feet of distance between tables, fitness centers may open indoor areas at 75 percent occupancy, and recreation and entertainment venues at may operate at 50 percent occupancy, or a maximum of 1,000 persons. Swimming pools may also expand operations to free swim in addition to indoor and outdoor exercise, diving, and swim instruction. Overnight summer camps will remain closed in Phase 3.

## MONDAY/JULY 6

DiabetesSisters PODS Meetup. 7-9 p.m. Virtual meeting. You are cordially invited to join us for the July DiabetesSisters PODS (Part Of DiabetesSisters) Meetup of South Riding/Chantilly. They meet monthly to discuss successes and struggles with living with diabetes. PODS Meetups are a great way to connect with others socially and educationally for peer support and voices of experience. Women age 18+ living with any type of diabetes or prediabetes are warmly welcome. Email Sara at [sara@diabetessisters.org](mailto:sara@diabetessisters.org) with any questions.

## Lovaas

FROM PAGE 4

What will the members of LARCA do with this report? Will they follow the clear path set forth by EY to clean up a dreadful combination of mismanagement and "self-dealing" in order to stop the financial bleeding and restore integrity and order? Or, will they, as some propose, seek vengeance on an intrepid President for doing an audit, and continue practices that led to LARCA's downward spiral?

Next-All await the outcome of the Commonwealth Attorney's investigation!

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## Masking My True Feelings



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

For those of us living in states where mask-wearing is mostly mandatory (indoors: yes, outdoors: not nearly as much), it is very easy to hide one's emotions. If your mouth is undercover, and being that it is located under your nose and above your chin, it most definitely is, communicating with the public has become strictly verbal. Body language as personified by the expression on one's face has become non grata. All that remains - above the mask, are your eyes and to a much lesser effect, your ears, your hair and your forehead. If words are not spoken when passing by, either within the six-foot cone of safety or not, no one knows whether they've been greeted with a smile or disparaged with a frown.

Still, I can't help doing either the former or the latter which invariably leads me to remind myself that what can't be seen must either be heard or not considered part of the new social-distancing equation. After a few months of donning the mask and viewing others donning the mask, I can't really see how I'm able to read the tea leaves, so to speak, that is, one's eyes. And how frustrating, because eyes have often been described as "windows to the soul." Unfortunately, without one's other facial features visible to the naked eye, interpreting one's eyes has become the only clue in conversation.

I refer you all back to the early game-show television, specifically to "Make a Face" which aired between 1961 and 1962. In the game, contestants attempted to name the famous celebrities after seeing only a portion of their faces. Of course there was a revolving wheel whose spin would provide clues to the celebrities being featured that day. I vaguely remember anything more, except I thought the host was Art James (who was actually the host of "Say When," another game show from the same era). The host was actually Robert Clayton for whom I have zero recollection. I can still see the wheel however, sort of, and I can recall seeing images of eyes, ears, noses, etc., and contestants trying to guess identities based on these facial fragments.

Life is sort of like that now. We're all receiving incomplete information. The masks are hiding all manner of interesting and identifiable characteristics which we've all spent years interpreting. Just the other day, I met a woman from the local tree-service company offering free quotes to me and my neighbors. As she walked around our property with us, mask on and clipboard in hand, she identified trees which needed to come down and limbs which needed to be trimmed back. And while she spoke, naturally there was eye contact, from which I developed an impression. A few days later, she was back in our neighborhood supervising her company's work cutting down some neighbor's trees. I inadvertently bumped into her while she was driving up the street just as I was at my on-street mailbox. She stopped her car and when she rolled down the passenger window to say "Hello", I could see she was not wearing a mask. I saw her entire face and I thought she was older than her eyes had led me to believe ("not that there's anything wrong with that"). It only confirmed my suspicions of just how poor my judgment had been after initially having only seen her wearing a mask. And then later I realized that just as I hadn't seen her face entirely, so too would other folks not be seeing mine. So regardless of any facial gesture I had made, it was only my words that mattered, not my deeds. But since I hadn't "deeded" anything, I realized that an entire level of communication and impression is now missing.

It feels like a combination of Halloween and Stanley Kubrick's "Eyes Wide Shut" where you're not sure who you are, but neither is anybody else. And in that anonymity breeds some contempt and lack of need for any familiarity. It's that lack of familiarity while quarantining at home which has led to the infrequent opportunity to interact socially - from distance or not. As a result, I believe I've lost some of my humanity, some of my dignity and perhaps even some of my friends.

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



# ‘People Stepping Up and Helping Out’

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**W**hen times are tough, people already having a hard time making ends meet need an extra hand. So last Monday, June 15, volunteers gave out free milk and other dairy products to Centreville and Chantilly families, plus the food pantries that support them.

The four-hour event was organized by Sully District Supervisor Kathy Smith’s office and the Springfield-based De Lune Corp. Supporting their efforts were Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM), Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS), the county’s Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Human Services Transportation (Fastran), plus Food For Others.

“It’s always good to help others,” said Christina Petruzzi of CERT, which helped with traffic control. “And it makes you realize how fortunate you are, the impact this pandemic has had on the community and how people have come together to help each other.”

**ALSO INSTRUMENTAL** in the event’s success was the unselfish work of a whole slew of volunteers from Centreville United Methodist Church, Ox Hill Baptist Church, Grace Covenant Church, Capital Home Professionals, Wegmans, Northwest Federal Credit Union and fire stations from Centreville, Vienna, Franconia and Burke.

“My company encourages us to do this kind of thing – getting involved with the community,” said Northwest Federal’s Daniel Ze-ballos. “And you get to give back to people in need.”

Ultimately, 1,165 households total received dairy products at seven different locations – outside Westfield High School, the Lee Overlook Apartments, FACETS Barros Circle Community Center and Centreville Regional Library, plus the Meadows of Chantilly, Fields of Chantilly and Chantilly Mews neighborhoods.

De Lune brought two huge trucks – containing 2,000 boxes of USDA dairy products and 960 boxes filled with milk – to Westfield. There, some 60 volunteers then loaded half of this food and milk into seven Fastran buses that went to the low-income housing areas listed above for distribution to the residents.

“They expect about 300 families at the Meadows of Chantilly, alone,” said WFCM Executive Director Harmonie Taddeo, that afternoon. “And we loaded supplies for 200-300 families at the Fields of Chantilly.”

Recipient families each received four half-gallons of milk, plus a dairy box including cream cheese, instant milk powder, plain and vanilla whole-milk yogurt, butter and 64 ounces of low-fat milk. The rest of the dairy boxes and milk went to local churches and community-based organizations, such as WFCM, Food for Others and FACETS, to take back to their food pantries to distribute to their clients. But before they did that, they also gave it out to people in need driving to Westfield to pick it up that day.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

(From left) Christina Petruzzi and Emma Anderson place dairy products in the trunk of a resident’s car during the food-distribution event.

Lori Stevens, with the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, helped load boxes into their vehicles. “We ask each driver how many families they’re picking up for,” she said. “We also loaded up the buses this morning with the dairy boxes; it took about an hour-and-a-half. I’m with my fire department’s auxiliary and, right now, we can’t hold bingo or other big fundraisers. So I’m just doing anything I can to give back to the community in these difficult times.”

Ox Hill Baptist Church member Emma Anderson, a rising senior at Westfield, also put the donated dairy products into people’s cars. Glad to participate, she said, “It feels good to help out and to see the faces of the people getting the food.”

CERT’s Babita Thapa helped unload the trucks, put the boxes onto pallets and place them into the buses. “This helps people in need,” she explained. “It’s my duty to help my community, and it feels great helping others. It’s also a good use of my free time.”

John Phillips, who coordinated the canteen from Centreville Volunteer Fire Department’s Station 17, was one of 10 volunteers there from his station. “Ciao [Italian restaurant in Centreville] donated pizza for the volunteers, and we brought Gatorade, water, candy bars and chips,” he said. “The station does what it can to support the community.”

“It’s nice to see the turnout of volunteers,” continued Phillips. “It’s pretty impressive – especially in these tough times – to see all these people stepping up and helping out.”

**THERE, AS WELL,** were Supervisor Smith and her office’s community-outreach person, Dan Dolan. “He found out De Lune had a USDA contract with the federal government

## Centreville, Chantilly families in need receive free dairy products.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Lori Stevens carries a dairy box to a car.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Kim Anderson and Kory Beene, of Ox Hill Baptist Church, load food and milk into a vehicle at Westfield High.

to distribute to the community,” said Smith. “And since De Lune is on the other side of the county, it was important that Dan connected with them so we could have their food on this side of the county, too. He then reached out to our community partners, like WFCM and NCS to put people together.”

“We’re also grateful to Westfield Principal Anthony Copeland for letting us use the facility,” said Dolan. “They’ve been very gracious and accommodating. And we really appreciate the snacks and water from the

Centreville Volunteer Fire Department, plus the manual labor from them and the other fire departments here.”

Besides that, added Smith, “We’re glad Fastran was able to take some food directly to several neighborhoods, because not everyone has transportation to come here to Westfield and pick it up. I’m really pleased with how everything’s turned out. This is what’s great about living in the Sully District – everybody pulls together to help each other.”