

CONNECTION

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Fairfax City's July 4th Wave Parade

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"The Wizard of Oz" characters on the Independence Day Celebration Committee's "There's No Place Like Home"-themed float in Fairfax City's July 4th Wave Parade.

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BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

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VIEWPOINTS

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

Should the Redskins change their name and do you have any suggestions for a new name if they do?



“No, in my opinion, but if they do a new name could be the Scrapers”

— CHRISTOPHER BARLOW, UPCOMING WEST SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR



“They should definitely rename, the ‘Red Tails,’ the nickname for the Tuskegee Airmen”

— COOPER JOHNSON, UPCOMING WEST SPRINGFIELD SENIOR



“I feel it’s a change well needed, it’s a negative connotation with the history of this country. Maybe the ‘Settlers,’ because they were the first to come”

— MALISSA LAWRENCE, UPCOMING WEST SPRINGFIELD SENIOR



“I think it’s a wonderful idea, but I can’t think of a new name right now”

— ADRIANNA JOHNSON, 19, ALEXANDRIA, COLLEGE STUDENT



“I don’t think they should change their name, they have a good tradition, a good franchise, people might not come to games”

— PETE COSTIGAN, 21, FORT HUNT, UNIVERSITY OF CHARLESTON STUDENT



“I’m strongly in favor of them changing their name, anything would be better. I’ve heard Red Hawks, Warthogs, anything”

— MEGAN GOTTEMOELLER, FORT HUNT

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NEWS

Marijuana Decriminalized July 1

Will decriminalization of marijuana stop inequitable treatment for communities of color?

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Who is more likely to be charged, asked Braddock Supervisor James Walkinshaw. An executive of a defense contractor smoking marijuana on his deck overlooking woods in Clifton or Great Falls, or the Black teen or young adult walking down Route One in Mount Vernon, or on a street in Annandale or Culmore sections of Fairfax County?

“Correct me, if I’m wrong, but I think the math that you read last time basically said that 30 to 40 percent of the annual marijuana arrests in the county are of African Americans over the last several years. To note for everyone, the African American population in Fairfax is about 10 percent,” Walkinshaw said to Fairfax County Police Chief Edwin C. Roessler Jr. during Legislative Committee meetings of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors earlier this year.

Fairfax County Police arrested 3,070 people last year for possession of marijuana. Black people were arrested 1,266 times and white people were arrested 1,713 times. In 2018, Fairfax County Police made 4,298 arrests for marijuana possession. Black people were arrested 1,624 times; white people were arrested 2,466 times.

But Black people make up less than 10 percent of the population.

“We’ve peeled back those numbers and it is disproportional,” said Roessler. “When you pull it back and you start looking at the zip codes of where people are coming from and the demographics of the county, it’s disproportionate across the board, any which way we slice it.”

“African American males and Hispanics are disproportionately charged, any way you look at it,” Roessler said.

“We know Black and white people are using marijuana at the same rates,” Walkinshaw said. “There’s no reason to believe it’s any different here in Fairfax.”

ON JULY 1, VIRGINIA JOINS 26 states and Washington D.C. in ceasing to jail people for possessing small amounts of cannabis. Gov. Ralph Northam signed SB 2 into law in May.

Possession of up to an ounce of marijuana will be punishable by a civil fine of up to \$25 instead of a criminal charge that could mean up to 30 days in jail and up to a \$500 fine. The bill prohibits employers from requiring applicants to disclose marijuana possession charges.

The General Assembly tabled bills on legalizing marijuana possession, and workgroups will conduct one- and two-year studies that include inequitable treatment of Black people.

But, in the meantime, will Black people continue to be charged disproportionately even though it’s now a civil penalty rather than a criminal charge?



Kathy Smith, Sully Supervisor

“I would say many years ago when the laws were put in place about marijuana some of the effect was to affect certain populations. I think it’s inequitable.”



Pat Herrity, Springfield Supervisor

“I would like to see the data of people who have gone to jail for possession of marijuana. I think we should have the numbers.”

“The scenario I described would also apply to decriminalization. The executive on the back porch in Clifton is not going to be found and fined for possession of marijuana,” said Walkinshaw. “We may reduce some of the equity issues and the harm that is done, but it doesn’t eliminate it. So that is another challenge that we will continue to deal with.”

Walkinshaw wants the Chief of Police to report data at least two times a year to the Board rather than annually so there is the ability to make adjustments throughout the year.

“**THERE IS**, related to our country’s history of the War on Drugs, a disproportional pattern of enforcement,” said Karla Bruce, Chief Equity Officer for Fairfax County.

“Specifically, there was a disproportionate harmful impact on communities of color, specifically African Americans and Latinos,” said Bruce. “When you have a criminal record, you definitely risk your economic security, you’re at greater risk for not being able

VIEWPOINTS



John Foust, Dranesville Supervisor

“I think possession of small quantities of marijuana has caused a lot of problems for a lot of people.”



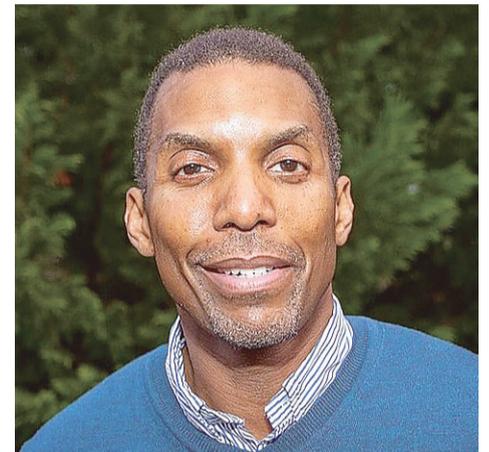
Edwin C. Roessler Jr., Fairfax County Chief of Police

“African American males and Hispanics are disproportionately charged, any way you look at it.”

to support yourself or your family. That can start a vicious cycle that I think should be taken under consideration. The other thing is it can sometimes prohibit you from being able to access professional licenses, educational opportunities, and government assistance.”

More people were arrested for marijuana in the United States in 2018 than in 2015, despite eight states legalizing or decriminalizing during that time. In every state that has decriminalized marijuana, black people are still more likely to be cited for possession.

“There are some human components here that we also have to think about,” said Lee Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk, who chairs the Board’s public safety committee, where oversight of this issue will continue. “The long term impacts of the decisions we are making might go on for generations. Personally that’s not a place I want to be. I want to be changing and improving people’s lives for the better.”



Rodney L. Lusk, Lee Supervisor

“The long term impacts of the decisions we are making might go on for generations. I want to be changing and improving people’s lives for the better.”



Karla Bruce, Chief Equity Officer

“The term marijuana actually has equity implications. The term was adopted in the 1930s to create the most public anxiety in order to encourage the prohibition of its use.”



James Walkinshaw, Braddock Supervisor

“If you’re African American or Hispanic you’re more likely to be arrested than if you look like me or like the Chairman here. And even in a place where we are committed to diversity and we have a department and a chief that is committed to it, we still have that challenge.”

Preventing the Callous in Young Black America

BY GEVAR BONHAM

Crowing up in Birmingham, Ala., I recall playing in the basement of 16th Street Baptist Church. The same church that was bombed in 1963 by the KKK, killing four young Black girls and injuring dozens. The weight of that experience playing where people lost their lives is one of many that released a strain of trauma already ingrained in my DNA as a Black man.

I consider myself a first-generation child of the post-civil rights era. My parents, who directly experienced Jim Crow, redlining and segregation, moved the family to the predominantly white suburbs in search of opportunities and high performing schools for their children.

But our experiences were not the same as our white peers. At ten years old, I remember walking past our car in the driveway to find eggshells and yolk blasted on the windshield and the word “n****r” written in paint. The feeling

of being unwelcome in Hoover City was the beginning of a callous we develop as young Black children, and the threat in my own neighborhood made it thicken.

I learned early on that not everyone views you as equal, or even human. The callous you develop turns into self-policing. Don't say too much. Monitor your physical presence and actions to appear non-threatening. The timestamp on a store receipt can prove your innocence if accused of a crime. This takes a heavy toll mentally, physically and emotionally but this is how we have learned to navigate an oppressive system.

Two years ago, my then 11-year-old son began his journey into callousness. Innocence began its departure, catalyzed by his first police encounter -- resulting from a schoolmate's false allegation. It was devastating to now be an observer as history began to repeat itself. Attempts to reconcile with the accuser were ignored as if this behavior is acceptable. These compounded situations bind such trauma to our DNA —

white America moves on with blissful ignorance of the broken pieces we're left to quietly mend in isolation.

It's unfair and unjust, but I am hopeful for my sons. Black communities are no longer fighting for justice and equity alone. Our allies are a diverse group of individuals and corporations, who have resonated globally. For the first time I am hopeful that we're poised for a reckoning with our nation's sordid history. We must keep our foot on the gas. Systemic change is tangible, if we can sustain engagement. Just as we didn't arrive here overnight, healing through restoration and reparation will require sacrifice and stamina.

Gevar Bonham is IT Systems Administrator, United Way of the National Capital Area and resident of Alexandria. This piece is part of a collection of stories told by African American male colleagues at United Way NCA. To hear more, please visit: <https://unitedwaynca.podbean.com/e/we-are-not-okay-1593038482/>

A Teacher's Take on the Reopening of Schools

BY HELEN MONDLOCH

I teach high school English in Fairfax County Public Schools. A number of teachers from across the county suggested I share the following concerns with the community about the plan for reopening schools next month.

Many of us fear that the primary objective of in-person school -- a richer, more personal and dynamic learning environment -- will be sharply undercut by the need for distancing, masks, constant disinfecting, not to mention constant reminders to students to adhere to protocols. The result will likely be a sterile, even oppressive environment where kids are mostly working solo on their laptops. Wouldn't they be doing the same from home without all the stress, expense, and health risks of in-person school?

Personally, despite the challenges inherent to virtual teaching, I had a decent experience this

spring. My English classes read works by Frederick Douglass, Poe, Sojourner Truth, and others. We did a bit of research on the coronavirus. We wrote analysis and reflection and poetry. I felt like we learned something. My journalism class managed to publish two more issues of the newspaper.

The frustrations I experienced stemmed mostly from issues that (I believe) could be mitigated in a new school year. I'm talking about occasional technical issues (like bad sound), the brevity of teaching sessions, and the fact that student work was optional. Trying to teach a group of shadows -- since most kids opted to keep their cameras off -- was also a challenge. But again, I think we could find ways to overcome these stumbling blocks come August.

FCPS teachers have been sharing other concerns about the hybrid teaching plan: When

the inevitable COVID cases turn up in our schools, how do we assure a smooth transition to virtual learning? Will there be huge delays and roadblocks, as we experienced in April? Will the instability and uncertainty cause more stress compared to a stable schedule of learning online?

Can the school system guarantee adequate PPE, including sanitizers and disinfectant wipes? What if we see another general shortage of these supplies? How will students social distance in the restrooms, or wash hands adequately with sink faucets that cut off after a few seconds?

The thought of students eating lunch in the classroom sparks particular concern, given that masks will come off and students will want to congregate and socialize. Will teachers ever have a break if kids are eating in our rooms, and we are scrambling to clean during six-minute pass periods?

Will we be able to display warmth and compassion to our students, and above all, teach effectively?

What about the sub shortage that posed vexing problems in our pre-COVID environment? Faced, inevitably, with even fewer subs next fall, and given the need for social distancing, what will we do with classes that have no coverage and cannot be combined?

And let's not forget the bigger picture: Will the likely rise in COVID cases stemming from in-person schools -- potential breeding grounds of "super-spreaders" -- burden our hospitals and help prolong the economic misery caused by shutdowns?

Finally, is it really honest to say teachers have a "choice" of whether to teach in person or online, if the latter means we may face negative repercussions with regard to teaching preps and the security of our current position?

These are pressing questions which FCPS has failed to address. There are many more.

Helen Mondloch is Honors English 11 Team Leader and Journalism Teacher/Watchdog Advisor at Westfield High School.

Send Photos for the Pet Connection

The Pet Connection, a twice-yearly special edition, will publish the last week of July, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by Thursday, July 23.

We invite you to send stories about your pets, photos of you and your family with your cats, dogs, llamas, alpacas, ponies, hamsters, snakes, lizards, frogs, rabbits, or whatever other creatures share your life with you.

Tell us the story of a special bond between a child and a dog, the story of how you came to adopt your pet, or examples of amazing feats of your creatures.

Just a cute photo is fine too. Our favorite pictures include both pets and humans.

Please tell us a little bit about your creature, identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description of what is happening in the photo, and include address and phone number (we will not publish your address or



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Robert Reed enjoys the company and a walking assist from canine friends.

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Local Media Connection LLC

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Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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BULLETIN

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

FAIRFAX CITY INTRODUCES OUTDOOR DINING EXPERIENCE CITY SQUARE

The City of Fairfax and the Fairfax City Economic Development Authority have launched a new street-side dining concept in Old Town Fairfax called City Square on July 1, 2020. City Square will be open from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily throughout the summer and consists of two locations, with a total of six outdoor seating areas along University Drive and Main Street.

GUNSTON HALL TO REOPEN GROUNDS

Since its COVID-19 closure on March 14, the staff at George Mason's Gunston Hall has developed numerous opportunities to bring the "museum experience" to families across the country including web page content, live stream events, and videos. Now, with the latest announcement of reduced restrictions, Gunston Hall will reopen starting with the public reopening of its grounds. Beginning Friday, July 3, Gunston Hall will reopen its grounds to the public. The grounds will be open from 9:30 a.m. - 6 p.m. daily. Guests may remit a contactless payment of \$5 per person, either cash or credit card. Guests are encouraged to purchase tickets in advance at www.GunstonHall.org.

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NEWS

An FCPS employee prepares a classroom for In-Person Instruction with Social Distancing, one of two plans for academic year 2020-21.



SCREENSHOT FCPS

Q&A on Back to School

Superintendent takes questions at Virtual Town Hall.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

FCPS hosted a virtual Town Hall Meeting on July 6, to answer questions about its two Return to School Plans-Full-time Online Instruction Details or In-Person Instruction with Social Distancing Details. Superintendent Scott Brabrand said, "Our kids need us to return to school in a responsible, safe manner... And we are returning to school, empowering you to make the choice of what's best for your child, and for your family."

Brabrand announced the school system extended the deadline for plan choice from July 10 to July 15 and that he would recommend to the school board on Thursday to push back the first day of school to Sept. 8. "Our teachers and staff would still come back at their normal times," he said.

Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services Sloan Presidio and director of the office of special education procedural support Jane Strong joined Brabrand. Questions covered various topics, including the switching choices, safety, curriculum, technology and extracurricular activities.

Q&A

What if my child isn't thriving in a virtual or in-person setting?

Brabrand: We're building two completely different school systems... for a whole year... We can't simply have a preference to change back and forth week to week, month to month.

How, are you going to track the testing for the coronavirus if children are showing symptoms?

Brabrand: A student that comes in not wearing a mask will be subject to a temperature check... Any kid that presents with concerns... will be sent down to the school clinic. If they make an assessment that there are concerns, they will be sent to an isolation room... Parents will be... asked to come as expediently as possible to pick up their child. According to Brabrand, the County is committing to hiring 200 more contact tracers for the schools.

How will they ensure each teacher at high schools and middle schools sanitize all desks and chairs in the 5-8-minute periods rotation of students?

Brabrand: I would not be honest as superintendent to tell you that every time your child changes classes that the desks will be wiped.

What online platforms will be used for virtual options?

Brabrand: We're going to continue to use Blackboard Collaborate Ultra... We will also allow Google...



FCPS

FCPS Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand answers questions at the July 6 Return to School virtual Town Hall Meeting.

and we will be piloting a new platform Schoology.

I'm wondering about the Academy.

Brabrand: We have no plans to cancel the Academy Programs... Academies offer very unique courses that will be dependent-based on whether the teacher is returning and, in the manner, that the teacher is returning.

Children... may not get every elective class that they wanted.

I want to know about sports, Marching Band, and extracurricular activities.

Brabrand: The Department of Education is working with the Virginia High School League... No decision has been made yet about high school sports. We have allowed conditioning to resume for fall sports.

What standards will be implemented to monitor student and staff physical and mental wellness?

Brabrand: We have a protocol in place where we look at student data around absences... We've already identified... children and those families who weren't able to connect as much with teachers.

"I will continue to do everything I can to reach out to this community and give you the honest truth as best that I can, with all the information that I can. That is my commitment to you today, tonight, tomorrow and for the year ahead," said Brabrand.

THE WEEK BEFORE, Fairfax County Federation of Teachers, Fairfax Education Association and Association of Fairfax Professional Educators issued a joint statement. "Our educators are overwhelmingly not comfortable returning to schools," said Trina Williams, President of Fairfax County Federation of Teachers. "It is absolutely unacceptable that FCPS has established an arbitrary deadline for employees and students to make decisions about the next school year without adequate data or specific information," said Becca Ferrick, President of Association of Fairfax Professional Educators. "We believe our community as a whole should not return to in-person learning until a vaccine or treatment is widely available for COVID-19, said Kimberly Adams, President of the Fairfax Education Association.

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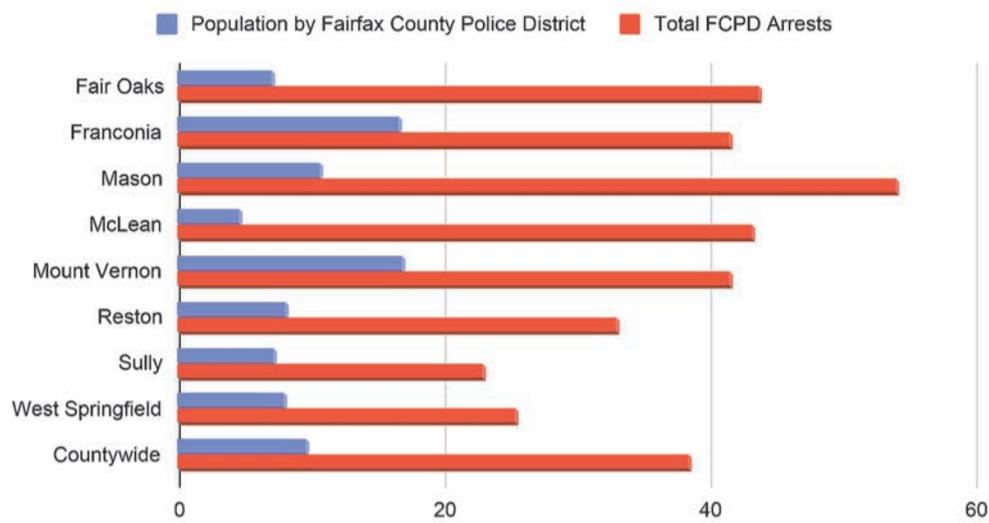
Data Proves Black People Treated Differently

Arrests of Black people disproportional in every police district in the county.

Of all arrests made by police officers in the county, Black people are arrested 38.54 percent of the time. Black people are targets of police use of force 45.63 percent of the time in the county. Black people make up less than 10 percent of the population. Black people are arrested and the subject of police force disproportionately more.

- The data speaks for itself:
- ❖ In the Fair Oaks Police District, Black people were arrested 43.79 percent of the time but make up 7.22 percent of the population.
 - ❖ In the Franconia Police District, Black people were arrested 41.65 percent of the time but make up 16.76 percent of the population.
 - ❖ In the Mason Police District, Black people were arrested 54.08 percent of the time but make up 10.8 percent of the population.
 - ❖ In the McLean Police District, Black people were arrested 43.34 percent of the time but make up 4.69 percent of the population.
 - ❖ In the Mount Vernon Police District, Black people were arrested 41.63 percent of the time but make up 16.84 percent of

Black People as a Percentage of...



SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.FAIRFAXCOUNTY.GOV/POLICE/REPORTS/ARREST-DATA](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/reports/arrest-data)

- the population.
- ❖ In the Reston Police District, Black people were arrested 33.04 percent of the time but make up 8.24 percent of the population.
- ❖ In the Sully Police District, Black people were arrested 23.09 percent of the time but make up 7.3 percent of the population.
- ❖ In the West Springfield Police District, Black people were arrested 25.54 percent of the time but make up 8.1 percent of the population.
- ❖ Countywide, Black people are arrested

38.54 percent of the time although they make up 9.73 percent of the population. The Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission made explicit recommendations with regard to the public availability of such data, said Phillip A. Niedzielski-Eichner, who served on the ad hoc commission and is the Providence planning commissioner. “The Board of Supervisors and Police leadership agreed with these recommendations. Nearly five years after completion of the Ad Hoc Commission’s work, the data released and the Department’s requirement to manually generate these reports, indicates that, while progress is being made, it is slow in how it is generated and inadequate in its format,” he said. Latinx people weren’t even accounted for in the latest round of data offered by police, mentioned only in traffic stops. See <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/reports/arrest-data>

— KEN MOORE, THE CONNECTION

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Zach Schumacher, a student from Burke (right) and friends came to bike on the Burke Lake trails.



PHOTOS BY JESS KIRBY/
THE CONNECTION

Enjoying Weekend in Burke Lake Park

BY JESS KIRBY
THE CONNECTION

Over the Fourth of July weekend, many area residents visited Burke Lake Park to relax, have fun and celebrate Independence Day with friends and family.

Despite the park not hosting July Fourth celebrations or specials, Burke resident and marina employee Stephen Weisweaver said that many visited over the weekend.

“We did have a lot of people coming in and renting boats, but for the most part it was a steady flow throughout the day,” he said.

Many other activities were available, such as disc golf, biking and a socially distant train ride through the woods, providing a way for people to get outside safely.

“We were bored at our house so we came out to ride bikes, and we were talking about possibly getting a boat to ride around the lake later,” said Zach Schumacher, a student from Burke. “They come on the trails quite a bit and I haven’t been yet.”

“We have visitors from Texas and this is one of the family’s favorite spots, so we came here,” said Mary Dohrman of Fairfax.

A preschool teacher, Millie Rios, brought her family from Chantilly to enjoy the park.

“We wanted to know more about the picnic and campground area, and one of my kids loves fishing,” she said.

The marina has also taken precautions to prevent



Some visitors enjoyed renting boats.

the spread of COVID-19.

“I assist people in getting in and out of the water and I make sure that everyone is safe while using their boats,” Weisweaver said. “Things are not running as usual. We usually don’t have partitions telling people where to go and we’re having to sanitize all the boats as they come in and sanitize all of people’s lifejackets.”

Though many visited the park during the festive weekend, some chose to celebrate July Fourth at home.

“We had a big family dinner together, plus we had two invited guests who are brother- and sister-in-law of our host, Michael, and then we did fireworks,” said Dohrman.

“I lit off fireworks and went over to a close friend’s house,” said Schumacher.



Burke Lake Park on July 4 weekend.



Millie Rios (second from right) and family came from Chantilly to fish and picnic.



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Representing American Legion Post 177 and VFW Post 8469 are (from left) Jeff White, Marcus Kuiper, Joe Christadore, Fred Ferguson, Hank Roeder and Sang Yi.

Fairfax City’s July 4th Wave Parade

Since Fairfax City couldn’t hold its usual, gigantic Fourth of July parade, with large crowds, this year, it instead held a much smaller parade, traveling through the neighborhoods while residents waved at the participants.



Firefighters, police and doctors are represented on this salute to America’s superheroes.



One of the planes from the Flying Circus Airshow.



Motorcyclists from Patriot Harley-Davidson riding on University Drive.

Fairfax City Officials Sworn In Online

Meyer recounts outgoing Council's accomplishments.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Although it had to be done virtually this year, Fairfax City's Mayor, Council and School Board were officially sworn in, last Tuesday, June 30. City Clerk Melanie Crowder gave the oaths of office to Mayor David Meyer and Councilmembers Janice Miller, Sang Yi, So Lim, Jon Stehle, Tom Ross and Joe Harmon.

And Gerarda Cullipher, chief deputy clerk of Fairfax County Circuit Court, swore in School Board members Jon Buttram, Mitch Sutterfield, Toby Sorensen, Bob Reinsel and Carolyn Pitches. Then Meyer thanked the voters and said all those elected bring a broad range of talents to their jobs.

"Every two years we choose among our neighbors and friends, individuals who will make decisions about our future," he said. "It's done openly, and without fear of intimidation, in fair and honest elections. We should never be complacent about this."

MEYER then listed some of the accomplishments of the outgoing Council, including:

- ❖ Adoption of a new, Comprehensive Plan and two Small Area plans – the City's roadmaps for the future – which create greater certainty for residents and the investment community;

- ❖ Adoption of an Affordable Housing Ordinance, aimed at providing more equitable housing opportunities for people with limited incomes;

- ❖ The City garnered \$130 million in new transportation funds. It also completed the \$43 million Fairfax Boulevard/Chain Bridge Road project, after 18 years of planning and several years of construction. And it approved a new, sidewalk policy to make Fairfax more connected;

- ❖ Began constructing Fire Station 33 – the City's first, new, fire station in 45 years. And the Fire Department received national accreditation;

- ❖ Finished construction of the state-of-the-art, Police Firearms Training Center;

- ❖ West Drive Property Yard: After 70 years, the City and county reached an agreement to relocate the county's industrial operation outside the City. These 4 acres will be remediated and available for future, public use;

- ❖ Opened a dog park at the former Westmore School site; and

- ❖ Started a successful composting program to reduce the waste stream.

"Much of the hard work for all of these things is due to the dedication and commitment of our City employees," said

Meyer. "They work tirelessly every day on our behalf, and we are immensely grateful for the service ethic, honesty, creativity and support they exhibit every day to make our City's operations and services more effective and efficient."

However, he added, "We're also facing some unprecedented challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic is far from over, and we continue to discern the most optimal choices in moving forward to keep our citizens safe and support our local businesses."

FURTHERMORE, said Meyer, "The national demands for great social justice and equity have found many voices in our City, right in our own neighborhoods, faith communities and civic and cultural organizations. The elected leadership has heard these demands for change, loud and clear. We will address them at our July planning meeting and will create a framework and process by which we can collectively assess and decide what changes to make, and when, where and how."

He told the residents that whatever the City does will be consistent with the community's core values. "These challenging discussions will occur in an open, transparent, collaborative and respectful manner that is inclusive and reflects the diversity we all affirm," said Meyer.

SEE SWEARING-IN, PAGE 11



Melanie Crowder swearing in Joe Harmon.



Melanie Crowder swearing in Tom Ross.



David Meyer

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-Werner Heisenberg

HOME LIFE STYLE



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

The pool house has a kitchen to make entertaining convenient.

A Summer Oasis

Pool house evolved into a space that incorporates the beauty of the outdoors into the interior design.

MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

The combination of sunny, warm weather and the current pandemic can make staying home a wise, but stifling choice. However, one Bethesda, Maryland, builder made that a pleasurable decision for one Great Falls, Virginia family.

Jim Rill of Rill Architects transformed their expansive, but empty and unused, backyard into a summer oasis by designing a pool and adjacent pool house.

The end-goal was to combine functionality, style and comfort, says Rill. "The furniture and fabrics are easy to maintain and care for, while also being functional and pretty," he said.

Originally tasked with building a screened-in porch, Rill's design process evolved into a space that incorporated the beauty of the outdoors into the interior design. "The owners became more and more inspired to use the building year round," he said.

Both flooring of the pool deck and pool house are flagstone. The furniture is by luxury design company Janus et Cie and a chandelier by the same company hangs from the ceiling.

Rill and his team added a powder room and changing room. There is a kitchen with an island made of maple and topped with a waterfall countertop of quartz by Caesarstone.

Three walls of the pool house are glass and can be covered with retractable screens.

"The owners wanted rustic with lots of glass," he said.

Transforming the expansive backyard into a summer oasis by designing a pool and adjacent pool house.



Three of the four walls of the pool house are made of glass and give the space a rustic feel.

Sharing Acts of Kindness

To acknowledge and inspire kindness and good deeds, Volunteer Fairfax has launched the #GoodConnectsUs campaign, recognizing citizens connecting with each other through volunteerism. This 12-week campaign, developed in partnership with Fairfax High grad Elisa Luckabaugh, features a Geographic Information System (GIS) interactive map that creates a visual display of the good works being performed in the community.

People check out the "Good Deed" infographic for inspiration, complete their act of volunteerism, record what they did on the interactive map and watch a blue dot appear in that location. Participants are also encouraged to post a picture of their good deed to social media and challenge friends and colleagues to join.

"Volunteer Fairfax hopes this campaign can inspire individuals and groups to action by demonstrating the abundance of good works that connect us in our community," said Volunteer Fairfax CEO Steve Mutty. "Through simple acts of kindness, being a good neighbor, or [doing] volunteer activities through a nonprofit, we'll show how being intentional and impactful adds up for the greater good."

With a passion and talent for GIS, Luckabaugh created and will manage the campaign's interactive map. "This is an opportunity to do good to connect and engage my community," she said. This fall, she'll attend the University of Mary Washington, majoring in geography to obtain a certificate in Geographic Information Science.

For more information and to participate in this campaign, go to <https://www.volunteerfairfax.org/goodconnectsus/>.

— BONNIE HOBBS

Swearing-in

FROM PAGE 5

He then extended a collective thank-you to outgoing Councilmembers Michael DeMarco and Jennifer Passey for their service. (Both chose not to run again). "Beginning with Michael's work on the Economic Development Authority and Jennifer's work on the Planning Commission – and their subsequent years on City Council – they've given us their best," said Meyer. "They've left a legacy for which they can be justly proud and for which we will be continually thankful."

"We have much to do," he continued. "I invite all citizens to join us in the next chapter of our self-governance. And remember that, when it comes to the City of Fairfax, the best is yet to come."

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Questions and "Canswers"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

"Very interesting," to quote Artie Johnson from "Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In," that "crazy-kooky" comedy show from the 70s. What's interesting is what my oncologist will say concerning the July 6th CT scan of my upper torso (lungs), the first such scan I will have had in almost six months. That interval being twice the usual and customary three-month schedule I've been on for years. The reason for this abnormally long interval? As you regular readers know, I was being treated for my second cancer: stage II, papillary thyroid cancer. Now that the treatment and all is complete, we can return to the scene of the original crime, if you know what I mean, and begin assessing/treating my underlying cancer: stage IV, non small cell lung cancer, which presumably has not disappeared in the last six months. To say my life depends on these findings is a bit obvious. Nevertheless, keeping one's eye on the ball is what is characterized-as-"terminal" patients have to do. (We're in constant touch with our mortality.)

Losing sight of the obvious is the ultimate presumption, not unlike one being innocent until proven guilty. In the cancer world in which I live exists the exact opposite: your cancer is never in remission (innocent). Ergo, you are always guilty (of having cancer). Now whether it moves or grows, the results of one's scan will confirm. It's challenging to not expect the worst, even after 11+ years of experience often receiving good news; the inevitability of the eventual bad news is occasionally overwhelming. I mean, one is not characterized as "terminal" because they're expected to live. The writing may not exactly be on the walls, but apparently it's in the handbook that oncologists use to determine the proper protocol to treat their patient's cancer.

Generally speaking, a serious/terminal diagnosis is rarely affected by the advances of modern medicine and/or a patient's disparate hopes and prayers. For us cancer patients, we're only as secure as the results of our most recent diagnostic scan says we are. So yes, July 6th is an important date for Team Lourie as will the follow-up telephone appointment with my oncologist on July 13th. That's when we'll learn if the road is hitting back at the rubber and whether or not I go forward in hope or backward in despair.

As much ado about something as I am making this situation to be, it's not as if I haven't been down this road before; many, many times since my original diagnosis in late February, 2009. This is just "another day in paradise" to quote Phil Collins. And though this road is the one most traveled, it still doesn't minimize the stakes. It just means that I've been incredibly and amazingly lucky not to have succumbed to this killer disease (lung cancer is by far the leading cause of cancer deaths) as so many hundreds of thousands already have. And though experience helps, it doesn't really change the stakes; it sort of maintains them. All I can do in the interim is try not to consider the negative and recommit to the positive. That positive mantra for me has been, "it's nothing until it's something." And if it is something, it will be bad enough to hear about it then so I don't need to hear about it (presume) it's bad now. For the moment, to quote Sergeant Schultz (John Banner) from Hogan's Heroes: "I know nothing!"

For some reason though, and I may be reading more into it than is appropriate, this July 6th scan seems to be carrying some additional weight. Not that there's anything different in and of itself with this scan compared to the previous one hundred or so that I've had - with or without symptoms, it just seems as if I'm spending more time trying to convince myself that it isn't.

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

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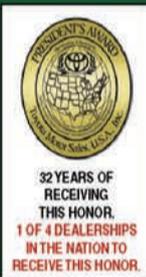
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