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# CONNECTION

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JANUARY 13-19, 2021

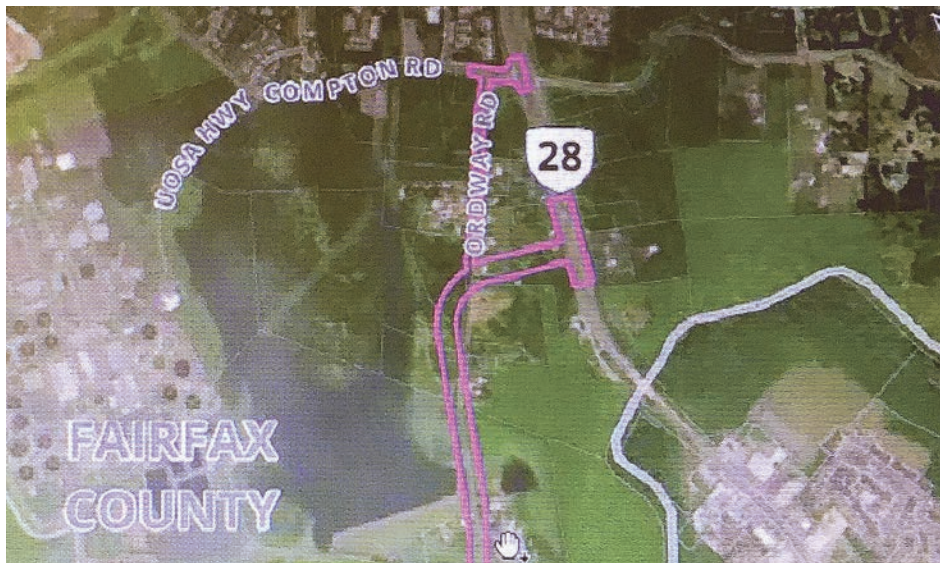
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# 'No Accountability, No Guts, No Leadership'

Residents decry Fairfax County's lack of action on Route 28 Bypass project.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION



The Route 28 Bypass (in purple) from Prince William County would tie into Fairfax County at Ordway and Compton roads, near Route 28 in Centreville.

Imagine your neighbor decided to build a second garage and use your side yard for its driveway. He hasn't asked your permission, told you or your family about his plan or asked what you think of it. Would you passively let him do it, or would you ask questions and try to get him to work with you for everyone's benefit?

That's the position Centreville residents and Bull Run Regional Park find themselves in now, thanks to Prince William County's Route 28 Bypass project. Most people in Fairfax County haven't heard about this road or how it could affect them. But land-use groups here have, and they've got a slew of unanswered questions.

The nearly \$300 million road – geared to reduce traffic congestion in Prince William – would cross Bull Run Creek and cut through Bull Run Regional Park in Fairfax County before connecting with Ordway and Compton roads in Centreville to link up with Route 28. Yet Fairfax County officials have made no objections to the serious impacts another county's project could have here – and haven't even held a public hearing about it.

Indeed – although Fairfax County's Board of Supervisors has known about this bypass for more than three years – the first, information session for residents here wasn't held until Dec. 7. It was hosted by Prince William County, in conjunction with Fairfax County's Department of Transportation (FCDOT).

Yet even then, because the meeting was virtual, participants couldn't see each other's questions and the hosts could pick and choose which ones to answer and which to avoid, altogether. They also weren't completely honest.

For example, on Dec. 7, Prince William Transportation Department Planning Manager Paolo Belita said that, to minimize impacts on Bull Run Regional Park, "We shifted [the bypass's] design to follow Ordway Road and away from the park, and we'll continue shifting it."

But at the Dec. 16 Sully District Council meeting, FCDOT Director Tom Biesiadny confirmed that some parkland will have to be taken for the chosen route. He didn't know how much, but he said more land would be needed than what's in Ordway Road's existing right-of-way.

ON DEC. 7, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) Executive Director Monica Backmon said Route 28 in Prince William carries 57,000 vehicles/day, so "We have to relieve the commuters' stress on this heavily traveled road." NVTA contributed \$100 million toward the bypass's cost, with Prince William bonds funding the rest.

**"We have to relieve the commuters' stress on this heavily traveled road."**

— NVTA Executive Director  
Monica Backmon

tal and, by 2040, should carry 60,000 county and regional vehicles/day. He said consultant Parsons "will look at environmental issues as the design moves forward and we better understand the impacts." He also said the project cost estimate included money for possible remediation.

"We'll look at traffic data for smooth traffic flow at the tie-in point, so [the bypass] can handle the traffic coming through the [Centreville] intersections," continued Canizales. "We estimate three traffic lights on the bypass, including at each end point."

A caller asked if this road is consistent with Fairfax County's Comprehensive Plan, and Biesiadny skirted the issue by replying that the Comp Plan "allows for adjusted alignments, so we believe there's enough flexibility in it to incorporate this solution." But, stressed another caller, "This bypass, specifically, is not on the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan."

Noting that the tie-in will be south of the Compton/Route 28 intersection, another person asked, "What will happen to home values of those people with the bypass in their front yards or backyards?" Sidestepping the uncomfortable question, Belita simply said, "We'll take a look at that."

"If traffic volumes will rise, wouldn't this [bypass] bring more traffic to Route 28 [in Centreville] at the Fairfax County line?" asked another caller. Biesiadny answered that Fairfax County already plans to widen Route 28 there from four to six lanes, with an option for eight lanes in the future, should they be necessary.

Saying the two counties will continue to coordinate, Belita said, "We're looking at how the design will impact Ordway at Route 28. This spring, we'll select an engineering-design firm."

Prince William Transportation Director Rick Canizales said the road will have four lanes total

and, by 2040, should carry 60,000 county and regional vehicles/day. He said consultant Parsons "will look at environmental issues as the design moves forward and we better understand the impacts." He also said the project cost estimate included money for possible remediation.

Belita estimated the bypass will take two years to construct. Meanwhile, another caller asked if this project needs Fairfax County Supervisors' approval. "It's to be determined," replied Biesiadny. "The Board will have numerous opportunities to engage in the project."

"Have the Fairfax County communities and homeowners' associations closest to the tie-in location been notified of the possible impacts of this project to their neighborhoods?" asked another person.

Belita said the Dec. 7 meeting was the start of that process. And Biesiadny said those communities would be contacted so they can "engage in the project and understand the potential impacts on their property."

Besides, added Canizales, "We had some meetings in 2017. We're now starting the design process and a Request for Proposals to get the right people to do it. This aspect will last up to three years."

However, Centreville's Jim Hart called it "a slap in the face to suggest that a preliminary, VDOT 'mix and mingle' night in 2017 at Centreville Elementary is equivalent to the type of public hearing on the final route held by Prince William supervisors, years later."

CITING ANOTHER CONCERN, a caller said, "There are many plants and environmentally sensitive species in the tie-in area. How will you deal with them?" Again, Belita just said they'd "look at that."

Resident Jehanne Arslan emphasized that the tie-in site is also in a historic-resource area, is "upstream from the Occoquan Reservoir and has the potential to pose threats to the public water supply, both during and after construction."

But, answered Canizales, "This project went through many years of study with the stakeholders, and this is the route that was chosen."

When asked why Fairfax County has had no public hearings about the bypass – even though it could significantly affect Centreville residents – Biesiadny said, "It's 90 percent in Prince William County and it's their project. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will have input on the design."

Still, Hart – a former Fairfax County planning commissioner – found the whole situation "appalling and shameful, especially since past Fairfax County Boards of Supervisors had been so protective of the Occoquan and environment, and more sensitive to the importance of transparency and accountability. Fairfax County's role in this project was botched badly, at many levels.

"Prince William has no business approving a new bypass route in Fairfax County, not shown on the adopted Comp Plan and in an environmentally sensitive area. I find it shocking that Prince William supervisors would hold a public hearing for its citizens, to select an extraterritorial bypass route in Fairfax County – yet Fairfax County's leadership would avoid the issue and suggest that enough had been done already."

Indeed, the project Website, [www.route28bypass.com](http://www.route28bypass.com), clearly states, "The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has not taken any action regarding this project." As a result, Fairfax County residents weren't given a chance to object to the final route or to express their concerns to their own, elected officials before this route

was selected. They also weren't notified that another county would be making a decision that could affect them.

It's especially egregious, said Hart, because this bypass would be on land zoned Residential Conservation and would be uphill from the Occoquan Reservoir – which supplies Fairfax County's drinking water – with a new bridge in a floodplain and a new road going through a regional park.

Regarding transportation, he said, "We already have a tangled mess where Ordway, Compton, Old Centreville roads and Route 28 all tie together. None of how that snarl would be resolved is even hinted at on the Comp Plan, especially if you throw a new bypass into the mix there."

Calling the recent meeting "carefully choreographed," Hart said, "It's obvious Fairfax County's supervisors want no fingerprints on this and will do whatever it takes to avoid having a public hearing or taking a vote on the route. No accountability, no guts, no leadership."

**"It's obvious Fairfax County's supervisors want no fingerprints on this and will do whatever it takes to avoid having a public hearing or taking a vote on the route."**

— Jim Hart, Centreville



## One Board, Two Sycamores, Three Concerns

### Possible removal of Heron House trees brought to light.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**T**wo Reston sycamore trees at Lake Anne Village Center appear to be a concern to certain people but for three different reasons. Their unease involves Reston's flagship characteristics, its tree canopy, lakes, and public art. Apparent consternation for some residents at Heron House is that the sycamores block lake views. According to the Morton Arboretum, sycamore trees can reach heights of 75 to 100 feet tall with a canopy 50 to 70 feet wide. The high-rise condo is noted for its floor to ceiling windows and cement balconies offering extended views of Lake Anne and its fountain. The condo is located on Lake Anne's edge, a Resource Protection Areas (RPA), under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance.

On Dec. 9, Senzel Schaefer, Lake Anne Reston Condominium Association Board President, said she served as president for over a year. "During my tenure, the issue of removing the sycamore trees on our plaza has been raised multiple times by a small handful of owners, all residents of the Heron House. At first, I was puzzled as to why residents would want two majestic and healthy trees removed. Upon some digging, I found that it was blocking their view of the lake and therefore they have been lobbying the Board of Directors to spend 40K to have them taken down."

Mary Mulrenan is the Public Information Officer at Fairfax County Land Development Services. In an email on Dec. 6, she wrote that they "located two trees near Washington Plaza North, Reston, in a Resource Protection Area (RPA). Someone has indicated these trees are allegedly designated for removal, but our check of records in that location shows no exemption request at this time." In Fairfax County, RPAs include any land characterized by, among other things, one or more of the following features - tidal wetland, tidal shore, and water body with perennial flow.

According to Mulrenan, a site visit indicated Lake Anne Reston Condominium Association was aware of the RPA restrictions and would "not proceed with any removal before following all relevant regulations."

NON-COMPLIANCE with RPA restrictions is a violation of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance and can result in penalties up to \$5,000 per day," she added. "No vegetation removal is allowed within 100 feet of a body of water... without prior approval from Fairfax County's Department of Land Development Services... This includes the removal of dead, dying or diseased trees and shrubs, noxious weeds, or invasive plants,"



Heron House's two sycamore trees are located in a Fairfax County Resource Protection Area, within 100 feet of a water body with perennial flow.

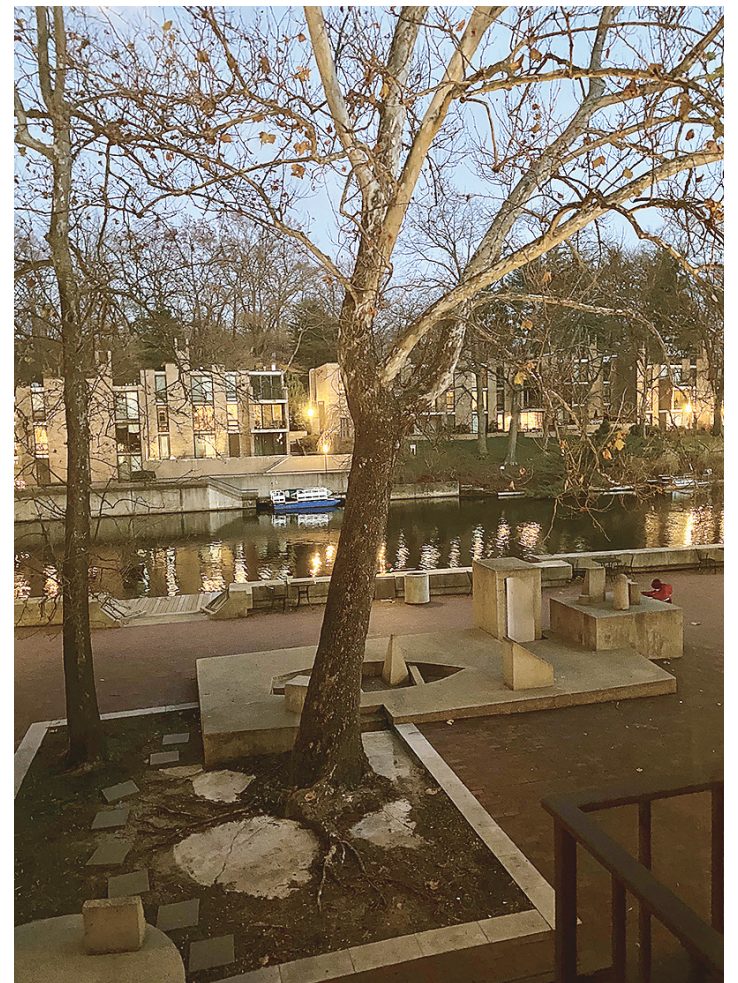
PHOTOS BY  
MERCIA HOBSON/  
THE CONNECTION

according to Fairfax County Land development Services RPA Notification, mailer, v8.

Mike Leone is Director of Communications, Marketing & Member Services at Reston Association. He, too, heard concerns from residents at Heron House. "Reston Association's Covenants Department has received some concerns from at least two members of Heron House regarding the proposed tree removal. To date, no application has been submitted to RA nor has contact been made from the condo association to RA related to the removal of the trees. The condo association would be violating RA rules if they do not notify RA and check to ensure an application is not required (for example, if the trees were dead)," he wrote in an email.

The second concern individuals broached was that the sycamore trees' root systems might be threatening the plaza. According to Schaefer, the group who brought up the issue of removing the trees said, "The roots of the sycamore trees are damaging the surrounding brick." Schaefer recalled saying, "There is no evidence of any movement of the brick. ... I opposed the motion and suggested we seek the advice of an arborist. My recommendation has been challenged by two Board members who also live in the Heron House," she said.

Eve Thompson is a homeowner and merchant in the historic Lake Anne area. She does not serve on the Lake Anne Reston



A possible standoff looms between the Heron House's two sycamores growing inches from pieces of the site-specific public art by Uruguayan-born sculptor Fonseca Gonzalo. Called "Sun Boat" (1965), Lake Anne of Reston condominium owns the irreplaceable brutalist sculpture.

### Reston's 60th Anniversary

March 2021 marks the 60th Anniversary of when Robert (Bob) E. Simon purchased the 6,750 acres of farmland in Fairfax County to create an open community that would later be named using his initials and the word "town." Fourteen months after purchase, with county approvals in-hand, Simon set about to construct the community he envisioned, one with a lake, where no lake existed. But there was a stream valley filled with native trees.

The Connection Newspapers reported in a story by Alex McVeigh dated Wed., July 11, 2013, when Robert Simon was walking with his newly hired forester, Glenn Saunders, Simon said, "We realized that everything within the contour of the lake's water level would have to be removed. There were hundreds and hundreds of beautiful dogwood, myrtle and holly trees and we thought it would be a shame to tear them all out. So, we decided to start our own plant nursery... (They) were eventually re-planted as needed as the project developed."

Condominium Association board. Thompson brought the third concern that the sycamores endangered more than just the plaza. According to Thompson, the trees threatened the priceless and irreplaceable site-specific work by Uruguayan-born sculptor Fonseca Gonzalo.

Called "Sun Boat" (1965), the brutalist, multi-piece public artwork is owned by Lake Anne of Reston, a Condominium. According to the guide, "Public Art Tour Series: Lake Anne" developed by Public Art Reston, "(The) fanciful collection of molded concrete elements are fully integrated into the plaza next to Heron House." Children are often seen climbing and playing on the inspirational piece. "We are so blessed to have his work... How precious they are," said Thompson. "It's maintenance; It's a property trying to protect a sculpture," said Thomson.

IN THE GUIDE'S FORWARD, Anne Delaney, Executive Director Public Art Reston, said, "With this guide, Public Art Reston invites you to consider Lake Anne Village Center as both an open-air art gallery and unique Reston experience that promotes the value of art in daily life."

Schaefer said that fixing the heating system in the Heron House should take priority for the funds. "I proposed that the heating be restored first before we spend money elsewhere. The group has met my suggestion with complaints of ignoring their issue," she said.

As the Presiding Officer of the Board of Directors, Schaefer said, she had the fiduciary responsibility to ensure the association's resources were spent wisely.



## INSURRECTION

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



### COMMENTARY

Last Thursday's one-word headline in the Richmond Times Dispatch was in such a large font that it extended across the entire width of the newspaper: INSURRECTION. The generally conservative newspaper that was in its history the mouthpiece of massive resistance against school desegregation could have termed the events at the United States Capitol the previous day a riot, a disturbance, or a protest. That they and many others chose insurrection as the best description of what happened is an indication of the seriousness of it.

No one expressed the situation better than Senator Mitt Romney in his prepared speech delivered at the Capitol as soon as the insurrectionists had been forced out: "We gather today due to a selfish man's injured pride and the outrage of his supporters whom he has deliberately misinformed for the past two months and stirred to action this very morning. What happened here today was an insurrection, incited by the President of the United States."

An insurrection is defined legally as the act or an instance of revolting especially violently against civil or political authority or against an established government. Under federal law, whoever incites, assists, or engages in any insurrection against the authority of the United States or the laws thereof, or gives aid or comfort thereto, shall be fined and/or imprisoned; and shall be incapable of holding any office in the future.

The rights to assemble and to petition the government are protected in the Constitution. America is known for its open protests to bring injustices to the attention of government officials and the public. Some would say that such actions are as American as apple pie. What happened last week is different. Incited and directed by the President of the United States, his lawyer and a retired general who was recently pardoned by the President, thousands of persons marched from near the White House to the United States Capitol where for the first time since the British occupied the Capitol in 1814

took over the building for a short time.

It is essential that the Congress and the justice system take appropriate action against those who incited, led and participated in the insurrection. Defense of our democracy demands it. Likewise, we need to understand why the Capitol was left so defenseless when it was well known that a major bullying of the Congress was going to take place that day as the President had been talking about for weeks.

The Guardian offered a perspective: "A group of white supremacists from throughout the country who had been radicalized by the rants and misinformation from the President occupied a space that has been the citadel of democracy." About the ease with which the insurrectionists took over the Capitol it observed, "The contrast with the mass deployments of over 5,000 troops for the Black Lives Matter protests in the summer could not have been more glaring. Then, Washington resembled a city under occupation."

Through what has been one of the most disturbing days of our history I remain hopeful that we will be able to undo the many wrongs of the last four years and the racism of hundreds of years. I pledge myself to working as hard as I can to make it happen!

## Superintendent Brabrand Presents FCPS Budget for FY 2022

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand presented a \$3.1 billion Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Proposed Budget to the Fairfax County School Board at its business meeting on Jan. 7. Overall, the FY 2022 Proposed Budget represents an increase of \$0.4 million, or 0.01 percent, over the FY 2021 Approved Budget.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted FCPS in numerous ways," said Brabrand. "As a result, this budget focuses on our most pressing needs. I have designed the budget to prioritize the instructional and social-emotional needs of our students so they can continue to learn and grow despite the ongoing challenges of this pandemic."

The FY 2022 Proposed Budget includes funds to continue supporting students' technology and instructional needs by enhancing digital instructional and web conferencing tools, cybersecurity protection, and the continuation of the lease obligation for FCPSOn.

"We are asking for an additional \$42.7 million, or 2.0 percent, in the County transfer to continue offering expanded preschool special education classes; address retirement rate increases and rising health care costs; expand and support our response to meet student

needs arising from the pandemic; and offset decreasing revenue from state, federal, and other sources," he added.

To begin to meet the prescribed changes to the Standards of Quality (SOQ) by the Virginia Board of Education, the budget includes \$4.9 million and 50 positions to fund staffing adjustments at the elementary level for the English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) program. In response to the update to the Code of Virginia that authorizes collective bargaining for public employees, the budget includes \$0.5 million and three positions for a collective bargaining team to support the new requirements and activities.

While the FY 2022 budget does not contain compensation increases for most employees, the proposed budget does include \$3.0 million for the third and final year of the three-year implementation plan to bring salaries of instructional assistants and public health training assistants to 50 percent of the bachelor's degree teacher salary scale.

"Now more than ever, collaboration with our county funding partners is vital," said Brabrand. "Working with the County Executive and the Board of Supervisors, we have been able to create a practical budget that will address our most pressing needs for FY 2022. We have pri-



COURTESY OF FCPS  
**Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand**

### BUDGET PROCESS SCHEDULE

The presentation of the FY 2022 Proposed Budget is the starting point of the budget process, which ends in May with the School Board's adoption of the Approved Budget.

The Fairfax County School Board will hold a work session on Tuesday, Jan. 12, a public hearing on the FY 2022 budget on Tuesday, Jan. 26 and Jan. 27, if needed, and an additional budget work session on Wednesday, Jan. 27.

The School Board will adopt its Advertised Budget on Feb. 18 and present it to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, April 13. Additional budget work sessions and public hearings will occur through May. The FCPS FY 2022 begins July 1, 2021.

Information about speaking at a budget public hearing and a list of relevant budget dates, along with updates and budget news, is available online.

itized the needs of students above all as we navigate the changing educational landscape during this pandemic."

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# Local College Student Launches Tutoring Company

Education is his passion.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

In the wake of the coronavirus and its impact on students' learning in Fairfax County Public Schools, a 2019 alumnus of South Lakes High School in Reston and second-year engineering student at Georgia Institute of Engineering recently founded S4S Tutoring. Sessions are due to launch Mon. Jan. 11, 2021. "All I could think of was there were kids who might be falling behind and just needed a little bit of extra help," said founder and CEO of S4S Tutoring, Benjamin (Bennie) Tignor of Reston.

Passionate about education, Tignor is the former student representative to the Fairfax County School Board (SY 2018-2019). He said the whole point of his position as a board representative was to talk with other students and figure out their concerns. "And that was before the pandemic totally changed education here...School in NOVA is very hard...The thing is everybody needs help," he said.

Nathan Onibudo, 17, of Springfield, serves as the current student representative to the Fairfax County School Board (SY 2020-2021). He agreed with Tignor's statement and said, "The only certainty is that

students in FCPS need help. The data collected demonstrates how students were thrown into a new environment many couldn't navigate."

**TIGNOR AND HIS TUTORING TEAM** at S4S are thrilled to launch their download-free, face-to-face tutoring sessions. The program utilizes the award-winning online platform, LearnCube for FCPS students K-12 struggling to learn during the COVID-19 pandemic. Course offerings include support in general education, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs, SAT/ACT prep, and college essay/profile coaching.

According to Tignor, he and the other S4S tutors understand first-hand, on multiple levels, the challenges with online education. Website profiles and resumes of the tutors detail professional and educational experience. For instance, Tignor's resume states he is skilled in biomedical engineering, leadership, and public speaking. He has held positions ranging from leading teams and conducting research. Tignor graduated from



Benjamin (Bennie) Tignor of Reston



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

**Bennie Tignor, an alumnus of South Lakes High School in Reston Class of 2019 and founder and CEO of S4S Tutoring, introduces a new student to the lesson space.**

South Lakes High School with an Advanced Diploma, 42 college credits hours, and received a GPA of 4.67/4.0.

Lyn Fiscus of Reston is a social studies and leadership teacher at South Lakes High School and the student government adviser. She knows Tignor well. "Aside from their other qualifications, Bennie and his colleagues offer two strengths that will help them connect with students who are struggling in the world of virtual school: they are students in that world themselves so they understand it well and being closer in age to FCPS students they will be better able to forge connections with them," she said.

While the tutors are not professionally certified to assist students with severe learning disabilities or special needs who require outside resources, Tignor said they could help those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, and learning disabilities.

**THE TUTORS** can spark passion, explain concepts differently, and fill in the gaps where big group online education might fall short. He said, "Three of our five tutors have learning disabilities, experience it themselves, and know how difficult it is. Personally, I have ADHD dyslexia, and that makes online learning a whole other ballpark of difficulty with engagement."

Tignor said that S4S tutors would donate 10 percent of their fees to Student Impact. According to Tignor, the local non-profit supports FCPS students and others. It creates a resource for schools and teachers during the pandemic's shift to e-learning. "The donations from S4S will allow Student Impact to keep providing essential learning resources such as computer cases, books and more," said Chief Executive Officer of Student Impact, Ana Stanisavljev of Reston, an alumna of South Lakes High School and fourth-year student at the University of Virginia.

Visit S4S Tutoring online for additional information, including a free introductory session.

## Cesar del Aguila Named Vice Mayor of the Town of Herndon

At its first work session of 2021, the Town Council of the Town of Herndon approved a resolution in a vote of 6-0 to elect second term Councilmember Cesar del Aguila the Vice Mayor for a two-year term beginning Jan. 1, 2021. Del Aguila abstained. Tradition held that the person who received the highest number of votes during the general election is named vice mayor.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Cesar del Aguila is the newly elected Vice Mayor of the Town of Herndon.**

During discussion of the motion to approve the resolution, Councilmember Pradip Dhakal said he wanted to call out del Aguila "for his openness, integrity and always ready to discuss the different views or ideas in order to move the Town forward."

Del Aguila thanked the voters of the Town. "I shall endeavor to persevere," he said.

Mayor Sheila Olem congratulated Vice Mayor del Aguila, adding, "I look forward to working with you over the next two years and let's touch base this week."

Del Aguila chaired the town's Pedestrian & Bicycle Committee and its Interview Subcommittee. He served as the town's rep-

representative to the Dulles Area Transportation Association and the Phase II Dulles Rail Transportation Improvement District Commission Board. A resident of Herndon since 2007, Vice Mayor del Aguila is an active volunteer with the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office, serving as a certified reserve deputy sheriff.

The day after the work session, Vice Mayor del Aguila shared his immediate and long term goals. "Working on immediate: best transparency practices and town process, and organizational reform. Long term: housing and five-year budget reform."

— MERCIA HOBSON

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## Announcements

## Announcements

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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.

**-Werner Heisenberg**

## AREA ROUNDUPS

### Virtual Coffee with a Cop

Join police from the Sully District Station for their first-ever virtual Coffee with a Cop, this Thursday, Jan. 14, from 10-11 a.m. There's no agenda, no speeches – just coffee and conversation. The Zoom Link is: <https://bit.ly/coffee0114> and the password is: coffee.

### Alert for I-66/Route 29 in Centreville

Route 29 north in Centreville will be reduced to just one lane under I-66, all this week, overnight, through Friday, Jan. 15. That's because of the continued demolition of old I-66 bridges, nightly, from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m.

Drivers should expect delays if traveling in this area and are urged by VDOT to consider using alternate routes. The work is part of the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Project. However, it's weather-dependent and will be rescheduled if inclement conditions occur.

The project includes reconstruction of the I-66 bridges over Route 29. These bridges are being lengthened, widened and raised to accommodate the new Express Lanes and provide room for any future mass transit along I-66 and the future widening of Route 29.

### You Can't Get There from Here

Heads up, drivers in Centreville: For the next four months, the left-turn lane and ramp from Route 29 north to I-66 east in Centreville will be closed. Traffic

on Route 29 north will be directed to stay to the left and continue to the intersection at Trinity Parkway/Machen Road. At the traffic signal, drivers will use the left-most turn lane only to make a U-turn onto Route 29 south, stay to the right and follow the signs to I-66 east.

Or, as an alternate route, motorists may continue farther north on Route 29 to Route 28 north, stay to the right and follow the signs to I-66 east. This closure is being done as part of the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Project. And drivers should expect additional, construction-related detours and traffic changes as work progresses at the Route 29/I-66 Interchange.

### Snowflake Trail Scavenger Hunt Extended

The Fairfax County Park Authority has extended its free scavenger hunt, the Snowflake Trail, through Jan. 31. Participants scan QR codes on their smartphones to find video clues while they walk through the forest behind the Cub Run RECenter. Snowflake markers will guide them to each clue, and videos along the way will teach children about the animals in the woods.

The Snowflake Trail starts at a kiosk at the Cub Run RECenter circle, across from the center's main entrance at 4630 Stonecroft Blvd, in Chantilly. It's less than a mile long, and RECenter entry passes are not needed to participate. For a video about it, go to <https://youtu.be/LSsFFHnMOEs>.

## Announcements

## Announcements

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## Announcements

## Announcements

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**Senior Living**, fourth week of every month.

### Questions?

E-mail [sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-778-9431





# CALENDAR

## NOW TO FEB. 7

"Winter's Tales." Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic, 2905 District Avenue, #105, Fairfax. Winter can be many things--- quiet, simple, elegant, cold, dark and hopeful. Winter's shadows are long and its daylight is precious. It is a season of white and blue, of cold and fire, of hibernation and regeneration. In "Winter's Tales" at the Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic, the gallery's artists demonstrate in a variety of mediums how they respond to the coldest and darkest time of the year. The exhibit features beautiful paintings, fine art photography, ceramics, exquisite jewelry and fabric art.

## WEDNESDAY/JAN. 13

MCC 2021 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration. 7 p.m. Hosted by the Staff at The Alden, McLean. Virtual Book Discussion on "The Sound of Freedom: Marian Anderson, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Concert That Awakened America" by Raymond Arsenault. "The Sound of Freedom..." recounts the life of Black contralto Marian Anderson and her experience as a Black woman in the classical music field. Arsenault gives context to Anderson's historic 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial, drawing on her own words and those of scholars. They will discuss this book that celebrates civil rights and the performing arts. Register online at [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org).

## WEDNESDAY/JAN. 13

Interior Illustrations. 10 a.m. to noon. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Capture a moment in time with your artwork through the unique "Interior Illustrations" program at Sully Historic Site. During this program, you will have the chance to use graphite or pencils to relax and draw a historic interior at Sully. Focus on specific artifacts or capture the essence of life during the early 1800s. The program is designed for participants age 16 to adult. The cost is \$15 per person. Some supplies will be available. Social distancing and face coverings are required. Call 703-437-1794.

## WEDNESDAY/JAN. 13

The Unruly Theatre Project's Virtual Improv Show. 7 p.m. Join (the) Unruly Theatre Project's virtual fall improv shows from the comfort of your couch! Register online and a Zoom link and password for the show will be emailed to you. Participants must register two hours in advance of showtime. Register online at [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org).

## JAN. 14 TO FEB. 18 (THURSDAYS)

MCC 2021 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration. 7 p.m. Virtual Podcast Discussion Group on "Seeing White"—Season Two of "Scene on Radio" from the Center for Documentary Studies. Where did the notion of "whiteness" come from? Hosts Jon Biewen and weekly guest host, Dr. Chenjerai Kumanyika, delve into the historical origins of whiteness and racism in the U.S. The series looks at the history as well as the social constructs and emotional grappling that Americans engage in when discussing race and whiteness. Register online at [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org).

## THURSDAY/JAN. 14

Virtual Women Who Lead Speaker Series. 7-8 p.m. Virtual Event. The Junior League of Northern Virginia presents talks by women leaders. Features Lieutenant General Gwendolyn Bingham. Cost is \$20. Purchase tickets at [jlnv.org/womenwholead](http://jlnv.org/womenwholead). Visit the website: [www.jlnv.org](http://www.jlnv.org)

## SUNDAY/JAN. 17

Catching Atomic Spies. 2-3:30 p.m. At the Cold War Museum (100% Virtual in the Zoom Room, 1742 Lineweaver Rd., Warrenton. How an Astonishing Work of Decryption Led to the Atomic Spies, the Cambridge Five, and Much More. Presented by the Historian of the National Security Agency. Cost is \$20. Visit the website:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/venona-the-secret-tool-that-found-key-spies-in-the-early-cold-war-tickets-123765105763>

## TUESDAY/JAN. 19

Virtual Women Who Lead Speaker Series. 7-8 p.m. Virtual event. The Junior League of Northern Virginia presents talks by women leaders. Features Vicki Warker. Cost is \$20. Purchase tickets at [jlnv.org/womenwholead](http://jlnv.org/womenwholead). Visit the website: [www.jlnv.org](http://www.jlnv.org)

## TUESDAY/JAN. 19

Waterfowl Program. At Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. While some birds may be wintering in the South, there are still plenty to see on local waterways. In fact, for some migratory birds, Fairfax County seems mighty balmy this time of year. Come to Burke Lake Park in January and learn about the birds that are making the lake their home for the cold season. Join the "Waterfowl" program on Tuesday, Jan. 5 or Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2021, to search for birds such as loons, lesser scaups and ring-necked ducks. Bring binoculars and dress for the weather. The program is designed for participants age 12 to adult and runs from 10 to 11 a.m. The cost is \$8 per person. Call 703-323-6600.

## FRIDAY/JAN. 22

Family Outdoor Exploration. 1-2 p.m. At E.C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Get your family into the great outdoors with a personalized program led by a naturalist or historian at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park. The "Family Outdoor Exploration" program lets you choose your own exploration. Investigate topics, such as Stream Life, Pond Life, Historic Ice Cream and much more. Once you register, the park will reach out to you to plan your personalized family outing. The cost is \$40 per family for a group of up to nine people age 4 to adult. Call 703-631-0013.

## MONDAY/JAN. 25

Unmeltable Snowman Workshop. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. It's always sad to watch a snowman melt away, so discover how you can create a four-season snowman that will still be with you when summer arrives. Sully Historic Site is hosting a series of "Unmeltable Snowman" workshops for families on three Mondays in January - Jan. 4, Jan. 11 and Jan. 25, 2021. At the workshop, you will learn to use a felting process to make an unmeltable snowperson and decorate it with style. Keep your creation through winter, spring, summer and fall. This program is suitable for participants age 5 to adult and is being offered on the hour from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The workshop is designed for a family of up to four people, and the cost is \$20 per family. Call 703-437-1794.

## FRIDAY/JAN. 29

Family Fun Trivia Night. 7-9 p.m. Virtual. At the Old Firehouse, McLean. Gather the whole family around the computer or tablet and get ready for some socially distant trivia. Prizes for winning teams. To register for Old Firehouse events, visit: [www.oldfirehouse.org](http://www.oldfirehouse.org) or call 703-448-8336, TTY: 711.

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## In Effect, a Trade



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Incurable but treatable non small cell lung cancer, stage IV for incurable but treatable papillary thyroid cancer stage IV. And though it may have taken a while to get re-diagnosed: nearly 11 years, the eagle, as they say, apparently has landed. Nevertheless, I'm glad to still be here. Let me amend that. After being given my first "terminal" diagnosis in late February, 2009, with an accompanying "13 month to two year" prognosis, I am glad to be anywhere. Still, it would have been preferred had I received the thyroid cancer diagnosis originally. If that had been the case, I might no longer be a cancer patient with an incurable form of papillary thyroid cancer. If I remember correctly, generally speaking, papillary thyroid cancer is called "the friendly cancer" because it's so curable. Not for me, and not now.

But "alas poor Yorick," papillary thyroid cancer was not my original diagnosis. As such, I have been treated and lived as a non small cell lung cancer stage IV patient whose life expectancy was shortening by the hour.

However, since I was being treated for lung cancer exclusively, my underlying/real cancer was left untreated - for 11 years. And sure enough, after 10 years or so, the thyroid cancer finally manifested itself with the appearance of my "adam's apple" tumor, as I called it. Left untreated for 11 years, it morphed, if that's even the right word, into a rare form of papillary cancer, the "terminal" kind. The thyroidectomy I had in late Jan. 2020 confirmed it once and for all.

And by "terminal" I mean, there is only one drug presently recommended, Lenvima, for my cancer, and its projected effectiveness is three years, give or take. So far the side effects have been fairly minimal and my first two quarterly CT scans since I began this regimen have shown tumor shrinkage. Very encouraging. However, as they say in the mutual fund business: "Past performance is not an indicator of future results." Therefore, though this trade was officially confirmed in the first quarter of this year, I still live and breathe - with somewhat shorter breath, from one CT scan result to the next. I may think I know how I feel, but not until I receive the results from the oncologist, electronically, will I truly know. This is when the rubber officially hits the road. The diagnostic scan results outweigh any feelings I may have on the subject. As is so happens, my next scan is scheduled for Jan. 13. I should have the results before the weekend. A timetable I've experienced many times since Feb. 20, 2009, the date of my original diagnosis.

The trade, unfortunately did not change this cycle. Nor has the situation of there being one drug available left to treat my cancer. I can remember more than once when my oncologist told me the drug he was prescribing was the last one he had confidence in to treat my lung cancer. Now, the drug I'm taking is also the last best choice available. Different from lung cancer drugs, when the drugs worked until they didn't, the thyroid cancer drug I'm taking has a three-year-ish effectiveness limit. After which, as we say in Boston, "it will be Katie bar the door." At the moment, there aren't any additional drugs to recommend. Given what I anticipated my life expectancy to be, considering the age to which both my parents lived, I would say my thyroid cancer is "terminal".

But that's a rabbit hole I'm not going down. Three years may not be a normal life expectancy (that would age me to 69), but it's ample time, I hope, for the cancer researchers to do their work. And I expect there will be some kind of progress even though the type of papillary thyroid cancer I have is not particularly common. Regardless, I will continue my routine of miscellaneous pills (upwards of 60 per day), alkaline water, lab work, scans, treatment and living my life on semi borrowed time. Granted, it's not ideal, but it's a life with which I'm extremely familiar. I have been there and I will continue to do that.

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



# BULLETIN

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.

## MLK CELEBRATION

Reston Community Center will mark the 36th Annual Reston Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration with a mix of online and in-person events to honor the Civil Rights leader and ask the community "Are We Keeping the Promise?" To comply with and support public health standards and best practices, several previously announced events have been canceled or modified. This includes:  
The Keynote Address by Ibram X. Kendi. Dr. Kendi, author of the book *How to Be an Antiracist*, (scheduled for Monday, January 18 at 11 a.m.) is rescheduled to early 2022

since his travel to Reston this year is precluded by current conditions. The Community Luncheon and Especially for Youth (scheduled for Monday, January 18) will return for the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration in 2022.

## SATURDAY/JAN. 16

Community Service Projects at RCC Hunters Woods. 9 a.m. RCC is partnering with Reston Association, Cornerstones and The Closet for small, socially distanced community service projects. Volunteers will sort items from The Closet and make bag lunches for the

Embry Rucker Community Shelter. Weather permitting, additional volunteers will be outside doing clean up on the paths around RCC Hunters Woods. Note: The location has changed from a previously announced location of Southgate Community Center, which is not available this year. To register, contact Ha Brock, Reston Association Volunteer Coordinator and Community Outreach Coordinator, at 703-435-7986 or habrock@reston.org.

## SATURDAY/JAN. 16

Reston Community Orchestra. 2 p.m.

Keeping the Dream: 15th Annual Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Online: RCC YouTube Channel. Celebrate the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at this moving virtual performance of Lift Every Voice and Sing. The performance pays tribute to Dr. King's vision of a society free of prejudice and racial divisions and his belief in the power of music to help create positive change. Instead of the traditional presentation in the RCC Hunters Woods Community Room, the performance will debut on the RCC YouTube channel on Saturday, January 16.

## SUNDAY/JAN. 17

Akua Allrich and The Tribe, A Nina Simone and Miriam Makeba Tribute. 2 p.m. at RCC Hunters Woods – the CenterStage. Jazz vocalist and Washington, DC, native Akua Allrich has proven herself to be a musician of extraordinary talent and crowd-moving passion. With finesse and charisma, she has successfully etched a place for her unique musical expression by electrifying audiences. To comply with current public health guidelines, the seating capacity of the CenterStage is capped at 30%, mask-wearing is required, and other strategies will be in place to promote safe attendance. Tickets sold through the CenterStage Box Office

## MONDAY/JAN. 18

Community Service Projects 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. RCC Hunters Woods. RCC is partnering with Reston Association and Cornerstones for community service projects at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods. Volunteers will make bag lunches for the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, and sort toiletries and cleaning supplies for the Cornerstones Assistance Services and the Pantry programs. Volunteer hours conclude around 1:30 p.m. To volunteer, please contact Ha Brock, Reston Association Volunteer & Community Outreach Coordinator, at 703-435-7986 or habrock@reston.org.

## CLIFTON WOMAN'S CLUB FUNDRAISER

Clifton Community Woman's Club is sponsoring a Virtual C.A.R.E.S. Fundraiser in February. C.A.R.E.S. is an acronym for Creative, Arts, Recording, Education, and Service. Participants will enter a photo or three-minute video of their project with an entrance fee of \$25. The five categories include:  
CREATIVE - Crafts, Fiber, Paper, Wood;  
ARTS - Painting, Sculpture, Poetry, Creative Writing, Photography;  
RECORDING - Video of Music, Dance, Stories, Dramatic Reading, Acting.  
EDUCATION - Video or PDF of any type of Class, teaching, or instructional;  
SERVICE - Photos of person with materials being created and/or donated as a volunteer;  
CCWC, a 501c3 organization, has held a Homes Tour for 47 years to benefit their Charitable Trust. Each year they give four \$2,000 scholarships, included in an average annual giving of \$20,000 to food banks, veterans, women and children in need, and others. 2020 cancelled their tour, but not their giving, thanks to loyal sponsor support. The winners in each category will be recognized on ZOOM on April 17th, with first place winners receiving \$100 and second place winners receiving \$50. For more information, visit <http://cliftoncwc.org/cares>.

## FINE ARTS FESTIVAL RESCHEDULED

Originally planned for May 2021, The Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival, hosted annually by the Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE), has been rescheduled to September 10, 11, and 12, 2021. Visit: [res-tonarts.org](http://res-tonarts.org).

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Pictured: One of the several historical buildings that has housed the Alexandria Gazette Packet since its 1784 founding.

The pandemic has crushed many newspapers across the country, and one of America's oldest newspapers and its affiliated Connection Newspapers, websites and digital media is at risk. The Northern Virginia, DC, and MD area's best read and most trusted source for community news, which includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region. The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyperlocal news to residents. Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years - countless residents have grown up with this local paper covering significant moments in the life of your family and children, news, sporting events,

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