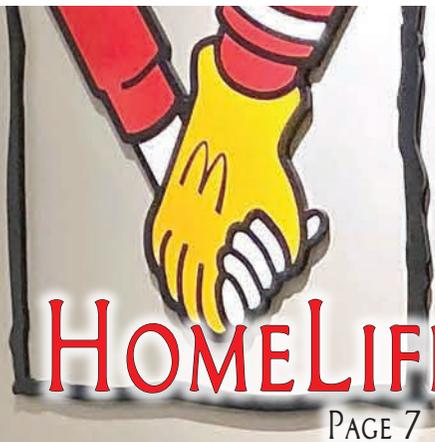


**We Need Your Help!**  
Save One Of America's Oldest  
Local Newspapers on GoFundMe

**THE CONNECTION**  
Newspapers & Online

And affiliated newspapers  
Alexandria Gazette Packet Mount Vernon Gazette  
Potomac ALMANAC CENTRE VIEW

Visit [connectionnewspapers.com](http://connectionnewspapers.com) or <https://www.gofundme.com/f/save-americas-oldest-newspaper>



# RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE Great Falls CONNECTION



## Ponchos of Sunshine To 'Frequent Flier' Hospital Children

NEWS, PAGE 9

## Keller Williams McLean/Great Falls Posts Record \$1.1b in Home Sales

NEWS, PAGE 3

## Dunn Loring Center To Become School

NEWS, PAGE 5

Co-founders of the nonprofit organization, Cape Ivy, Meg Smith of Great Falls and Cindy Hargroves, formerly of Great Falls, donate warm fleecy ponchos to a Ronald McDonald House.

ATTENTION POSTMASTER:  
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL.  
REQUESTED IN HOME 1-14-21

POSTAL CUSTOMER  
EFCR WSS

PRSRPT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
EASTON, MD  
PERMIT #322

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED  
OPINION, PAGE 4 ❖ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10

# COSTA

DENTISTRY



NEW  
PATIENTS  
RECEIVE  
50% OFF

glo<sup>®</sup>

TAKE HOME  
WHITENING  
PRO KIT

\*OFFER VALID  
FOR APPOINTMENTS  
FROM JAN-MAR.  
MUST SCHEDULE  
BY 1/31/21.

(703) 757-0833 | COSTASMILES.COM | @COSTA\_SMILES

10135 COLVIN RUN ROAD, SUITE 101, GREAT FALLS, VA 22066

## County Residents List Assembly Expectations

**Fairfax County General Assembly Delegation holds pre-2021 Session Public Hearing.**

By **MERCIA HOBSON**  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Fairfax County General Assembly Delegation held a Pre-2021 Session Public Hearing on Saturday, Jan. 9. Limited to 70 two-minute speaker slots for County residents who signed up ahead of time, this was an opportunity for delegation members to hear constituent concerns as they prepared for the upcoming session that convenes on Wednesday, Jan. 13 and adjourns on Saturday, Feb. 27. All speakers registered in advance could submit video or call in to submit live testimony during the hearing. Speakers could also submit written testimony by email.

Residents urged the Fairfax delegation to support strengthening our public schools, childcare, and Human Services, expanding access to affordable housing, protecting our environment, modernizing transportation infrastructure, and more. They provided testimony.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey McKay welcomed all and thanked Senator Richard (Dick) L. Saslaw (D-35) for conducting the public hearing. McKay named actions from banning firearms on county property, removing Confederate monuments from the county courthouse, passage of the Clean Economy Act, which had allowed Fairfax County to procure the largest solar PPA project in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and increasing and improving access to one of the most fundamental rights as Americans, voting for no excuse early voting, easing ID re-



**Marissa Brown of Vienna and her son Paul**

quirements and allowing valid drop boxes. However, McKay said, “We need additional financial support from the state of course, and additional state flexibility to weather this storm...The number one thing counties need right now is flexibility to be spry and be able to do what is necessary to meet the needs of people in their communities. And we know communities throughout the Commonwealth are very, very different and that flexibility has never been more important to counties than it is today.”

**SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE** Tamarra Derenak Kaufax (Lee District) spoke next. Addressing the Fairfax Delegation, she said that as the state legislative liaison, on behalf of the entire school board, they were concerned about budget implications associated with some of the proposed changes and the difficulty they have in acquiring the necessary local resources. “Please consider more flexibility on your local match requirements.” “We urge you to continue to hold harmless provisions for student enrollment losses, as we believe they’re temporary... Please avoid imposing state level one-size-

fits-all mandates, particularly in these uncertain times.”

Marissa Brown of Vienna and her son Paul said there was much to do in the upcoming session. Paul said he was a person with autism. He waited more than six years on the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver List. Marissa said they were concerned that Virginia’s current reimbursement rates don’t support hiring a high-quality workforce.

“This is essential in order to recruit staff who really understand the needs of people with developmental disabilities, particularly people with complex needs like Paul. And as I get older, I need to have the confidence that the system of services and support will be there for our son...Finally, criminal justice reform needs to include people with disabilities who are often severely impacted through arrest and incarceration, instead of services and supports,” Marissa said.

Tom Blackburn, president of the 4500 member Audubon Society, addressed three topics saying the Society enthusiastically supported a bill considered by Sen. David Marsden (D-37) and Del. David Bulova (D-37). It required a study of the sale of

**“We need additional financial support from the state of course, and additional state flexibility to weather this storm...”**

— Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey McKay

invasive plants and encouraged the use of native plants. “Next climate change: ASV (Audubon Society Virginia) supports several of the initiatives to address climate change. In particular, we support Senator Boysko’s proposed legislation that would require the Board of Housing and Community Development to fulfill a statutory obligation to keep Virginia’s building code, consistent with the International Energy Efficiency code. We also urge passage of a bill that would allow retail customers to purchase 100 percent renewable energy from licensed energy suppliers,” Blackburn said.

**MORGAN JAMESON** said far too often he’s seen lifelong residents move out of the County to find affordable housing. He said, “Fairfax County is already experiencing a deficit of 31,000 affordable dwelling units and rental homes... The gap between the need and supply will grow considerably without new approaches...Affordable housing is critically important for all Virginians but obtaining it is particularly challenging in Northern Virginia where housing is increasingly out of reach for low and moderate income earners. Therefore, please allocate funding to the Virginia Rental Mortgage Relief Program, expand resources available, and increase funding for the Virginia Housing Trust Fund.”

## Keller Williams McLean/Great Falls Posts Record \$1.1b in Home Sales

**T**he Covid pandemic in 2020 didn’t hold back the Keller Williams Realty office in McLean/Great Falls from setting a new record in northern Virginia for the highest sales volume by a single brokerage. Their agents closed \$1,133,544,680\* in real estate sales during the worst health crisis the country has seen in 100 years.

“We had been knocking on the door of \$1 billion in sales for the last three years,” said

Amina Basic, the Team Leader and CEO. “But we never imagined in our wildest dreams it would happen during a pandemic with ‘stay at home’ orders from our governor for three months.”

After Gov. Ralph Northam issued his order in mid-March, “our industry panicked about what to do. But our amazing agents knew what to do. They doubled their efforts to care for all of their clients who had housing needs,” Basic said.

The national real estate market

dropped about 35 percent in the following 3-4 months, and the Keller Williams office saw a drop of about 30 percent before it started a record pace. “We never closed our office. We adopted new protocols to keep our agents and their clients safe, and we encouraged them to reach out to their communities like never before to help out in this time of need. We all pivoted immediately and found ways to work with title and lenders and get deals closed.”

The office has 276 agents reg-

istered with the regional multiple listing service. It grew by 25 agents during 2020 with many top producers. “It just proves that we have the tools, training, support and leadership to help our agents thrive during difficult times. I couldn’t be more proud of our wonderful agents and their dedication to their clients and communities,” Basic said.

*Keller Williams McLean/Great Falls, 6820 Elm Street, McLean, VA 22101, 703-636-7300*



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Amina Basic**

## 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."

### Let Us Know Your View

Send letters

Online [www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter)

By email: [editors@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:editors@connectionnewspapers.com)

By mail to: Letters to the Editor The Connection  
1606 King St., Alexandria VA 22314

You can comment on our  
Facebook page or find us on Twitter  
[www.facebook.com/connectionnewspapers](http://www.facebook.com/connectionnewspapers)  
<https://twitter.com/alexgazette>  
<https://twitter.com/mtvermongazette>  
<https://twitter.com/followfairfax>

[www.ConnectionNewspapers.com](http://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com)

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

Published by  
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Free digital edition delivered to your email box. Go to [connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe](http://connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe)

NEWS DEPARTMENT:  
[greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Kemal Kurspahic**  
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414  
[kemal@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:kemal@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Mercia Hobson**  
Community Reporter  
[mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Ken Moore**  
Contributing Writer  
[kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com)

ADVERTISING:  
For advertising information  
[sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com)  
703-778-9431

**Salome Howard-Gaibler**  
Display Advertising  
703-415-5394  
[salome@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:salome@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Debbie Funk**  
Display Advertising/National Sales  
703-778-9444  
[debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com)

**David Griffin**  
Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
[dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com)

Classified & Employment  
Advertising  
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher  
Mary Kimm  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
[@MaryKimm](https://twitter.com/MaryKimm)

Executive Vice President  
Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
[jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com)

Managing Editor  
Kemal Kurspahic  
Art/Design:  
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,  
Ali Khaligh  
Production Manager:  
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION  
[circulation@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:circulation@connectionnewspapers.com)





The Fairfax County School Board approved repurposing of Dunn Loring Administrative Center as a new elementary school providing capacity relief at Shreve-wood Elementary School in Falls Church and the Dunn Loring, Tysons, and Falls Church communities.

# Dunn Loring Center to Become School

## Capacity relief coming for Shreve-wood ES and Tysons Periphery.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

A new school project to help bring sustainable capacity relief for Shreve-wood Elementary School and the Dunn Loring, Tysons, and Falls Church communities is on the way.

On Jan. 5, in a vote of 10 to 0, with two members absent, the Fairfax County School Board approved a proposal presented by Karl Frisch, Providence District Representative, to use available bond funds to establish a school at the current Dunn Loring Administrative Center. The site previously housed an elementary school from 1939 to 1978 and is a suitable site already owned by FCPS.

According to Frisch, the school system can repurpose the building with a \$36.8 million renovation with sufficient available bond funds.

Even with program changes and space adjustments to accommodate growth in the short term, Shreve-wood Elementary continues to experience overcrowding and a capac-

ity deficit, as reported in each of the last CIP (Capital Improvement Program) reports. Capacity analysis at Shreve-wood reached 118 percent in 2019 and is projected to be 120 percent in 2025.

“I am grateful to the many parents and school staff who have shared their capacity concerns with me over the past year. If not for their persistent advocacy and willingness to think outside of the box, this would not have been possible,” said Frisch.



Karl Frisch, Providence District Representative on the Fairfax County School Board.

According to FCSB documents, in 2017 and 2019, voters approved bond funds initially earmarked for a new elementary school in the Fairfax/Oakton area without attaching it to a specific location as part of the school bond referendum. Two elementary schools in the area no longer have capacity needs once indicated.

Leaving the project undated allows staff to focus on Return to School. Planning, permitting, and construction, though, is generally a five-year process. Boundary adjustments will be in line with the opening of the new school.

# Avoid These Retirement Mistakes

When you retire, you’ve learned a lot about all sorts of things, helping you avoid some of the mistakes you made earlier in life. However, you may still be susceptible to financial missteps specifically related to your retirement years. How can you dodge these errors?

Consider these suggestions:

**Manage your withdrawal rate carefully.** You will likely need to tap into your retirement accounts – your IRA and 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored plan. But you should establish an annual withdrawal rate that’s appropriate for your situation. By withdrawing too much each year, especially in the early years of your retirement, you risk outliving your resources. You may want to consult with a financial professional to determine the withdrawal amount that’s right for you. (Keep in mind, though, that once you turn 72, you will be required to take out at least a certain amount each year – based on your age and account balance – from your traditional IRA and 401(k) or similar plan.)

**Don’t underestimate health care costs.** Once you turn 65, you will be eligible for Medicare, but you may still need a Medicare supplement plan and will probably also incur other expenses. In fact, a healthy 65-year-old couple who retired in 2019 will need nearly \$390,000 over their remaining years just to pay for health care, according to HealthView Services, which produces health-care cost projection software. Other estimates show different amounts, but they all amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars. So, when calculating your expenses during your retirement years, reserve a big space for health care.

**Don’t take Social Security too early.** You can start receiving monthly Social Security checks when you reach age 62, but your payments will generally be significantly

larger if you wait until your “full” retirement age, which will probably be between 66 and 67. (The size of your payments will “max out” at age 70.) Of course, if you need the money at 62, you may have to take it, but if you believe you have longevity working in your favor, and you can afford to wait, you may be better off by delaying Social Security as long as possible.)

**Don’t invest too conservatively.** Once you’re retired, you might think that you should take as few chances as possible with your investments – after all, you simply have less time for them to bounce back from a downturn than you did during your working years. Nonetheless, it’s important to own a reasonable percentage of growth-oriented investments to help keep you ahead of inflation. Even at a low rate, which we’ve experienced recently, inflation can erode your purchasing power over time.

**Don’t be more generous than you can afford.** If you have grown children who need financial help, or grandchildren heading to college someday, you’d no doubt like to do whatever you can to provide assistance. However, the hard truth is they simply have more time than you do to find workable financial solutions, whereas if you deplete your funds through your generosity, you could put yourself in a precarious position. So, be as giving as you can afford – but don’t go beyond that. By preserving your financial independence, you’ll end up benefiting your family, as well.

Retirement can be a wonderful time of your life – and you may enjoy it more by doing what you can to avoid costly financial mistakes.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by April DuBois, your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC.*





**Retiring soon or already retired?**

Contact me for a complimentary retirement income analysis.

**April DuBois**  
Financial Advisor

**(703) 810-9006**

**april.dubois@edwardjones.com**

# State Farm Insurance G. STEPHEN DULANEY

IN GREAT FALLS



AUTO • HOME • LIFE  
FINANCIAL SERVICES

Like A Good Neighbor, State Farm Is There.®

Open Saturdays

Complementary Insurance and Financial Review

Visit [www.gstephendulaney.com](http://www.gstephendulaney.com)



**703-759-4155**

731-C WALKER RD. • GREAT FALLS, VA

State Farm Insurance Companies  
Home Office Bloomington, Illinois

Proud Supporter of Military Appreciation Mondays

www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

Let us know about an upcoming event

## NEWS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Virginia NORML's Tamara Netzel, is the first customer at the recently-opened Columbia Care Portsmouth, for medically distributed cannabis.

## Northam: 'Time to Legalize Marijuana'

Virginia looking to be the first state in the south with legalized marijuana.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE CONNECTION

Legalizing marijuana around the country has moved forward in recent years, and Virginia could be on the agenda this month as the General Assembly gathers in Richmond to kick off 2021.

Governor Ralph Northam opened the discussion in November. "It's time to legalize marijuana in Virginia," said Northam. "Our Commonwealth has an opportunity to be the first state in the South to take this step, and we will lead with a focus on equity, public health, and public safety. I look forward to working with the General Assembly to get this right," he said.

It's not just to catch a buzz either, according to the governor's office. There are many advantages to adult-use legalization, including addressing social and racial equity and creating economic development opportunities for historically disadvantaged Virginians, agribusiness industries, and localities. In addition, the tax revenues can benefit both localities and the entire state while providing funding

to support the establishment of a comprehensive program, education, and public health campaigns, along with addressing inequities that exist due to the criminalization of marijuana.

"According to a report issued [in November] by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) that I chair, over the past decade law enforcement in Virginia has made between 20,000 and 30,000 marijuana-related arrests," said Del. Ken Plum. "Though Black and white Virginians use marijuana at about the same rate, JLARC found Black Virginians are 3.5 times as likely to be arrested and convicted. JLARC also found that it would take two years and between \$8 million and \$20 million to set up a commercial marijuana market in Virginia and that it could ultimately generate \$300 million in annual sales tax revenue."

WASHINGTON STATE, a state similar in size to Virginia, netted nearly \$400 million in tax revenues from legal marijuana in 2019, said State Sen. Adam Ebbin. "Equita-

SEE MARIJUANA, PAGE 8

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Same Company, Same Employees,  
Same Great Value - Now Celebrating 20 Years!

## TWO POOR TEACHERS

Kitchen and Bathroom Remodeling



- Electrical (ELE)
- Gas Fitting (GFC)
- Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVA)
- Plumbing (PLB)
- Residential Building (RBC)

Fully Insured & Class A Licensed  
Since 1999



Free Estimates **703-999-2928**

Check if your contractor is licensed at the state level  
<http://www.DPOR.virginia.gov>

Visit our website: [www.twopoorteachers.com](http://www.twopoorteachers.com)

# Creating a Calm Interior

PHOTOS BY CHRISTY KOSNIC

**Soothing spaces offer serenity during difficult times.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

In the current times of turbulence and uncertainty, many are looking for a haven for serenity and calm. For some, a home's interior has become that place.

"We have a lot of clients that ache for a calm interior," said Sallie Lord of Grey Hunt Interiors, who recently designed two spaces to evoke such feelings.

For a client who derived serenity from time spent on the water, Lord designed a living room that is reminiscent of sand and sea. "We used soft tones in this room to create a sense of calm," she said. "On the ceiling is a subtle, soft blue-green fabric wallpaper that creates an elegant, by-the-water vibe. We even had custom art painted of the lake that the owner grew up by. It makes you want to dive in, grab a drink and relax."



For a client who derived serenity from time spent on the water, interior designer Sallie Lord of Grey Hunt Interiors designed a living room that is reminiscent of sand and sea.

**"We have a lot of clients that ache for a calm interior."**

— Sallie Lord of  
Grey Hunt Interiors

As home offices have become more important than ever, Lord says has worked to marry functionality with relaxation. "One of my clients wanted us to create a space that inspired her, but that mainly calmed her," said Lord. "Her life is very busy and go, go, go and she needed a retreat to unwind."

Shades of lavender and white helped create that aesthetic. "We used wallpaper from the Vern Yips line of [textile manufacturer] Trend on the ceiling to give the space the spice and power that reflects her spirit, but calmed the room down with soft lavender walls, crisp



Shades of lavender and white can create a serene and soothing aesthetic.

whites, and soft textures, such as those used in her custom drapes. This room worked so well that she often finds her children in her space relaxing."

**Kyle Knight Ins Agcy Inc**  
Kyle Knight, Agent  
11736 Bowman Green Drive  
Reston, VA 20190

ACROSS FROM RESTON TOWN CTR.  
WWW.KYLEKNIGHT.ORG  
703-435-2300

**It's why I'm here.**

Your home and car are more than just things. They're where you make your memories – and they deserve the right protection. I get it. It's why I'm here.

LET'S TALK TODAY.

**State Farm**  
State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company  
State Farm Fire and Casualty Company  
Bloomington, IL

**Inside or out...**

**...Tech Painting's got you covered!**

Serving:  
VA  
DC  
MD  
OBX

**703-684-7702**  
[www.techpainting.com](http://www.techpainting.com)

Since 1987

**Happy Birthday Falls Road Golf Course!**

2021 Marks The 60th Birthday Of Falls Road Golf Course And We Need Your Help

We are looking for any photos, score cards, logoed attire, news clippings And memorabilia related to the course. Our hope is to borrow these Items and curate a show sharing the wonderful History of your Falls Road Golf Course.

Please contact Mike Kenny regarding Any help you can provide in this effort.

Mike Kenny  
mkenny@mcggolf.com  
301-299-5156

**Learn About Advertising in the Connection and Digital Options!**

Advertising in the Connection and upcoming special sections:

**CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/ADVERTISING**

or call **703.778.9431**

# Marijuana Legalization is a Goal of the Governor

FROM PAGE 6

ble reform demands appropriate safety regulations, support for separately-impacted communities, and a structure for taxation,” Ebbin said in a recent column. “Legal cannabis should support Virginia’s small businesses, not simply pad the pockets of massive corporations. Small, Women-owned, and

Minority-owned (SWaM) businesses can play a critical role in the entire supply chain including farming, processing, and brick and mortar sales.”

Included with Northam’s plan to legalize adult-use marijuana were five principles he will address, he said. These include: Social equity, racial equity, and economic equity; Public health; Protections for

young people; Upholding the Virginia Indoor Clean Air Act; Data collection.

The ACLU of Virginia advocates for legalization, with specific key concerns. “Lawmakers must remove all penalties for marijuana possession and automatically expunge conviction records for all crimes that no longer are illegal. ... People younger than age 18 should

not be considered delinquent — and legalization should not continue to fuel the school-to-prison pipeline, leading to another generation of Black and brown kids and young adults being criminalized.”

Northam put together a task force on legalizing marijuana, consisting of representatives from the Virginia State Police, the Attorney

General’s office, and NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, among others. One focus of the task force was a look at the way other states that have dealt with it. This included Colorado, California, Oregon, Washington, and Massachusetts. The task force had a “robust discussion with experts from these states in the Marijuana Legalization Work Group,” said Bradley Copenhaver, the Virginia Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry.

The task force put together a 482-page report, “Impact on the Commonwealth of Legalizing the Sale and Personal Use of Marijuana,” dated Nov. 30, 2020. One of the things this report addressed, was concerns about preventing access by the underage crowd. This includes limiting the “proximity of marijuana retailers to schools and other youth-focused places and minimize marketing to youth,” the report said. This includes reducing the appeal of packaging “and that advertisements must be a certain distance (e.g. 1,000 feet) from schools and community centers,” it states.

NORML is monitoring Virginia’s step forward in this process. They look at the support from Governor Northam, State Attorney Mark Herring and House Majority Leader Charniele Herring. Jenn Michelle Pedini, the Virginia NORML Executive Director, released recommendations to lawmakers last month on how Virginia should go about legalizing adult use marijuana. Among their recommendations, NORML said tax revenue on adult-use cannabis in Virginia could yield \$300 million annually and create 11,000 jobs by year five.

**TO ADDRESS** social equity, Virginia could use some tax revenue to support reinvestment programs for communities most impacted by the drug war. Legislators could also prevent vertical integration and provide loans for small businesses, NORML said.

On the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, there has been a mixed bag of support for this effort. In the Braddock District, Supervisor James Walkinshaw (D) has been for legalization, looking at the number of arrests as an equality issue. “As Chairman of the Board of Supervisors’ Legislative Committee, I advocated in Richmond for our Board’s support of cannabis decriminalization. Personally, I have always supported legalization. Arrests for simple

SEE MARIJUANA, PAGE 11

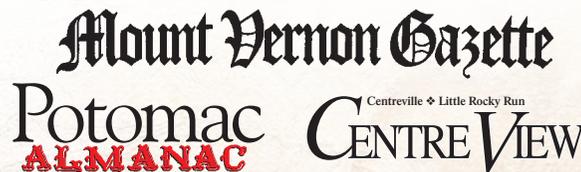
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## Save One Of America’s Oldest Local Newspapers on GoFundMe

Visit [connectionnewspapers.com](http://connectionnewspapers.com) or <https://www.gofundme.com/f/save-americas-oldest-newspaper>



And affiliated newspapers



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,

school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cars. Internet news and large national newspapers do not provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers provide.

Help save these historical papers. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of a local community newspaper.

Thank you for helping to keep your community dialogue alive throughout Northern Virginia and Potomac, Md. All funds will be used to continue providing vital community dialogue and meeting obligations to our loyal and patient employees, contractors and suppliers due to continuing loss of advertising.



Visit [connectionnewspapers.com](http://connectionnewspapers.com) or <https://www.gofundme.com/f/save-americas-oldest-newspaper>

Connection Newspapers.... Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette, Centre View, Potomac Almanac  
1606 King Street • Alexandria, VA • 703-778-9431

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Inova Fairfax medical staff wear Cape Ivy headbands to alleviate mask bands from rubbing behind their ears.



Gavin Smith of Great Falls and his dad, Keith, pictured during a canine visit at Johns Hopkins Children's Hospital. Mom Meg (not pictured) co-founded the nonprofit organization Cape Ivy.

## Ponchos of Sunshine to 'Frequent Flier' Hospital Children

**Cape Ivy aims to provide warmth, comfort and support to children who have chronic or critical illnesses.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

In honor of her son, Gavin Grey Smith of Great Falls, who lost his 12-year battle to a rare form of CVID (Common Variable Immune Deficiency), his mother, Meg Elliot Smith, threw herself into providing fleece poncho capes to "frequent flier" children in hospitals. In the process, she and her friend co-founded Cape IVY.org, a nonprofit whose mission is "to provide warmth, comfort and support to children who have chronic or critical illnesses and their families. Cape Ivy provides the ponchos because robes, sweaters, and jackets don't work well with IV lines and other medical equipment.

Speaking about Gavin's courageous fight, Smith said, "We went down a lot of roads and ended up spending a lot of time in hospitals...I realized that one thing my son needed was some way to stay warm. When he had IVs or was at home with PICC lines in his arm, he couldn't wear a sweater or coat, so I popped a poncho over his head, and I started making them for him."

SMITH said that when Gavin passed, she took a year off before diving into the project. With her Etsy business partner, former Great Falls resident Cindy Hargroves, they shifted focus and together co-founded nonprofit Ivy Capes. "We started in June of 2019, and it became a nonprofit last March. We've managed to raise \$38,000...(and) donate to 32 different children's hospitals and 21 Ronald McDonald Houses across the country," she said.

Katie Haynes of Youngsville, North Carolina, a cape recipient, said, "It shows that there are people out there that care."

According to Smith, they focus on Inova Fairfax and have given them multiple donations as well as Children's National Hospital  
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



Co-founders of the nonprofit organization, Cape Ivy, Meg Smith of Great Falls and Cindy Hargroves, formerly of Great Falls, donate warm fleecy ponchos to a Ronald McDonald House.

**"I find more joy each day giving my time to help kids in treatment for their chronic illnesses."**

— Cindy Hargroves, co-founder of Cape Ivy

in the District of Columbia, The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, and CHOP (the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia), "where I spent a lot of my time." To date, Cape Ivy donated 1,648 ponchos.

Cindy Hargroves, co-founder of Cape Ivy, said it became evident that Cape Ivy needed to become a nonprofit. She said, "We were giving away many more ponchos than were purchased and were receiving generous monetary donations...Now I wake up every morning, and I'm excited about Cape Ivy...I find more joy each day giving my time to help kids in treatment for their chronic illnesses,"

Smith said she and Hargrove perform 99

percent of the work, but they do have a few volunteers, including Langley High School students. Although Smith and Hargroves no longer sew the ponchos themselves but instead have them manufactured, there are times when they could use volunteers to help with shipping.

CAPE IVY also provides headbands to health-care workers to attach to their COVID-19 masks, alleviating the discomfort of the mask's bands rubbing behind their ears.

According to Smith, they are looking at ways to expand Cape Ivy's reach. However, COVID-19 health and safety restrictions limit their ability to go to hospitals, nursing



Volunteers Ian and Ashley Sanders of Great Falls model ponchos for Cape Ivy.org.

homes, chemo centers, and the like. Smith said that it's easy once you get to the right person, people who are in and out of hospitals, in wheelchairs or tend to get colder.

"I just gave out my first poncho, and mom was so happy she started crying. She said it has been so hard to find a blanket that fits right with his wheelchair," said Kim M., Child Life Specialist, Hackensack Meridian

Asked why the name, "Ivy Capes," Smith said when she and Gavin were in the hospital, she spent a lot of time drawing. "I'm an artist at heart. I drew an IV medical pole, and then I started drawing ivy going up the medical pole."

"Any parent with a chronically or critically ill child, dig deeply into themselves and find strength, they did not know they had," said Smith.

For more information visit the organization's website [Cape IVY.org](http://CapeIVY.org)

**CLASSIFIED**  
 WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM  
 TO ADVERTISE IN THIS PAPER. CALL BY MONDAY 11:00 AM 703-778-9411

**Announcements**

**Announcements**

**LeafFilter**  
 GUTTER PROTECTION

✓ **INSTALLS ON NEW & EXISTING GUTTERS**

BEFORE LeafFilter | AFTER LeafFilter

MADE IN THE USA | ACCREDITED BUSINESS | LIFETIME WARRANTY | A COMPANY OF VLHS

**15% OFF** YOUR ENTIRE PURCHASE\*  
**AND!** **10% OFF** SENIOR & MILITARY DISCOUNTS  
**+** **5% OFF** TO THE FIRST 50 CALLERS!\*\*

Promo Number: 285

CALL US TODAY FOR A FREE ESTIMATE **1-877-614-6667**

Mon-Thurs: 8am-11pm, Fri-Sat: 8am-5pm, Sun: 2pm-8pm EST

\*For those who qualify. One coupon per household. No obligation estimate valid for 1 year. \*\* Offer valid at estimate only. CSLB# 1035795 DOPL #10783658-5501 License# 7656 License# 50145 License# 41354 License# 99338 License# 128344 License# 218294 License# 603 233 977 License# 2102212986 License# 2106212946 License# 2705132153A License# LEAFFNW822JZ License# WV056912 License# WC-29998-H17 Nassau HIC License# H01067000 Registration# 176447 Registration# HIC.0649905 Registration# C127229 Registration# C127230 Registration# 366920918 Registration# PC6475 Registration# IR731804 Registration# 13VH09953900 Registration# PA069383 Suffolk HIC License# 52229-H

**Announcements**

**Announcements**

Do you **CARE** for someone with *memory loss*?

**Care to Plan** is an online care planning tool that helps families managing memory loss identify and access supportive services recommended for them.

You may qualify for a **NEW** research study.

**1-888-597-0828**  
 senior.carenav@rivhs.com

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**

**Announcements**

**OUTER BANKS, NORTH CAROLINA • VACATION RENTALS**



**500 VACATION HOMES**

*Selling fast for summer 2021 due to need to escape covid*



**Book now for best selection!**

**877-642-3224**

[www.brindleybeach.com](http://www.brindleybeach.com)

**Announcements**

**Prepare for unexpected power outages with a Generac home standby generator**

**REQUEST A FREE QUOTE!**  
**844-947-1479**

**FREE** 7-Year Extended Warranty\*  
 A \$695 Value!  
 Offer valid December 15, 2020 - March 1, 2021

**Special Financing Available**  
 Subject to Credit Approval

\*To qualify, consumers must request a quote, purchase, install and activate the generator with a participating dealer. Call for a full list of terms and conditions.

**Announcements**

**WEEK IN GREAT FALLS**

**Rotary Club of Great Falls Announces a New Music Contest**

In an effort to help promising musicians gain notice in their community, the Rotary Club of Great Falls announces a new music contest open to students in grades 9-12. Solo vocal, keyboard and instrumental submissions are eligible. Participants are invited to submit video entries via private YouTube channels. Judging will be based upon level of difficulty, execution, expression, creativity, and poise. The Rotary of Great Falls team of judges will name first through third place winners, with cash prizes and invitations to perform. The first-place winner will be entered in the District-wide contest, which carries a prize of \$1,000.

Entry forms can be obtained at <http://www.rotary7610.org/Musiccontest.html>. The Entry Form and link to the private YouTube site should be sent to Dr. Mac Lambert, Langley High's choral director, at [mllambert@fcps.edu](mailto:mllambert@fcps.edu). Deadline for entries is March 12.

**LIGHT UP MCLEAN HOLIDAY DECORATING CONTEST**

McLean Community Center and The Old Firehouse Center announce the winners of the first annual Light Up McLean, Holiday House Decorating Contest. More than 420 residents voted and have decided the following results:

- Best Overall**  
 1st Place -- House 1, The Kelleher Family, 1829 Briar Ridge Ct.;  
 2nd Place -- House 5, The Buck Family, 6619 Heidi Ct.;
- Most Original/Creative**  
 1st Place -- House 7, The Schomburg Family, 1804 Sheridan Ct.;  
 2nd Place -- House 4, The Sullivan Family, 904 Lawton St.;
- Best Holiday Theme**  
 1st Place -- House 2, The Abraham Family, 6163 Kellogg Dr.;  
 2nd Place -- House 6, The Weimer Family, 1241 Ingleside Ave.

**TUESDAY/JAN. 19**

Caregivers Support Group. 10 a.m. Virtual via Zoom Shepherd's Center serving Oakton-Vienna-Reston-Herndon (SC)  
 SC hosts a support group for caregivers of adult family members with dementia the first and third Tuesdays of each month. Their virtual, facilitated meetings are from 10:00 to 11:30 am. Contact facilitator, Jack Tarr, at [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net) for details on joining the meeting via zoom or see the SC web site: <https://www.scov.org/announcements>.

**SATURDAY/JAN. 23**

With the start of the new year, many people have made resolutions to improve their health. Be Fit McLean, a virtual health and wellness fair produced by the McLean Community Center (MCC), can help them meet resolution goals by providing health-enhancing information. Be Fit McLean, a live, virtual health fair event, will be held from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 23. Admission is free; however, registration is required. To register

or for more information, visit [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org).

**SUNDAY/JAN. 24**

An "En-Lighting" Experience. 2 p.m. Online. Paul Aurand was struck by lightning in July of 1998. Struggling with the aftereffects, Paul was regressed back to rediscover the unconditional love and oneness that led to a deep personal transformation. Cost is \$15. Visit the website: <https://isgo.iands.org/webinar/nova-presents-an-en-lighting-experience/>

**Be a part of our:**

**Wellbeing** pages, the first week of every month.

Delight in our **HomeLifeStyle** sections, the second week of every month. Peek at the top real estate sales, glimpse over-the-top remodeling projects, get practical suggestions for your home.

Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our **A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun** pages, the third week of every month.

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

**Questions?**

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



## 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 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>

# Marijuana Legalization is a Goal of the Governor

FROM PAGE 6

possession of marijuana are one of the most significant drivers of the disproportionality of arrests here and across the nation. The data is quite clear that white Americans and Black Americans use marijuana at similar rates, but Black Americans are much more likely to be arrested for doing so. Marijuana prohibition laws have cost American taxpayers untold billions and devastated millions of families. It's a failed policy that should end," Walk-inshaw said.

In Mount Vernon, Supervisor Dan Storck "has been generally supportive of legalization," for a long time, he said.

According to Springfield District supervisor Pat Herrity (R), there are more important issues facing county residents. He looks at Virginia's pandemic response numbers on John Hopkins Tracking list, for the number of vaccines administered in Virginia. "Virginia is ranked 46th in the nation for administering the vaccine and 42nd in testing. ... Fairfax County

residents need the Governor and General Assembly to focus on those critical efforts right now instead of political agendas," he said.

George Mason University student Maritza Martinez thinks it's a great idea, calling it a "step forward," she said. "Weed isn't that big of a deal," she said.

Although it's not alcohol, being under the influence of marijuana could impact driving skills, but "MADD doesn't have a position on legalization," said Cristi Cousins, M.Ed, MADD State Program Specialist.

Copenhaver said It could take 18-24 months after legislation is passed for retail sales of adult-use marijuana to take place. The Governor's legislation will include considerations for density caps and local decision-making with regard to the allowance of retail marijuana locations.

For more, see: [www.governor.virginia.gov/virginia-marijuana-legalization-work-group/](http://www.governor.virginia.gov/virginia-marijuana-legalization-work-group/) <http://jlarc.virginia.gov/land-ing-2020-marijuana-legalization.asp>

# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CALL 703-549-0004

FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION

ELECTRICAL ELECTRICAL

## K & D ELECTRIC

COMMERCIAL / RESIDENTIAL SERVICE  
Family Owned & Operated

Recessed Lighting  
Ceiling Fans  
Phone/CATV  
Computer Network Cabling  
Service Upgrades  
Hot Tubs, etc...

Licensed/Bonded/Insured

Office 703-335-0654

Mobile 703-499-0522

lektrkman28@gmail.com

LANDSCAPING LANDSCAPING

## Quality Tree Service & Landscaping

Reasonable prices. Licensed & insured.

Summer Cleanup...

Tree removal, topping & pruning, shrubbery trimming, mulching, leaf removal, planting, hauling, gutter cleaning, retaining walls, drainage problems, etc.

25 years of experience - Free estimates

703-868-5358

24 Hour Emergency Tree Service

## Patios & Drainage

Your neighborhood company since 1987

703-772-0500

## J.E.S. Services

Free Estimates - Fully Licensed & Insured

- Planting & Landscaping Design
- Drainage & Water Problems
- Concrete Driveways, Replacement or New
- Patios and Walks • Masonry Work or Dry Laid
- Paver, Flagstone, Brick, any style you choose
- Retaining walls of all types

All work Guaranteed



Sign up for

FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION

to any or all of our 15 papers

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/SUBSCRIBE](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/SUBSCRIBE)



## 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.



# DIANNE VAN VOLKENBURG

*Buy with Confidence. Sell with Success.*



Twee Ramos, Susan Canis, Joe Trippi and Justin Scango

**Work with the #1 Realtor**

Dianne Van Volkenburg and her team of real estate agents and marketing specialists are unsurpassed in providing first-class service to buyers and sellers. In fact, Dianne and her team have one of the highest rates of repeat clients in all of Northern Virginia as former clients, families and friends trust them for their real estate needs.

## Over \$100 Million in Sales for 2020!



Great Falls \$1,499,000



Great Falls \$2,399,000



Potomac Falls \$750,000



Great Falls \$1,150,000



Great Falls \$1,585,000



Great Falls \$3,250,000



Great Falls \$1,499,000



Great Falls \$1,995,000



Great Falls \$999,000

## Inventory Is Low - Call Me Today

LONG & FOSTER REAL ESTATE | CHRISTIE'S INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE  
9841 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, VA 22066  
703-759-9190 • GreatFallsGreatHomes.com

703-757-3222  
sales@GreatFallsGreatHomes.com

