

CONNECTION

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Community Market Opens In Lorton

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Betsy Garnes, Lake Ridge, visiting the Community Market at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton for lunch and shopping with gardening friends, examines oils and gems by Susan & Staci, of "Gems 4 U." Garnes is using the outing opportunity to perform another regular act of kindness in memory of her father.

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PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

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

EVERY SATURDAY
Community Market Opens. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton. Featuring over 20 vendors, new and returning.

SATURDAY/APRIL 24
Academy Day. 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Sen. Mark Warner is hosting his annual Academy Day. The event will offer a comprehensive overview of the United States service academies and their admission processes. Attendees will have an opportunity to hear from officials from the five federal service academies, as well as representatives from the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board, the University of Virginia ROTC programs, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, the Virginia Military Institute, and the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership at Mary Baldwin University. Visit www.warner.senate.gov. You may email academy_noms@warner.senate.gov with questions.

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NEWS

County Board Recognizes '2021 Community Champions'

Citizen leaders step up to support the vulnerable.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors recognized its ten "Community Champions" during the Board's April 13 meeting. The County's volunteer leaders supported many causes, giving their time and talents to improving the quality of life for those most vul-

nerable dealing with food insecurity to social injustice.

Every year, as a part of the Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards, supervisors have the honor and challenge of selecting one outstanding volunteer from their district to receive their Community Champion Award. During the meeting, each board member provided brief comments on his or her district, "Community Champion 2021."

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards will be live-streamed on YouTube Tuesday, April 20.

Diane Watson, Community Champion 2021, At Large- "As a passionate advocate for issues relating to the health, well-being, and enrichment of older adults, our at-large champion has been an active volunteer with the Fairfax County Department of Family Services Volunteer Solutions, the Northern Virginia Aging Network, and the Fairfax County Long Term Coordinating Council, working to enrich the lives of older adults and support challenges unique to this community. She serves her active adult community as a block captain and care team leader, where neighbors work together to provide services so that all can age in place safely in their home. She has also helped draft policies tackling social isolation for older residents in Fairfax County and throughout Virginia. An outstanding advocate, facilitator, and collaborator, congratulations to Diane Watson, our At-large Community Champion." - Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay (D At-Large)



Rebecca "Betsy" Clevenger, Community Champion 2021, Braddock District - "For more than a decade, our next volunteer has been a champion and leader of her church's charitable operations in Annandale. Prior to March 2020, she helped serve an average of 65 families weekly. Once the pandemic took effect, the need for food and necessities skyrocketed, and she rose to the occasion. She oversees the provision of critical food requirements, such as 220 grocery bags prepared weekly, emergency food boxes, as well as prepared meals. She's created an environment where everyone can get help, no questions asked. Her tireless efforts and organizational prowess have ensured that thousands of our neighbors have had food to eat and warm clothes to wear. Congratulations, Betsy Clevenger." - Supervisor James Walkinshaw (D-Braddock)



Fanny Salazar-Laske, Community Champion 2021, Dranesville - "This year's champion was instrumental in establishing WIN, Women-inspired Neighborhood, a community-wide effort in conjunction with Fairfax County Public Schools, county government, and nonprofits to bring women in need to the forefront of assistance. The success of a group over its six-year history is predominantly due to her efforts in creating a safe space for neighbors, largely people of color, immigrants, (and) for those struggling financially can come together to talk about the challenges they face, build social networks, and find ways to support each other. During the pandemic, she has helped those in need by distributing food at food banks, offering interpreting skills, for reaching out to families adversely affected by the pandemic." - Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville)



Volunteer Fairfax 2021 Community Champions

Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay (D-At-Large) selected as his champion Diane Watson

Supervisor James Walkinshaw (D-Braddock) picked Rebecca "Betsy" Clevenger

Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) selected Fanny Salazar-Laske

Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill) chose Lydia Russo

Supervisor Daniel Storck (D-Mount Vernon) picked Reverend, Dr. Brian Brown

Supervisor Penelope Gross (D-Mason) selected Bob Kahane

Supervisor Daniel Storck (D-Mount Vernon) chose Rev., Dr. Brian Brown

Supervisor Dalia Palchik (D-Providence) chose Judith Schneider-Fletcher

Supervisor Pat Herry (R-Springfield) picked Stacey Brumbaugh

Supervisor Kathy Smith (D-Sully) selected Dr. Reverend Brenda McBorough

Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D-Lee) chose Michelle Menapace

Lydia Russo, Community Champion 2021, Hunter Mill District - Serving as a volunteer with Vienna Volunteer Fire Department since 2006, she assists with fundraising outreach and marketing. In addition, she turned what was supposed to be a purely social endeavor, a Facebook group called Vienna VA Foodies, into a vehicle for raising money, awareness, and community action for food-insecure families, for frontline workers also, first responders, and more. Her efforts weren't limited to Vienna either. When the Black Lives Matter Movement grew over the summer, Vienna Foodies fundraised to help the Anacostia area of D.C. In one day, the group raised \$20,000 to support Martha's Table, a nonprofit helping children, families, and the community." - Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill)



Michelle Menapace, Community Champion 2021, Lee District - "This volunteer worked on several Fairfax County Boards, Authorities and Commissions including the Community Action Advisory Board and Human Services Council, the Food Access and Literacy Workgroup. Our Community Champion has spent a good deal of her time in 2020 devoted to numerous pandemic efforts. She focused on collecting and delivering farmers market produce for donation organizations, addressing food insecurity, and selling face masks for others. When she delivered masks and was asked how they could compensate her for her efforts, she asked that folks simply pay it forward by providing food donations to nonprofits, such as So Others Might Eat, World Central Kitchen, Food for Others, and more. Her efforts resulted in more than 250 masks donated and countless food donations." - Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D-Lee)



Bob Kahane, Community Champion 2021, Mason District - "This volunteer is well known in his hometown. He has served as president of the Rotary Club three times in the past and will take up that position again in July. He has also served as chair for Taste of Annandale, the largest community event in the Mason District, for four years. His jobs as chair are numerous, including recruiting sponsorships, organizing volunteers, and attending to a myriad of other details. The Taste attracts more than 6,000 community members for free entertainment, food, and more. Proceeds from this event are used to support youth activities in his town and in his district. Congratulations Bob Kahane, Mason District Community Champion," read on behalf of Supervisor Penny Gross (D-Mason District) by Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay (D At-Large)



SEE COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS PAGE 11

Earth Day – Then and Now

BY PAUL GILBERT
NOVA PARKS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



New parkland at Pohick Bay.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NOVA PARKS

Fifty-one years ago, in 1970, the first Earth Day took place on April 22. The issues of that time were quite different than what we face today. In 1970 our nation was awash in pollution. In 1969 the Cuyahoga River in Ohio caught fire due to so much oil and chemicals on the surface. The same year a large oil rig spill off the coast of California happened. A new report at the time documented the endangered Bald Eagle and the impact of DDT pesticide on the eagle and other species. American cities were choked with high levels of lead smog from cars and trucks, and litter was everywhere.

Today, we have addressed many of these issues, and new ones face us. The EPA was established in 1969, and pollution has decreased dramatically. DDT was banned, and species like the Bald Eagle have recovered. Lead was removed from gasoline, and our air is much cleaner, and litter is not the problem it was decades ago. All of this has meant better health for people and nature. So, let's take a moment and appreciate the great work that has been accomplished!

Today, while our rivers are not on fire, and we breathe and eat fewer toxins, our challenges are still great. Global warming is the central environmental issue of our generation. The global average temperature in March 2020 was over 2 degrees higher than the average for the 20th Century, and this trend is growing. The results are more extreme storms, wildfires, hurricanes, and more. And the cause is too much carbon in the atmosphere. The solution has two sides: reducing the use of fossil fuels and the expansion of natural areas that absorb carbon.

At NOVA Parks, we have been doing what we can to address both sides of the carbon issue for

some time. Since 2007 NOVA Parks has tracked every gallon of gas and kilowatt of electricity consumed and converted it to carbon. Many investments have been made to improve energy efficiency. In 2018 NOVA Parks completed its second new building with a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certification. The new Jean R. Packard Building features recycled building materials, cutting edge stormwater, HVAC, and lighting, and even has solar panels on the roof.

But the most significant contribution the regional park system has made to address the causes of global warming is the expansion of protected forested parkland. As the region's original conservation organization, by 1970, NOVA Parks had already assembled 3,600 acres of parkland. With new parkland acquisitions almost every year, the Regional Park system is currently up to 12,200 acres, including 37 acres of waterfront land in Fairfax County added over just the last year and 600 acres of managed parkland added in Loudoun County in 2018. Over 85 percent of the Regional park system is in a natural, mostly forested condition. This level of forested land absorbs 15,000 tons of carbon from our air per year! Forests are the air filters of our region, absorbing carbon and releasing fresh oxygen.

Environmental leaders fifty years ago did a remarkable job of cleaning up pollution and toxins in our environment, making the world a healthier place to be today. Our collective job



Students in '70s doing water quality testing: the first Earth Day took place on April 22, 1970.

moving forward is to address the carbon in our atmosphere that is driving global warming. We must all look for ways to use fewer fossil fuels, and at the same time, recognize that parkland is more than just a fun place to visit, but is actually vitally important to absorbing the carbon in our air. The progress of yesterday gives hope that the challenges of today can be addressed with focused effort.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Spiritual, Societal and Medical Benefits of Fasting

To the Editor:

It is a month of Ramadan and all healthy Muslims will be fasting from dawn to Sunset. Muslims fast because the benefits of fasting range from spiritual, to societal, to medical.

As the nature of man is weak, we naturally want to fulfill our desires beyond limit. During this spiritual exercise, we learn self control and it helps us improve in our morals. In addition to controlling the appetite, Muslims are specifically encouraged to control their speech and

temper and focus on spiritual improvement.

While fasting, one is also confronted with the reality that there are people in the world who cannot afford their basic needs such as food, drink, and shelter. As a result we try to become thankful for what we have and consequently become more charitable. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) stated, "Do your duty to God as well as the creation of God equitably." Thus, besides our relationship with God, it is important to be good towards our fellow humans.

Ramadan teaches us to care for the weaker sections of our society and learn to sacrifice for others to create a beautiful society.

With self-control, fasting also discourages over-eating and once a year diet-control can be a great way to detoxify our digestive systems.

With the spiritual, societal, and medical benefits in mind, why not give it a try?

Aasma Ahmad
Lorton

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'Good Way to Recognize His Contributions to the City'

Trail named after former Fairfax mayor, John Mason.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

A future trail to be built in the City of Fairfax was originally expected to be called the Comstock Trail. But after a recent action by the Fairfax City Council, this trail will instead be named after former City Mayor, John Mason.

During the Council's March 9 meeting, Parks and Recreation Director Cathy Salgado read the staff report explaining the reasons for the proposed change. She noted that Mason served as Fairfax's mayor from 1990-2002 and was the first, four-term mayor in the City's history.

"Under his proactive leadership, numerous initiatives were undertaken, including economic development, upgrading housing, improving community appearance, encouraging the arts, and advancing regional cooperation – especially in the area of transportation," she said.

"Mason has a strong interest in and love for the City, and especially its trail system," continued Salgado. "He has been a champion of expanding the City's trails and has been an advocate for providing funding for

both building and maintaining trails."

Fairfax's Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) provides recommendations on the naming of the City's parks and trails. And at its Feb. 11 meeting, it voted to endorse the recommendation to change the Comstock Trail's name to the John Mason Trail. It then forwarded this request to Fairfax Mayor David Meyer and the City Council for their consideration.

THE OFFICIAL RESOLUTION presented to them stressed that Mason has been a Fairfax resident since 1975 and was instrumental in creating the 2020 Commission, which focused on long-term future needs of the City. It also stated that he "provided strong leadership in developing initiatives to strengthen the City's economy."

Furthermore, noted the resolution, Mason "advocated for the purchase and development of open space throughout the City and



John Mason

actively sought the creation of a City trail network. Mason took an active interest in developing regional cooperation and joint planning and continues to be a strong supporter of investing in new trails and maintaining existing trails."

After hearing the resolution, Councilmember Jon Stehle said he was pleased with "such a great motion put forward by PRAB."

Councilmember Tom Ross then thanked Mason "for all his work on the City's trails and on its bike-way program. His leadership and dedication made that possible." Referring to Mason's vision for the City, Ross added, "This trail will be a good way to recognize his contributions to the City, over many years."

Noting that she was on the PRAB board when Mason was its chairman, Councilmember Janice Miller said, "This is an appropriate move forward."

Councilmember Joe Harmon said he, too, "totally supported" this action, and then all the members approved it unanimously. As a result, signage at the future entrances to this trail will be erected indicating that it

will someday be the site of the John Mason Trail.

Afterward, Mason said, "What a difference a quarter century makes! When I was the mayor of the City of Fairfax in the '90s, there was little interest in trails and non-auto travel options. Today, the City is aggressively pursuing multimodal planning.

"Key goals include creating '15-minute neighborhoods' – ensuring that 100 percent of the residents can access a local activity, as well as green space, trails or open space, via a safe, 15-minute walk from home. Credit goes to thoughtful leadership and strong, civic support."

MASON said, "I look forward to the day when the Gateway Regional Park, at the intersection of Pickett and Old Pickett roads – a NOVA park in collaboration with the City – will be an acknowledged, nodal point for trails in Northern Virginia, connecting east to the Fairfax County Cross-County trail, north to the Vienna-Fairfax-GMU Metro Station and onward to the W&OD Trail, and south to GMU and onward to the Workhouse Arts Center and Occoquan Regional Park, about 14 miles away."

As for the Comstock Trail now being named after him, Mason said, "I appreciate the honor. More importantly, if it helps to generate momentum for a strong trails program, I'm even more appreciative."

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The traffic signal at Newington and Telegraph Roads was upgraded in early April.



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/
THE CONNECTION

There's More Than Meets the Eye at Traffic Signal Intersections

This technology dates back to an invention by the son of a former slave.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

At the intersection of Telegraph and Newington Roads in the Mount Vernon District, the traffic signal crews were out in early April, upgrading the visibility of the lights, replacing signal heads and backplates in accordance with a Federal Highways initiative to update their Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways. The MUTCD defines the standards used by road managers nationwide to install and maintain traffic control devices on all public streets, highways, bikeways, and private roads open to public travel, the FHWA said.

According to the FHWA, backplates added to a traffic signal indication improve the visibility of the illuminated face of the signal by introducing a controlled-contrast background. The improved visibility of a signal head with a backplate is made even more conspicuous by framing it with a retro-reflective border. Signal heads that have backplates equipped with retroreflective borders are more visible and conspicuous in both daytime and nighttime conditions, the FHWA said. To simplify it, the driver and pedestrians can see these lights better, and this is what was going on at the signal at Telegraph and Newington Roads.

This signal in the southern part of Fairfax County is one of 1,516 signals the Virginia Department of Transportation's Northern Virginia office is responsible for, which is broken down into 918 signals in Fairfax County, 344 in Prince William County, and 254 in Loudoun County. This number does not include Rapid Flashing Pedestrian Beacons, mid-block pedestrian intersections, flashers, and sign warning flashers VDOT Northern Virginia District also maintains.

The VDOT Signal Maintenance office has a staff of

15 people working on the traffic signal program, but that does not include Traffic Engineering, Permits, or contractor staff that deal with larger emergencies such as signals being knocked down, re-wiring, etc. The budget is \$9.71 million. The traffic signal budget includes utilities, ancillary repairs, parts and equipment, labor, vehicles, maintenance contractors, and life cycle replacement, said Ellen Kamilakis, a Senior Public Affairs Officer at VDOT Northern Virginia District.

Each traffic signal light has a life cycle of about 15 years until it needs to be serviced or replaced. The lights are out there in the elements, and bounce around in high winds, rain or ice, so these fixtures have to be durable.

The actual bulbs are LED-based lamps. They are warranted for seven years but have an average of about a 10-year life cycle. Amber indications, i.e., the "yellow light," has a longer life cycle as they are not on as long as red and green lamps.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VDOT
VDOT is using some solar powered traffic signals too.

<mh>Sitting at the Light

<bt>No doubt drivers in this area have spent considerable time sitting at the traffic light, but this is not new. The first traffic signal was installed in London in 1868. Fast forward 55 years when the U.S. Patent Office granted Patent No. 1,475,074 to 46-year-old inventor and newspaperman Garrett Morgan for his three-position traffic signal, the History Channel website said.

Morgan, the son of former slaves in Kentucky, started a Black newspaper in 1920 called the "Cleveland Call." Morgan saved enough to buy a car. He had to share the crowded Cleveland streets with bicycles, horse-drawn delivery wagons, streetcars and pedestrians and navigate the intersections which had manually-operated traffic signals.

These signals only had red and green, but no interval for reaction time, so this led to many accidents, giving Morgan an idea to design an automated signal with an interim "warning" position—the ancestor of today's yellow light—so drivers would have time to clear the intersection before crossing traffic entered it, the History Channel website said.

Morgan sold the rights to his invention to General Electric for \$40,000, and the rest is history.

Fairfax Restores More FY 21 Budget Cuts

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

With a potential shortfall of nearly \$18 million in its FY 21 budget looming because of the pandemic, in January, the Fairfax City Council cut its capital and operating budgets. It also placed \$7.9 million of budgeted expenses on hold.

But as the City's finances improved, in February, the Council restored some \$1.4 million of those previously frozen items into its current, General Fund expenditure budget. And during its third quarter FY 21 budget review, last Tuesday, April 6, it was able to give the go-ahead to soon restore even more items.

During that work session, City Manager Rob Stalzer said City staff now recommends an additional \$166,868 worth of items held in reserve to be released, effective May 1. Chief Financial Officer Dave Hodgkins then gave a presentation.

"We'll come back April 20 for action on our request," he said. "We had a \$20 million revenue reduction from what we proposed for FY 20 and what we adopted. Much of our increased revenues in FY 21 are going to help balance the FY 22 budget."

He noted that the City received \$4.3 million in CARES Act and FEMA aid in FY 21 but stressed that "It won't be ongoing revenue. We expect revenues to eventually increase, over time, without raising the tax rate, because of new development."

"But that doesn't include the money we'll need for our CIP [Capital Improvement Program] financing plan," continued Hodgkins. "It calls for annual, additional funding up to 9.5 cents on the real-estate tax rate, or the equivalent – for example, increased assessed value from new construction."

He said the \$166,868 that staff is now requesting be unfrozen would go toward still-unfunded FY 21 initiatives/increases. "We're seeking \$139,955 for 2-percent [employee] merit raises, effective May 1 – not the 3.5-percent we originally requested," said Hodgkins. "We also need \$26,913 for compression relief."

He said it's to make up for when the employee salary scales had to be compressed to keep the City's pay scales at the bottom levels in line with the market. Otherwise, added Fairfax Mayor David Meyer, "These people might leave the City and go elsewhere, for a small amount of money more."

Hodgkins then told the Council members, "We won't ask for any more budget releases. And sometime in July, we'll come back with a fourth-quarter [budget] review. We're looking for your guidance, going forward."

Councilmember Janice Miller commended Hodgkins on his "thorough presentation," telling him, "You answered all my questions ahead of time." A majority of the Council then gave the thumbs-up for staff to proceed with its requested monetary release.

However, Councilmember Sang Yi wasn't one of them. He wanted more information about how employees are evaluated for their merit raises so he could be sure that the City has a performance-evaluation system in place that's equal for everyone, across the board. But Stalzer said he didn't expect the City's consultant on this matter to have this information available for another year.



BONNIE HOBBS/
THE CONNECTION
Dave Hodgkins

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

The Community Market at the Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton offers a large outdoor venue for a variety of food and craft vendors on the grounds of the historic Lorton Workhouse



Workhouse Opens Community Market Season

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

The Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton, kicked off its seasonal Community Market on April 10. Now beginning its second season, the Market opening included special activities celebrating Spring cherry blossom time, with Hawaiian dance performances, haiku readings, and cherry blossom themed art, as well as the Market's usual offering of local vendors' crafts, food and other products. Although far from the Tidal Basin, the Workhouse is an official participant in the National Cherry Blossom Festival.

With a nod to the famous blossoms and Asian and Pacific Island culture, the Community Market's activities included workshops on origami cherry blossom and butterfly making and a metal forging demonstration.

Recognizing the community's needs during the health crisis, the Community Market started last year, seeking to engage neighbors and friends in relief through art activities and promote local businesses with a safe outdoor venue, explained Erin Wright, Event Rental Manager. The venue meets Covid-19 response safety requirements for social distancing in a large outdoor space. As a Community Market, the event evolved from its early beginnings as a farmer's market selling fresh produce and food, to include a wider variety of products, crafters, artisans, hobbyists, food trucks, and small businesses. Thirty-five vendors currently are under contract, for periods of one to seven months, with new vendors expected throughout the season. The Market will open every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., until Oct. 30.



Nora Wong, of Bristol; Samantha Weinheiner, of Falls Church; and Cherry Nutting, of Fairfax, dance group instructor and leader, perform hula using pu'ili. Sticks made of bamboo with slits cut in one end with strands removed, create a rattle when moved and hit against the body.



Darnell and Amelia Mason, of Montclair, taste a sample before making a selection from Chloe Temple at "Chez Dee Bread."



Georgia Knapp, 8, of Lorton, who attends Gesher Jewish Day School, adds her cherry blossom to the Workhouse Wishing Tree.



Dancers Audry and Rosalin of Aldie, perform the Pearly Shells Hula.



Gari Jiménez, Blacksmith, "Flatline Forge," of Reston, brought a mobile forge and anvil to demonstrate forging a steel blade; the company sells cutlery and blacksmithing tools.

Kitchen Trends for 2021

Local designers say bold colors and durable materials are popular.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

As the command station for many households, kitchens are for more than just cooking. They've become spaces for Zoom meetings, homework sessions, or just gathering to spend time with family during a season of hunkering down.

As we begin to see a slow return to some version of normal, thoughts of hosting small dinner parties and intimate gatherings with close friends could be on the horizon. Those visions spark a desire for a kitchen spruce-up. Whether simply switching out light fixtures or embarking on a complete renovation, a few of the area's top designers share the trends they're seeing in kitchen design this year.

Faucets that operate with motion-activated sensors, one of Nicely Done Kitchens and Baths designer Jackie Llyu favorite emerging trend. "The touchless faucets are great for a messy cook, plus they help keep the kitchen and cook more sanitary," she said.

"Smart technology, such as ... appliances that turn on remotely, is also trending," added Nadia Subaran of Aidan Design.

Kitchen accessories with a touch of whimsy are popular this year, says Subaran. "Add fun elements with light fixtures, such as library lights that make a kitchen feel like a living space, and fabrics on stools and banquettes," she said.

Homeowners are now asking for kitchens that are personalized, says designer Cathy Goss, also of Nicely Done Kitchens and Baths. "I'm seeing character pieces, statement-making fixtures, personalized art and accessories are helping to customize spaces," she said.

"Add personality with your backsplash, said Kirsten Gable of Anthony Wilder Design/Build. "Stone, subway and glass tiles are great options.

After a mellow year of near solitude, many homeowners are seeking spaces that are bright and expressive, suggests Goss. "My favorite trend is to add more pops of color," she said. "The new kitchen has a mix of metals, texture, and weathered or light wood accents. It also has more color and pattern with the tile and a mix of painted colors on the cabinets."

Bold colors, especially in shades of blue and green are what homeowners are requesting, added Subaran. "There's a move away from all white kitchens," she said. "Try wallpaper, open shelving and mixed metals, such as black and aged brass, for a layered look."

Homeowners asking for kitchens with features that make organization a breeze, says Gable. "Custom storage solutions to hide clutter makes a big difference in a kitchen's overall appearance," she said.

Kitchens that are built to stand the test of time are growing in popularity, says designer Shannon Kadwell also of Anthony Wilder Design/Build. Kadwell recently completed a kitchen with a white Caesarstone island and dark Silestone perimeter counters "Durable quartz counters, such as Caesarstone or Silestone, are popular, low maintenance choices."

"I love quartz countertops with a matte finish. Most



PHOTO BY JOHN COLE

This kitchen, created by designers at Anthony Wilder Design/Build, features a Caesarstone island and Silestone perimeter.



COURTESY OF NICELY DONE KITCHENS AND BATHS.

Infusing a neutral space with a vibrant color will be a trend this year, says designer Cathy Goss of Nicely Done Kitchens and Baths.

"If I were going to design my own kitchen again, I'd definitely add a beverage refrigerator, which frees up space in the main refrigerator."

— Shannon Kadwell of Anthony Wilder Design/Build

manufacturers are coming out with that option," added Kate Couchman of Nicely Done Kitchens and Baths.

Kadwell is in the midst of designing a kitchen that has a sink with two faucets, a corner drain and a ledge for cutting boards and bins. "Specialty sinks offer versatility," she said. Homeowners are asking for custom range hoods in metal or wood. Dedicated coffee and beverage stations are also in demand. "If I were going to design my own kitchen again, I'd definitely add a beverage refrigerator, which frees up space in the main refrigerator,"

Britepaths Begins its Brighter Possibilities Campaign

Fairfax-based nonprofit Britepaths assists local people in need with a variety of services. It offers resources to guide individuals and families to better outcomes through financial literacy, workforce development and targeted mentorship.

But it can't do it single handedly; it needs the community's support to carry out its mission. That's why Britepaths Executive Director Lisa Whetzel hopes people will participate in the organization's Brighter Possibilities fundraiser, this month, to help make sure that those who need resources the most will receive them and thrive.

"For the families we serve, living in a constant state of crisis is a very familiar feeling," she explained. "Last year, with our community's support, we helped a lot of people find stability. But what comes after the storm? While many of our neighbors

are still struggling to keep their homes and feed their families during the pandemic, others have begun to lift their heads up and wonder, 'What's next?'"

"For years, Britepaths has sought to understand the unique needs of each client," continued Whetzel. "We craft life-altering solutions designed to bring about permanent change. By supporting our virtual campaign, you're saying that just surviving isn't enough. We want all our neighbors to move past their daily grind and find a pathway out of struggle. With your help, what's next for them are brighter possibilities."

To contribute, go to <https://britepaths.org/civicrm/contribute/transact?reset=1&id=54>. For more information or sponsorship details, contact Shannon Bryant at 703-273-8829.

— BONNIE HOBBS

AREA ROUNDUPS

School Board Approves \$41m Frost Middle School Renovation Contract

The Fairfax County School Board has approved a more than \$41 million contract for Frost Middle School's extensive renovation.

"Frost Middle School's major renovation is long overdue. Thanks to Fairfax County taxpayers, these funds will help the school continue providing a top-notch education for years to come. I am grateful to see this investment finally coming to fruition with the unanimous approval of this contract," said Karl Frisch, Providence District Representative on the Fairfax County School Board.

The renovation project will include additional classrooms, administrative offices, a library, and site improvements, totaling approximately 206,000 square feet. The estimated completion date is Fall 2023.

Funding for the project — \$41,150,000 — will come from the 2019 School Bond Referendum and was approved without objection as part of the consent agenda during last Thursday's regular School Board meeting. R.J. Crowley, Inc. received the contract as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

Overnight Ramp Closure from Route 50 East to I-66 West

As part of the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Project, the ramp from Route 50 East to I-66 West will be closed from this Friday, April 16, at 9 p.m., until Saturday, April 17, at noon, for drainage work. Traffic will be directed to continue farther east, stay to the left and make a U-turn from the left-most, left turn lane at the Waples Mill Road traffic signal to reach Route 50 West. Drivers will then stay to the right and follow signs to I-66 West. All work is weather-dependent and will be rescheduled if inclement conditions occur.

Dinner, Music and a Movie Outdoors

Shoestring Theatre Co. presents the premiere of its film, "I Ain't Made That Way," on Saturday, April 24, at 7 p.m., at Veterans Amphitheater. It's adjacent to Fairfax City Hall at 10455 Armstrong St. Attendees are invited to bring their blankets, lawn chairs and friends, get their dinner from

Live Outdoor Family-friendly Performance Arriving at Center for the Arts

By DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

The past year with the health and safety of audiences and performers at the forefront because of the pandemic, the Center for the Arts has reimagined what was to be its 30th anniversary season of great entertainment. In response to the pandemic with the utmost health and safety precautions, the Center for the Arts has not been using its traditional indoor nearly 2000 seat venue: the Center had to creatively rethink and retool how it could present live entertainment.

“Throughout the past year we have tried to think creatively about how to continue fulfilling our mission and serve the Northern Virginia community as a cultural hub,” said Adrienne Bryant Godwin, director of programming. “Every time I pass Mason Pond Lawn I think to myself how great it would be to activate that space as a performance venue. The circumstances of this past year have given us an opportunity to try it out!

“The transformation of the Mason Pond Lawn into a performance venue has truly been a collaborative effort. We partnered



PHOTOS COURTESY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Collision of Rhythm duo, from left -- Bronkar Lee and Aaron Williams who will perform on Mason Pond Lawn.

with the Mason’s Student Involvement to make the outdoor stage a reality, but it also took a lot of logistical coordination with other University departments,” added Bryant-Godwin. Staff has been working tirelessly to think through all of the necessary

Where and When

“Collision of Rhythm” duo Bronkar Lee and Aaron Williams take to Mason Pond Lawn outdoor stage at the George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, on April 25, 2021 at 3 p.m. Tickets: \$15 adult, \$10 child. Recommended for all ages. Performance will take place on Mason Pond Lawn. Note: George Mason University has health and safety protocols in place, which everyone must adhere to. FAQs about attending an outdoor performance on Mason Pond Lawn: <https://cfa.gmu.edu/events/outdoor-performances>. Link to taking the Mason COVID Health Check prior to coming to campus: <https://www2.gmu.edu/mason-covid-health-check>

details and ensure that we are able to offer safe, fun artistic experiences for our patrons.

“Collision of Rhythm” was scheduled since the pandemic has been particularly hard on families, who are having to manage so much over the past year, said Godwin, “Collision of Rhythm” is the ultimate dynamic duo made up of a tap-dancing percussion virtuoso and a beatboxing, juggling multi-instrumentalist.

Aaron Williams and Bronkar Lee do it all from drumming, tap-dancing, rhythmic juggling, and music-making on multiple in-

struments, including the marimba, piano, saxophone, flute, and more, noted Bryant Godwin.

“Collision of Rhythm” will be bringing a “high energy, engaging performance” to the Mason Pond audience, said Lee. The event will be “uplifting one for music brings people together. Everyone is entitled and deserves the right to be connected with music.”

“Life is in the detours,” added Lee. “Together we can make the world a better place, especially after the past year of challenges.”

“Bring the entire family for this fun outdoor performance. Plenty of music peppered with comic relief and inspirational stories,” added Bryant Godwin.

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NOW THRU APRIL 18

Blossoms Galore at Mosaic Gallery. A new exhibit at the Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic gallery in Fairfax offers its own interpretation of the beauty of nature in a show titled "Art Blossoms 2021", featuring artists from the Torpedo Factory Artists' Association. Additionally, there's a special cherry-blossom themed gift for purchasers spending \$200 or more. The Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic is a satellite gallery sponsored by the Torpedo Factory Artists' Association, and is located at 2905 District Avenue, #105, Fairfax.

NOW THRU APRIL 17

Bluebells at Riverbend Park. At 8700 Potomac Hills Street, Great Falls. Celebrate the wildflowers with a week of fun, family-friendly, safe activities. Join them for hikes to learn more about all the wildflowers that make their home along the floodplains of the park and see the eagle's nest. Also visit the learning tables to create a bluebell craft, meet some exhibit animals, and learn about volunteer and camp opportunities at the park. Preregistration is required for all hikes and numbers will be limited to follow safe social distancing guidelines. Call 703-759-9018.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 14

(The) Unruly Theatre Project's Virtual Improv Show. 7 p.m. Sponsored by The Alden. Join in (the) Unruly Theatre Project's virtual spring improv shows from the comfort of your couch. You can register for one show or as many as you like, but participants need to register at least two hours in advance of a show to see it. A Zoom link and password for the show will be emailed to registrants. For more information or to register, visit: www.aldentheatre.org.

THURSDAY/APRIL 15

Virtual '80s Music Drag Bingo (Virtual). 7 p.m. Sponsored by The Alden Theater, McLean with Miss Fluffy Soufflé. Fluffy Soufflé takes you back to the '80s! Part bingo, part drag show, your music bingo card is made up of songs, and instead of calling out numbers, Fluffy plays music clips! Singing along and '80s-themed costumes encouraged. \$10/\$5 MCC tax district residents. One ticket per bingo card. Zoom link and bingo cards will be emailed separately.

FRIDAY/APRIL 16

Campfire Fridays. 7:30-9 p.m. At Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. Bring the whole family for an evening devoted to the wonders of the natural world. "Campfire Fridays" may include nature walks, interactive activities, animal presentations or other opportunities to learn about nature and our place in it. Topics vary, but all the programs include s'mores. These Friday night programs are designed for participants age 3 to adult. Cost is \$12 per person. Call 703-569-3464.

FRIDAY/APRIL 16

Musical Road Trip. 2-3 p.m. Via Zoom. Zoom off to revisit classic songs and guess trivia about different USA destinations with Benjamin Pernick, Music Therapist, Musical Comedy Actor, and Award-Winning Comedy Film Director. Funded by the Friends of Burke Centre Library. Register at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library to receive Zoom link.

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

Legals

PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR TOWN OF CLIFTON
APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL USE PERMIT

PUBLIC HEARING OF TOWN OF CLIFTON PLANNING COMMISSION
APRIL 27, 2021

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Clifton Planning Commission will hold an electronic Public Hearing on Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at 7:30 P.M. via Zoom as permitted by law to consider the application for a Special Use Permit for Môtier, LLC located at 12644 Chapel Road, to include restaurant use. The application for the proposed Special Use Permit is available for review and downloading on the Town's website at www.cliftonva.gov and a hard copy may be examined at the Clifton Post Office, 12644 Chapel Road, Clifton VA, 20124. All interested parties are invited to attend and express their views with respect to the application. To obtain access to the electronic Public Hearing, contact the Town Clerk at clerk@cliftonva.gov no later than Noon on April 27, 2021.

PUBLIC HEARING OF TOWN OF CLIFTON TOWN COUNCIL
MAY 4, 2021

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Clifton Town Council will hold an electronic Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 4, 2021 at 7:30 P.M. via Zoom as permitted by law to consider the application for a Special Use Permit for Môtier, LLC located at 12644 Chapel Road, to include restaurant use. The application for the proposed Special Use Permit is available for review and downloading on the Town's website at www.cliftonva.gov and a hard copy may be examined at the Clifton Post Office, 12644 Chapel Road, Clifton VA, 20124. All interested parties are invited to attend and express their views with respect to the application. To obtain access to the electronic Public Hearing, contact the Town Clerk at clerk@cliftonva.gov no later than Noon on May 4, 2021.

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Announcements

Community Champions

FROM PAGE 3

Reverend, Dr. Brian Brown, Community Champion 2021, Mount Vernon District - "I'm recognizing Reverend Dr. Brian Brown. This individual recognized the critical needs of the community during the pandemic, especially their emotional and spiritual needs, as the Black Lives Matter movement and awareness grew in our community and around the country. Working with our office, and our district and county public safety officers, and traffic enforcement to coordinate logistics, he organized a safe, peaceful protest and supported black citizens who have lost their lives to police action. Attracting over 1000 participants in the speeches encouraging peaceful action as leverage for change, this march helped the community in grief and frustration towards positive growth." - Supervisor Daniel Storck (D-Mount Vernon)



Judith Schneider-Fletcher, Community Champion 2021, Providence District - "The Providence District Volunteer Champion serves as president for her neighborhood association, the Miller Heights Neighborhood Association, and is very actively involved in championing drives, including many we have partnered on, for Food for Others, for the Oakland High School, and Little Library. In 2020, to allay escalating food insecurity in our area, to organize her neighborhood for turnout for massive food drives working with Food for Others, the results - over 1,000 pounds of food donated. She brings her community together; she raises awareness and advocates for those organizations dealing with food insecurity in the community. With her dedication to help, she has inspired and encouraged her neighbors to be involved in tackling this issue." - Supervisor Dalia Palchik (D-Providence)



Stacey Brumbaugh, Community Champion 2021, Springfield District - Stacey Brumbaugh is emblematic of the best kind of next-door neighbor. As a community leader, she stepped up efforts during the pandemic to help neighbors donate food and living necessities to those in need by offering her home as a collection and distribution location. In connection with her Community Action Center, her home was transformed into a drop-off center for food, easily accessible to community members, allowing distribution to neighbors in need. She is an example of how one person, volunteering with care and commitment, can literally put food on the tables of those who have none." - Supervisor Pat Herry (R-Springfield)



Dr. Reverend Brenda McBorough, Community Champion 2021 Nominee, Sully District - "Like several of our champions this year, this volunteer got to work during 2020 to support a critical mission area, food insecurity. She willingly and proactively fought this challenge through the most precarious of times. In coordination with the county, she recruited volunteers to coordinate receipt of food and other necessities, oversaw truck loading and dispatch to locations in her district weekly. Through her grassroots efforts, she effectively created a distribution service to ensure no one went hungry in her neighborhood, and she did it with grace, humility, and compassion." - Supervisor Kathy Smith (D-Sully)



AREA ROUNDUPS

FROM PAGE 8

Old Fire Station No. 3 (at 3988 University Drive) and then settle in for an enjoyable, outdoor evening of Appalachian music and an entertaining story.

This is a Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts event, and COVID rules will limit seating, so people are encouraged to get their tickets early. Individual and family/friends pod seating is available. Get tickets at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/i-aint-made-that-way-opening-musical-performance-by-tyler-hughes-tickets-140726491725?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>.

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Hitting The Nail On the Head



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

What are all these "Toe Nail Clipper" emails I receive nearly every day? And how do these senders know that I'm actually the perfect recipient. Toe nail clippers and cuticle trimmers have been the bane of my existence going back as far as I can remember. And as recently as I care to mention, these two accessories have been front and center on my bedside table, in a drawer in my living room coffee table, in my car's console/glove box and in any suitcase/overnight bag I take with me out of town. The fact of what has been the matter with me is that I bit my nails and trimmed my cuticles constantly, not out of appearance but due apparently, to some undiagnosed mental condition, according to family and friends who were subjected to my relentless pursuit of whatever ailed me.

The constant gnawing and "cuticizing" of my nails drove my parents nearly around the bend. Whatever they tried, which was not professional help, couldn't stop the train, so to speak. Unfortunately, they weren't alive to see me stop. What joy they would have felt for this change. Exultation. Unfortunately, the change occurred quite by accident and with no intent of mine. What happened was that I was diagnosed with cancer, rather than make me a nervous wreck about my original "terminal" diagnosis, and bite my nails for a good reason, I just stopped, and it's been over twelve years now. I still haven't been to a manicurist, but I no longer scoff at the suggestion. And though neither of my parents lived to see me stop biting my nails, they also both died before learning about my lung cancer diagnosis, for which I was extremely grateful.

Aside from the obvious reason why my mother would have been upset about her "baby" being diagnosed with lung cancer was the fact that throughout my childhood, my mother smoked four packs of Chesterfield Kings every day. Then suddenly, she stopped, cold turkey, the coldest you can imagine. It happened in the early 60s when the anti-smoking campaign about the association between smoking cigarettes and lung cancer began in earnest in this country. From that point forward, my mother never wavered in her commitment. There were no more cigarettes and she lived to age 87, almost, when she died from natural causes, not cancer.

Oddly enough, it was her non-smoking son, yours truly, who was diagnosed with lung cancer, part of an ever increasing percentage (upwards of 25% most recently) of non-smokers so diagnosed. Whether second hand smoke or environmental exposure to certain chemicals, the numbers of lung cancer patients who were non-smokers has been steadily increasing. And in a fortuitous twist of fate, it was this increase specifically in the number of non-smokers being diagnosed with cancer which led to a huge increase in research funding. Funding which has spawned an increase in the numbers of drugs approved by the FDA which have directly affected my treatment and subsequent survival. Now what percentage of nail-biters are diagnosed with cancer, I can't say.

But this hyper-targeted email campaign - which features almost daily emails from people who are on a first-name basis with me and I them, according to their sender's name, is remarkable in its having reached a prime candidate, and one with a history of having used imperfect and/or failed implements for this very purpose. If anybody would appreciate the possibilities of this product, the relief it might provide, it would be me. If my mother were alive today, I'm sure she'd agree, nobody ever bit their nails more than I did. That's how I learned the meaning of the word "quick": "the soft-tender flesh below the growing part of a fingernail or toenail."

With all the self-consciousness I endured while nail-biting (and the visual condition of my fingers as a result), I wish I could take credit for having figured out the underlying cause, or had found a topical solution and/or a hypnotic suggestion that would help me stop. But I didn't. Apparently, the cancer made me stop, and not even consciously. To quote the late B.B.King: "The thrill is gone."

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



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