

# Great Falls CONNECTION

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PAGE, 8



Delfinia, one of Lift Me Up's most loved horses is back home in Great Falls after a lengthy and costly stay at the Marion duPont Scott Equine Medical Center. Georgia Bay, Executive Director and Advanced Instructor at Lift Me Up gives her a bit of hay.

CALENDAR, PAGE 10 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

## Community Helps Hoof Beloved Horse's Medical Bills

NEWS, PAGE 9

## Colvin Run Channelization Under Review

NEWS, PAGE 3

## Running for Second in Command

NEWS, PAGE 6

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# NEWS

## County Board to Review Colvin Run's Concrete Channelization

### Recommends proposed county, state, and federal process changes.

By MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Part 2 of a series.

Fairfax County Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill District) presented a Joint Board Matter with Supervisor John W. Foust (D-Darnestown District) on Tuesday, April 13. The matter concerned a

process review of the Route 7 infrastructure project and the environmental impacts by concrete channeling of Colvin Run as it empties into Difficult Run.

"This result is not good for Colvin Run; not good for Difficult Run, nor is it consistent with the best stream management and restoration techniques developed and implemented in dozens of locations around the county," Alcorn said.

The Board voted unanimously to direct County staff to review the environmental processes undertaken in the Rt. 7 widening project. According to the Joint Board Matter, the staff is to "recommend changes in county, state, and/or federal processes to achieve a more balanced and holistic approach toward minimizing the overall environmental impact on similarly scaled and situated infrastructure projects. Such recommendations could include proposed changes in state or federal law in the Board's legislative program."

During his presentation, Alcorn reminded the Board, the Route 7 widening project was well underway. It saw several years of engineering and planning by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Virginia Department of Transportation, Fairfax County Department of Transportation, and other federal, state, and county agencies.

"Unfortunately, inspired by a group of local residents and (as reported) in a Connection Newspapers article, the final outcome is not a good one for Colvin Run where it empties into Difficult Run...In the name of protecting wetlands, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approved the one option that was probably the worst option for the stream - putting Colvin Run into a concrete channel," said Alcorn.

JOINTLY with Supervisor Foust, Alcorn put forth the motion that (County) staff review the environmental processes undertaken in the Route 7 Widening Project that resulted in the concrete channeling of Colvin Run. Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay opened the meeting for discussion. Seeing and hearing none, the ten-member Board voted and unanimously approved the motion.

Kathleen R. Leonard, at Virginia Department of Transportation Communications provided the Connection with a 2012- 2019 chronological description of the Rt. 7 Improvements engineering and planning public meetings and other events. Highlights

included the Rt. 7 Working Group Meetings, community and homeowners' meetings, public notices issued by Virginia Marine Resources Commission, and Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

Leonard supplied links to meeting minutes, presentations, and permit approvals, including those for Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) Virginia Water Protection, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Wetland, and Virginia Marine Resource Center (VMRC).

One of the earliest documents VDOT provided was the Nov. 2017 Revised Environmental Assessment of Aquatic Biology. It rated the potential environmental impact between a No-Build Alternative and Build Alternative for Colvin Run, Piney Run, and Difficult Run. The Fairfax County, Stream Protection Baseline Study, was identified as the best available data source relevant to the Study Area. Three monitoring stations were located



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION  
Colvin Run as an articulated concrete block channel with the addition of staggered weirs, wooden boards to dissipate the water velocity.



Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill)



Supervisor John W. Foust (D-Darnestown)

### VDOT- Provided Documents:

Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) Permit - November 4, 2019 Copy of VMRC Permit

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Permit - October 30, 2019 Copy of USACE Permit

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Permit - October 16, 2019 Copy of DEQ Permit

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Public Notice - August 16, 2019 Copy of Public Notice published in the Fairfax County Times and Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) Public Notice - July 26, 2019.

within or close to the Study Area (Colvin Run, Piney Run, and Difficult Run).

Benthic Macroinvertebrate Community Integrity scored "poor" in Colvin Run and "good" for Difficult Run and Piney Run. Aquatic Habitat scored "poor" for all three stations. Fish Taxa Richness scored "high" for Colvin Run, "moderate" for Difficult Run, and "low" for Piney Run.

According to reported findings, the Build Alternative would result in "minimal impacts" from loss of stream channel, temporary construction impacts, and road operation. The effects would be offset mainly by implementing best management practices and stabilizing Colvin Run.

On July 26, 2019, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission at Fort Monroe, Va., issued a public notice of a 30-day public hearing August 17, 2019, through September 16, 2019, regarding applicant Shirley Contracting to impact 2,609 linear feet of surface waters affecting Colvin Run and Difficult Run in the Potomac watershed.

On Aug. 26, 2019, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality issued a public notice. The public meeting was not held based on the low number of comments received during the 30-day notice, according to documents provided by VDOT.

ERIC KNUDSEN, a former member of the Rt. 7 Working Group, said he and Tim Thompson, president of the Carpers Farm Homeowners Association in Vienna, which is adjacent to Colvin Run, traveled to Fort Monroe on Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2019, to testify at a hearing of Virginia Marine Resources Commission. Knudsen said they testified about the concrete block channelization of Colvin Run and its sediment flow to Difficult Run as part of the Route 7 Improvements Project between Colvin Run Road and Jarret Valley Drive in Fairfax County. He and Thompson detailed the environmental consequences of channelizing Colvin Run to manage stormwater and funneling it into Difficult Run. He said they voiced opposition to "Option 10-C", a rip rap channel such as concrete blocks and not a best practice. Knudsen said the Army Corp of Engineers did not term the area a "floodplain" but instead a "stable forest."

"I was arguing that it was a cow pasture, a floodplain that allowed the water to expand and not be funneled into Difficult Run.

SEE PROJECT, PAGE 8

GREAT FALLS CONNECTION ♦ APRIL 21-27, 2021 ♦ 3

# 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.



**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 Herrity (R-Springfield) picked Stacey Brumbaugh

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

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 dona-

tions." - 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 5

# Community Champions

FROM PAGE 4

**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 Stork (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)



. When the **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 Herrity (R-Springfield)



**Dr. Reverend Brenda McBorrough, 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)



## KEEP VIRGINIA BEAUTIFUL PROMOTES EARTH DAY ACTION

Keep Virginia Beautiful (KVB) recently published an expanded calendar of Earth Day events and is encouraging participation from communities across Virginia.

"KVB believes every day is Earth Day," said Mike Baum, executive director of Keep Virginia Beautiful. "There is so much people can do on Earth Day or every day to get outside and find a COVID-safe way to make a difference in their communities. Consult our website for some creative ways to get involved."

The KVB event calendar includes the following Earth Day activities:

- ❖ Make dreams into reality by applying for 30 in 30 Green Grants before April 30. KVB will be awarding grants to environmental projects throughout the month of June.
- ❖ Adopt-a-Highway. Groups of all kinds are eligible to adopt and care for a two-mile

stretch of highway in their community.  
❖ Visit the Nauticus Museum in Norfolk to see Planet or Plastic? An exhibition by National Geographic.  
❖ Participate in the global Earth Day Live Summit.  
❖ Learn about Rain Barrel assembly with a workshop at the Broad Rock Ranch Library in Richmond.  
❖ Give back and participate in community cleanups across the state.  
❖ Attend the tree planting ceremony at the Williamsburg Botanical Gardens.  
❖ Stop by the native plant sale at the Virginia Living Museum.

Visit the KVB website for updates to the event calendar. For more information on environmental activities across the state, follow Keep Virginia Beautiful on Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram.

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# Running for Second in Command

## Thirteen candidates are running for lieutenant governor in Virginia.

By MICHAEL LEE POPE  
GAZETTE PACKET

**T**he job of lieutenant governor is often overlooked, but it plays an important role in Virginia politics. Although many people view it as a stepping stone to running for governor, the lieutenant governor has a critical role in the day-to-day proceedings of the General Assembly.

He or she presides over the Senate, which often means making procedural rulings about whether motions can proceed or not. Perhaps more importantly, though, the lieutenant governor gets to break tie votes in a chamber where Democrats hold a two-vote majority. Because the chamber is home to some conservative-leaning Democrats, the lieutenant governor has many opportunities to step in and break a tie vote.

Earlier this month, Lieutenant Governor Justin Fairfax broke a tie vote on legalizing marijuana after two Senate Democrats voted with Republicans. The next election for senators isn't until 2023, so the next lieutenant governor will walk into a Senate chamber where he or she could end up being a tie-breaking vote on almost any issue.

## Democratic Candidates for Lieutenant Governor

Democrats will choose their nominee for lieutenant governor in a June 8 statewide primary. (Absentee voting begins April 23.) Seven candidates will be on the ballot. The seat will be open because incumbent Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax is running for governor.

**Del. Sam Rasoul (D-11)** was first elected to the House of Delegates in 2013 to fill the seat vacated by Onzlee Ware. He's raised more money than any of the other Democrats in the race, and his campaign contributors include donations from the health-care sector, physicians, pharmacists and dentists. On the campaign trail, he talks about how his experience as a Muslim has informed his view of politics.



Sam Rasoul

"Look, we've all had some vulnerable moments over the past several years," said Rasoul in a candidate forum. "And a big vulnerable moment for me was in December of 2015 when a then-candidate for president said people who worship like me are not

6 ♦ GREAT FALLS CONNECTION ♦ APRIL 21-27, 2021

welcome in this country."

**Del. Hala Ayala (D-51)** was first elected to the House of Delegates in 2017, defeating incumbent Republican Rich Anderson. Campaign-finance records show she's received \$25,000 from the environmental group Clean Virginia, and she also was able to transfer \$60,000 from her House campaign. On the campaign trail, she talks about how being an Afro-Latina-Lebanese-Irish has informed her view of politics. "For a long time, I did not feel like politicians looked like me or had a lived experience like mine," said Ayala in a candidate forum. "My family struggled growing up, and I lost my father to gun violence."

**Norfolk City Councilwoman Andria McClellan** was first elected in 2016, and as an at-large member of the council represents more people than anybody else in the race. Her biggest contributor is the Norfolk-based PAC Access for Virginia. On the campaign trail, she talks about how her experience in local government would inform her performance as lieutenant governor.

"We need a statewide database of affordable housing, where people can search and find opportunities," said McClellan in a candidate forum. "It needs to be searchable and available for all throughout the commonwealth."

**Sean Perryman** is the former president of the Fairfax NAACP, a role that's put him at the center of the debate on ending qualified immunity and defelonizing drugs. A significant portion of his campaign contributions come from lawyers and lobbyists, and he's taken \$25,000 from Clean Virginia. On the campaign trail, he's called for allowing incarcerated people to vote, abolishing qualified immunity for police and limiting campaign contributions.

"I don't think corporate donations are a problem. I think the problem is contribution limits," said Perryman in a candidate forum. "Whether you're getting \$100,000 from an LLC or from Joe Smith down the block, they are still having influence over you. And so we absolutely need to have limits on our contributions."

**Del. Mark Levine (D-45)** was first elected in 2015, filling a seat vacated by Democrat Rob Krupicka. Campaign-finance records show his largest donation is \$40,000 from



Hala Ayala

his House of Delegates campaign, and he also received \$25,000 from Clean Virginia. On the campaign trail, he advocates for banning assault weapons, joining the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact and abolishing mandatory minimum sentences for non-violent crimes.

"I support no prison sentences for people who are addicted to drugs, period," said Levine in a candidate forum. "Because if you're an addict, you need help. You need health care. You don't need to go to prison."

**Del. Elizabeth Guzman (D-31)** was first elected in 2017, defeating Republican incumbent Scott Lingamfelter. Campaign-finance records show she's taken large campaign contributions from several unions, and she's also taken \$25,000 from Clean Virginia. On the campaign trail, she's styled herself as the Bernie Sanders candidate in the race who will abolish Virginia's so-called right-to-work law.

"I'm ready to go to the Senate and to be the voice to educate the senators on how it's important to repeal the right to work," said Guzman in a candidate forum. "Repealing the right to work is providing workers a voice at the table, to fight for better equipment, to better their salary and for training purposes as well."

**Xavier Warren** is an NFL player agent and lobbyist for nonprofits. Campaign-finance records show he's taken money from people who work in sports management, and he received a \$10,000 in-kind contribution from communications firm Capture Create Media. On the campaign trail, he advocates for ending the cash-bail system and investing in solar farms.

"Virginia is in a covid crisis, a climate crisis and an economic crisis," said Warren in a candidate forum.

"I want to be the leader in technology, healthcare innovation and also clean energy and helping families to build generational wealth."



Mark Levine

will be at 37 locations throughout Virginia. To vote in the convention, voters must register as delegates to the convention. Voters will be asked to rank the candidates from first to sixth, and if no one wins a majority on the first round the last-place candidate will be dropped.

**Former Del. Tim Hugo (R-40)** was first elected in a 2002 special election to fill the seat vacated by Jay O'Brien when he was elected to the state Senate. As a longtime member of the House,



Tim Hugo

he served as chairman of the House Republican Caucus and was able to raise large amounts of money to help candidates across Virginia. On the campaign trail, his pitch to Republican delegates is that he's a Republican who has a history of winning in Northern Virginia, where he was reelected eight times before being unseated by Dan Helmer in 2019.

"You never thought a decade ago or 15 years ago that you would have Democrats talking casually about infanticide," said Hugo in a candidate forum. "You never thought you'd have Beto O'Rourke going door to door against us to talk about taking our guns, and you never thought you'd be talking about defunding the police. But that's what Democrats are doing now."



Elizabeth Guzman

**Del. Glenn Davis (R-84)** is a former member of the Virginia Beach City Council who was first elected to the House of Delegates in 2013. Campaign-finance records show he was able to transfer about \$350,000 from his House campaign account, giving him an early edge over other other candidates. As a member of the House, he has a voting record that's a bit more moderate on issues involving gay rights and labor issues.



Glenn Davis

On the campaign trail, he's positioning himself as a moderate alternative to the other candidates who are more closely aligned with former President Donald Trump.

"I want to go to the middle because the middle is where you win elections," said Davis in a candidate forum. "The middle is where a lot of Republicans have gotten way too uncomfortable being, and what's why we lose."



Xavier Warren

**Former Del. Winsome Sears (R-90)** served one term in the House of Delegates 20 years ago. Since that time, she waged an unsuccessful campaign in 2004 against Con-



Winsome Sears

## Republican Candidates for Lieutenant Governor

Republicans will choose their nominee in an unassembled convention on May 8, which

SEE CANDIDATES, PAGE 7

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# Candidates

FROM PAGE 6

gressman Bobby Scott and an unsuccessful write-in candidacy in 2018 as an alternative to Corey Stewart, whom she called a "charlatan." Sears has the endorsement of state Sen. Amanda Chase (R-11), and on the campaign trail she accuses Democrats of race baiting.

"They're pitting the races against each other," said Sears in a candidate forum. "You've heard the constant Black, white, now it's Asian. They're speaking against Thomas Jefferson kids and their successes, and they want quotas."

Lance Allen is a first-time candidate who is trying to use his lack of political experience as an asset, framing his campaign as an attempt to do something about his frustration with politics. He doesn't have any big name endorsements, and he hasn't raised much money. But on the campaign trail, he's trying to connect with voters by tapping into their frustration with Republican leadership in the General Assembly.

"We caved on issue after issue, and I'm tired of compromising my values just so we can have a little bit of power," said Allen in a candidate forum. "It's time to stand up and say the things we know as Republicans that we need to say."

Puneet Ahluwalia is an activist who has been involved in Northern Virginia politics for years trying to build an immigrant base for the Republican Party. As a first-generation immigrant, he's hoping his personal story might resonate with voters who want to expand the range of the party. On the campaign trail, he talks about how critical race theory is a threat to Virginia schools.

"All it does is teach children to divide, to hate, to see themselves as victims of oppressors," said Ahluwalia in a video posted to YouTube. "It leads to lower achievement and more quotas. America can't lead when we don't even believe in our own values."

Maeve Rigler is a lawyer who wanted to run as a Republican candidate against U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8) but she was unsuccessful in securing the nomination in the convention. She's now positioning herself as the candidate who will fight for election security, arguing that she'll fight against voter fraud.

"We need a candidate who will stand up against voter fraud," said Rigler in a YouTube video.

"The Democrats stole the election from the Republicans. I've been expecting Virginia Republicans to stand up and speak out while the Democrats keep spewing their socialist agenda, I've heard nothing but silence from Republicans."

## FRESHFARM Markets Open

Local FRESHFARM Markets are opened. Residents are encouraged to pre-order as much as possible, but grab-and-go and prepackaged options will be available for purchase at all of the markets listed below.

### Saturday Markets

Arlington, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. -- N Courthouse Rd. and 14th St N, Arlington

Oakton, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. -- 2854 Hunter Mill Rd., Oakton.

### Sunday Market

Mosaic, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. -- 2910 District Ave., Fairfax

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# Helping Children Improve Their Writing

Practical suggestions for boosting skills.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**W**hen Stacie Dougherty read an essay that her seventh grade son wrote for a Language Arts writing assignment, she became concerned. As she scanned the page, she noticed grammatical errors and run-on sentences.

"I don't think he knows how to write a paragraph with a topic sentence and supporting sentences," she said. "I need to nip this in the bud before he starts high school in a year and I can't afford a tutor."

Parents like Dougherty who fear that this school year's remote learning environment has compounded their child's writing difficulties are looking for strategies to address the problem. Local writing specialists explain why kids struggle with writing and what parents can do to help.

"Writing can feel like a challenge especially at the middle and high school level," said Kathryn Roessler, St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School in Alexandria. "This is often because writing involves so many different skills and is a process that entails so many different steps."

Take time to brainstorm, plan and organize, says Roessler. "Sometimes students see this as an extra step rather than one that can promote efficiency and save time in the long run," she said. "An outline is always helpful for organizing ideas, even when it's not a specific requirement by the teacher."

One resource for improving a student's writing is providing models and examples of the specific type of writing that a student is attempting to complete, says Amy Hutchison, Ph.D., associate professor and director of the Division of Elementary, Literacy and Secondary Education at George Mason University. "[It's] sometimes referred to as mentor writing, she said. "Students study the features of a mentor text to determine how they can apply those features to their own writing."

Whether a classic or the latest in popular fiction, a tool in developing effective writing skills is sitting on the shelf at a local library. "Reading has a profound impact on the development of writing skills," said John Gilbert, Tutoring Coordinator and Writing Specialist in Marymount University's Student Academic Hub. "Think of reading as a partnership that goes hand-in-hand with writing. Reading exposes a child to different writing genres, builds vocabulary, increases phonemic awareness, and helps to build grammar skills."

An activity as simple as keeping a daily journal can help boost a student's writing. "Studies have shown that journaling, because it is a creative process, not only improves writing skills, as it is a daily practice

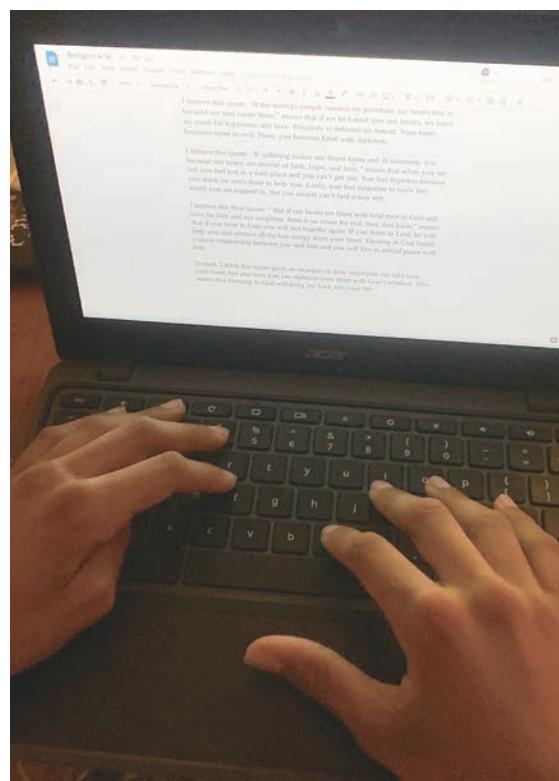


PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Improving a middle or high school student's writing abilities requires practice and structure.

**“Reading has a profound impact on the development of writing skills.”**

— John Gilbert,  
Writing Specialist,  
Marymount University's  
Student Academic Hub

the next."

"Read different types of writing with your child such as fiction, news articles and opinion pieces," added Gill. "Talk about the different writing techniques you notice like sentence length, punctuation and organization."

**“Writing can feel like a challenge especially at the middle and high school level.”**

— Kathryn Roessler,  
St. Stephen's &  
St. Agnes School

the use of digital graphic organizers to support writing difficulties. "Our digital graphic organizer includes built in supports to help students with self-regulation, she said. "Research shows that all students, including those with and without writing difficulties, increase the quantity and quality of their writing when using this structured approach."

## Project Processes Under Review

FROM PAGE 3

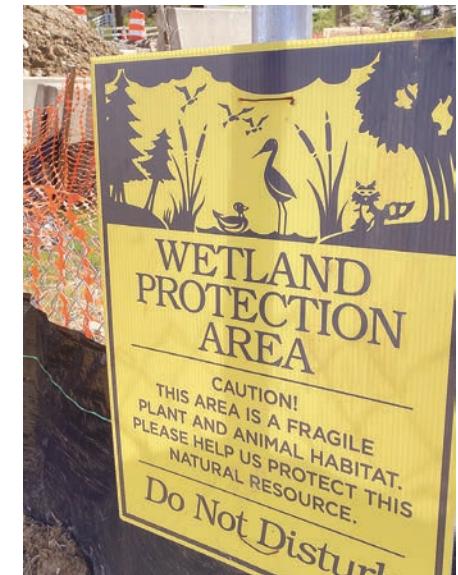
What they were doing was creating a funnel that would create more turbulence. The fact was that a meandering stream through a floodplain was a whole lot more environmentally safe than a channel into another stream," said Knudsen. He said they voiced recommendations for three other options. Those were 1, 2, and 3, using stormwater best practices such as meandering streams with shallow pools.

Knudsen said they brought letters in opposition to the proposed plan from Fairfax County addressed to Robert Berg at the Army Corps of Engineers and from Great Falls Citizens Association signed by William Canis. The letters cited the problems 10-C would cause for Difficult Run, which could negatively impact nearby wetlands. According to Knudsen, those on the Virginia Marine Resources Commission told them the letters could not be entered as testimony.

One month later, on October 16, 2019, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality issued Individual Permit Number 19-0554 signed by David L. Davis, Director, Office of Wetland and Stream Protection to Shirley Construction. It authorized permanent surface water impact on .84 acres palustrine forested wetlands, .90 acres of stream channel, and areas less than .13 acres of combined palustrine scrub-shrub /emergent wetlands and open water on the Rt.7 Improvements from Colvin Run Road to Jarrett Valley Drive. The permittee, Shirley Contracting Company, LLC, would be compensated for the authorized surface water impacts.

The other two required permits followed, October 31, 2019, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetland and November 4, 2019, Virginia Marine Resource Commission.

On July 9, 2020, the Route 7 Working Group held Meeting No. 23. Minutes of the meeting described a Route 7 Project Update for the Colvin Run stream



MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The Wetland Sign is installed on the banks of Colvin Run in Vienna. A new articulated block channel (ABC) VDOT reported approximately 1200 feet in linear length replaces a straight channel section along the south side of Route 7 installed in the late 1960s.

relocation. As part of the update, documents showed a page of proposed "enhanced design elements" along the articulated concrete block channel, the addition of staggered weirs, wooden boards to dissipate the water velocity.

On Friday, April 16, 2021, Leonard provided VDOT's project overview and update. She said in an email that the foundation of the new stream channel at the approach to Difficult Run is constructed of hollow articulated concrete blocks (ACBs). Those blocks would guard against ongoing erosion and allow, over time as soil was deposited into the vertical cores and spaces in the blocks for vegetation to develop by the water running through the channel.

Looking to future work, Leonard said the project team is at the beginning of the construction phase in the Colvin Run and Difficult Run area. Removal of the eastbound side of the existing Difficult Run bridge has begun. Later this year, the retaining wall between Colvin Run and eastbound Route 7 will be built. She added that an eastbound Route 7 bridge over Difficult Run would be built in late 2021/22.

The Connection has not heard back from other individuals and groups after requests for comments as of press time. The Connection will publish these as we receive them.



Delfinia is a little finicky about who she gives kisses. Georgia Bay said she feels honored.

## Community Helps Hoof Beloved Horse's Medical Bills

**Delfina back home, but support needed for the long recovery.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**O**n April 8, a beloved 18-year-old Norwegian Fjord named Delfinia at the Lift Me Up equestrian center in Great Falls suffered a severe case of colic, abdominal pain. The gentle pony-sized horse, with her distinctive two-tone mane, lay in her stall.

"We knew Delfinia was really sick when she didn't want to eat. This pony lives to eat," said Georgia Bay, Executive Director and Advanced Instructor at Lift Me Up. It is a center that offers therapeutic riding and horsemanship programs for children and adults of different abilities. Apparently, painkillers for Delfinia's chronic laminitis, foot pain built up in her system and hurt her stomach. Bay said colic is critical. "Really bad things can happen to the intestines, where they split or twist," she said.

Delfinia required emergency transport to the Marion duPont Scott Equine Medical Center in Leesburg. According to Bay, they worried about covering the cost but at the same time didn't want to lose Delfinia. "We thought we were going to make this work somehow." Following nine days of treatment, Delfinia returned home to Lift Me Up.

"We've put out an appeal and said if you'd like to help with her vet bills, that would be great. We are so humbled by the outpouring of support," said Bay. She added that Lift Me Up no longer had reserve funds for emergencies due to the pandemic. "We used to, but not right now," said Bay.

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Delfinia keeps her eyes open for a bit more hay.



**"We've put out an appeal and said if you'd like to help with her vet bills, that would be great. We are so humbled by the outpouring of support,"**

— Georgia Bay,  
Executive Director and  
Advanced Instructor at Lift Me Up

The cost of Delfinia's treatments, medications, and 24-hour observation and care at the hospital hit \$8,000 a little over halfway through her stay and continues to rise with a long road to recovery.

Ongoing support will help Lift Me Up continue to afford Delfinia's medical bills. To donate, visit the Lift Me Up website.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 9. This year we will continue to publish submissions through the May 5th and 6th editions. Photo submissions are due by Sunday, May 2, 2021.

Please complete a submission form at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/mothersday](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/mothersday) and send us your photo(s).

You may also email the requested information and photo(s) directly to [editors@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:editors@connectionnewspapers.com)

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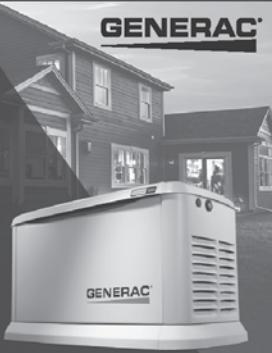
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## CALENDAR

### NOW THRU JUNE 26

Ken Britz, Artist of the Year. At VAS Gallery in the Village Green, 513 Maple Ave. W, Vienna. The Vienna Arts Society is thrilled to present a collection of "Favored Subjects", artworks by Artist of the Year Ken Britz. The exhibition is open April 12 through June 26, Mon. - Sat., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Discover more about Ken on the website: [www.ViennaArtsSociety.org](http://www.ViennaArtsSociety.org)

### NOW THRU APRIL 23

Joanne Bast Exhibit. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At The McLean Textile Gallery, 6819 Elm Street, McLean. Visit the newly opened McLean Textile Gallery to view the work of Joanne Bast, an artist who works in thread, felted wool and beads. Small groups welcome. Visit the website: [www.themcleantextilegallery.com](http://www.themcleantextilegallery.com)

### SATURDAY/APRIL 24

Decorate a Hiking Stick. 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. At Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. Put a little pizzazz into your next nature walk with a tricked-out hiking stick. Fairfax County parks have more than 300 miles of trails, and a hiking stick can be a good companion on your explorations. Pick a stick, decorate it, and then take it with you on your next nature hike. All craft materials will be provided. This program is designed for explorers age 6 to adult. The cost is \$15 per person. Call 703-471-5414.

### SATURDAY/APRIL 24

Discovery Sampler. 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. at Hidden Pond Nature Center, 8511 Greeley Blvd., Springfield. You'll also get an idea about the nature center's spring and summer programs. Program scheduling will limit group sizes and allow for social distancing. There will be a maximum of 20 participants in each time slot, and the attendees will be divided into smaller groups of about six to eight people. Station rotations will include Pond Netting, Nature Crafts, and Meeting the Exhibit Animals. Call 703-451-9588.

### SUNDAY/APRIL 25

Open Air Spring Market. Noon to 5 p.m. At the Windover Building, 243 Church Street, NW, Vienna. The Vienna Arts Society presents a curated selection of the best independent designers, artists and emerging brands. You'll meet vendors selling hundreds of hand crafted items. Artists will help kids paint a small gift for their moms in time for Mothers' Day. Plein air painters will be working in the neighboring gardens. Rain date, Sunday, May 2. Visit the website: [www.ViennaArtsSociety.org](http://www.ViennaArtsSociety.org)

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With characteristic red eyes, Brood X cicada exits from exoskeleton moving from nymph to adult stage



PHOTO BY  
SUSAN LAUME/  
THE CONNECTION

## Brood X Emerging Now

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

For many of us, quarantining for the Covid pandemic, may have felt like being locked up at home for more than the several months to a year it actually was. But consider the life of the Brood X Cicada. Insects in this brood have been in their underground homes since 2004, surviving on sap from tree roots for 17 years. Soon they will emerge with the same boisterous exuberance we humans might soon get to display when all Covid restrictions are lifted.

**BROOD X** is unlike other species of cicadas that are seen annually. Other species have staggered life cycles. Some spend just two to five years underground; so we see some of them each year; called annual cicadas. Broods of "periodical" cicadas emerge in prime numbered years at lengths of 13 or 17 years. It's the Brood X periodical cicadas we'll see in masses this Spring. We will see the annual cicadas this year too, mostly after Brood X has finished reproducing.

Why do periodical cicadas stay underground so long and why do they emerge in such large numbers? Scientists have multiple theories. Most agree that warm temperature cycles drive the insects' behavior. Their behavior could mirror long past warm/cold ice age cycles. Temperatures are regulated underground for nymphs which lack a protective outer shell. By emerging when ground temperatures reach 64 degrees, after such an extended length of time, during a rainy period, and in such high numbers over a short period of time, the many things that would like to eat them may not be able to evolve to take advantage of their mass appearance, although they will be eaten by all

**Expect to see a fair number of recipes posted for "shrimp of the land," heralding cicadas' high protein, low fat properties.**

kinds of creatures.

Though found in other parts of the world, and found here before Europeans settled in America, the cicadas mass emergence is common only to North America. Billions are expected to emerge over an area covering 15 states in the mid-Atlantic region beginning in mid-April until early June. Estimates run to a number over a million per acre. The "tree cricket" males call their songs to attract mates after emerging; usually congregating for a loud effective chorus of sound. They are among the loudest insects, capable of producing decibels at the rock concert level.

Cicadas have three life stages: egg, nymph, and adult. Most of their emerged time is spent mating, even eschewing eating, so there is little to no damage to crops or plants. Males mate several times. After mat-

ing, females, who mate only once, deposit about 400 eggs in groups among several dozen locations.

Their hosts are the twigs of mature trees, which do not normally show a negative impact from hosting the eggs, except that some egg burdened twigs may wilt and drop off. Nymphs hatch in six to ten weeks, then immediately burrow underground to begin another 17 year cycle.

**CICADAS** are not harmful to pets or humans; they don't bite or sting.

The many creatures that eat them include birds, squirrels, bats, snakes, fish; even dogs and cats. They are edible by humans too. So expect to see a fair number of recipes posted for "shrimp of the land," heralding cicadas' high protein, low fat properties. Most suggest eating in the soft stage, without legs and wings, for better taste and less crunch! And there's always a chocolate covering to consider. Your next time to try them won't come again until 2038.

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## Wanna Take A Chance?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I'm sort of invoking Southwest Airlines here, but not exactly. What I am invoking are the incredible number of television and radio commercials for legal gambling sites and for car insurance. Both offer rewards while requiring payment upfront. In anecdotal fact, if it wasn't for these two entities advertising on television especially, and on radio to a lesser degree, the airwaves would be a lot less redundant. I'm so used to seeing Flo from Progressive, LiMu Emu and Doug from Liberty Mutual and all sorts of familiar characters from Geico that I am actually contemplating making an insurance inquiry. Together, these insurance companies in particular have combined to nearly beat me into insurance-quote submission. The last time I changed car insurance companies was after seeing a plane at the beach flying a banner for all of us who could see encouraging us to make a call. It was - for me, the last straw. I called the company the following week and was indeed rewarded for that call: hundreds in premium savings.

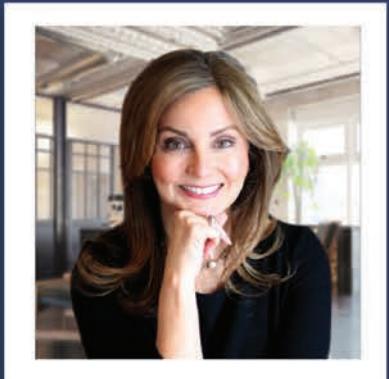
Likewise, DraftKings, Fanduel and BetMGM have combined to nearly entice me into entering their world of online, sportsbook betting. Unfortunately, I have a much better grasp of the jargon and issues addressed by car insurance advertisers (having been a Certified Financial Planner in my previous profession). With respect to the sportsbooks, even though I'm a long time "sports guy," and as such understand the nature and risks of anticipating a desired outcome, I've rarely ventured outside the lines. Those lines being an NFL most-winners pool held weekly in season at my wife Dina's former employer, a season-ending Super Bowl point-totals-at-end-of-each-quarter thing, and a yearly participation in the annual NCAA's "bracketology," (which I've actually won once).

But the modern sportsbook and even the individuals hired by the radio and television networks to discuss/albeit recommend the various "plays;" the over-under, the parlays and all the extra-special, apparent can't-miss,

opportunities for new/first-time bettors/gamblers hyped as if there really is nothing to lose by playing and only money to win, is all too much for me to process and understand. After listening to all the noise, I really feel a need to take a class to protect myself from simply losing/throwing money away because I think I understand, but likely understand very little of the actual risk/reward dynamic. Certainly, I can appreciate the excitement of winning money at the expense of others, but as most would attest, at the very least; expecting outcomes will satisfy your financial needs is a slippery slope at best and a rabbit hole at worst (why else the "If you become afflicted to gambling" advisories on all the advertisements).

The car insurance companies are certain we all want to save money on such necessary got-to-haves like car insurance. And the sportsbooks are betting (pun intended) that we all want to find free money and are not opposed to taking a chance to get it. A chance which if successful, might actually provide the extra money needed to pay their car insurance premiums. I fear however, that once dipping my wallet into the gambling waters, and win a little, but likely lose more, it might be difficult to extract myself from their figurative clutches. The car insurance companies are sort of the same. They entice us by advertising lower prices then hope to retain customers by offering various other incentives such as "accident forgiveness," "vanishing deductibles" and the like. In effect, they're both trying to bait us and hope we don't switch. Their motivation is quite similar: they want our money and they want us beholden to them. It's not ideal, but it sure is prevalent. In each instance, you're "betting" money on an outcome which is totally out of your control: predicting scores and predicting whether you'll have a car accident or not. Whose to know? Not me. In addition, I've grown weary - and skeptical of the never-ending pursuit of my dollars. Besides, I got out of the predicting business as soon as I received my "terminal" cancer diagnosis in late Feb., 2009.

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



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