

CONNECTION

Reston ♦ ^{Oak Hill} Herndon ♦ Chantilly ♦ CENTRE VIEW

Bike to Work Day Returns For 2021

NEWS, PAGE 8

Sporting their matching Bike to Work Day 2021 20th Anniversary t-shirts, cyclists create their own party-like atmosphere at the Town of Herndon pit stop at Bike to Work Day 2021, held Friday, May 21.



Call for School Board Member's Resignation Fosters Heated Conversation

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

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Kalypso's and Montmartre Host Candidates Forum

With Lake Anne and its sparkling fountain as a backdrop, candidates for Va. Lt. Governor took questions from a panel of Reston civic leaders and residents on the patio of Kalypso's Sports Tavern. The forum was sponsored by Reston Strong, hosted by Kalypso's and Cafe Montmartre.

From left -- candidates, Former Va. NAACP President Sean Perryman; Va. Sen. David Marsden, surrogate for Norfolk Councilwoman Andria McClellan; and Del. Mark Levine. Exchanges among them were spirited, with several areas of agreement. While both Perryman and Levine opposed taking contributions from Dominion Power or corporate PACs, Perryman called out Levine for taking a \$300,000 loan from himself. Sen. Marsden was at a disadvantage, unable to specify candidate McClellan's position on policy issues, e.g., police reform & campaign finance.



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Convention Done, Primary Ahead

Republicans get a head start in the general election; Democrats still fighting each other.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

The way Democrats talk about Donald Trump, you'd think he was on the ballot in 2021. And in many ways, he is.

The former president may be out of the White House and kicked off of social media, but he's still eager to see himself as a kingmaker. Shortly after wealthy businessman Glenn Youngkin secured the Republican nomination in a multi-location convention, Trump endorsed Youngkin and reinserted himself in the conversation. Democrats did not miss a beat, launching a tour of the commonwealth they call the "Where Trump Leads, Glenn Follows" Tour.

"He is just like Donald Trump," said House Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn this week when the tour arrived in Old Town Alexandria. "He will stand for the same policies and same initiatives that Donald Trump has stood for."

The contours of a fall campaign season are starting to come into focus as Republicans and Democrats stake out positions on everything from criminal-justice reform and abortion rights to voting access and preventing gun violence. Republicans get a one-month head start, giving them the ability to move from a divisive convention into a general election strategy for the fall campaign season. Democrats, meanwhile, are still attacking each other as the June 8 primary approaches.

"We're running in every corner of the commonwealth, in more seats than we've contested in a half century," said House Republican Leader Todd Gilbert. "I'm more confident than ever that voters will return a Republican majority to the House of Delegates in November."



REPUBLICAN PARTY OF VIRGINIA
The Republican stateside ticket, from left: Jason Miyares for attorney general, Glenn Youngkin for governor and Winsome Sears for lieutenant governor.

27 percent of the undecideds broke for one candidate, McAuliffe would still be in the lead with \$8.5 million cash on hand.

"This gubernatorial field is the most diverse in the history of the commonwealth, and that has drawn a great deal of interest in the race," said Rebecca Bromley-Trujillo, research director for the Judy Ford Wason Center at Christopher Newport University. "So we're seeing that in the field but we're not seeing that in the leaders in these races, at least for governor and attorney general."

Despite the lopsided nature of the polling and the fundraising, the primary has not lacked for drama. During a televised debate, Fairfax said when he was accused of sexual assault, McAuliffe treated him like Emmet Till or George Floyd.

businesses, who are struggling, and who want to provide the leave to their employees, sick leave, paid family medical leave, and they need our help to do it."

THE JOB OF lieutenant governor is often overlooked, although it plays a key role in breaking ties in the Senate. That responsibility is more important now than it's been in recent memory because Democrats have such a thin majority and the body has a handful of conservative Democrats. Republicans have chosen firebrand conservative former Del. Winsome Sears (R-90), who appears in campaign photos with an assault rifle to show her support for gun rights. She pulled ahead of the pack of other candidates after Sen. Amanda Chase (R-11) and former lieutenant governor candidate E.W. Jackson endorsed her. As an immigrant from Jamaica, she's made opposition to critical race theory a cornerstone of her campaign.

"The Democrats, they're not helping us," said Sears at a candidates forum. "They're pitting the races against each other. You've heard the constant Black, white. Now it's Asian, they're speaking against Thomas Jefferson kids and their successes. They want quotas."

The Democratic primary for lieutenant governor is the most wide open. Polling has Del. Sam Rasoul (D-11) slightly ahead, and he's raised more money than any of the other candidates.

But Del. Hala Ayala (D-51) has the endorsement of Gov. Ralph Northam, who is attempting to play the role of kingmaker on his way out the door of the Executive Mansion. The crowded field of candidates also includes Norfolk City Councilwoman Andria McClellan, Fairfax NAACP president Sean Perryman, NFL player agent Xavier Warren and Del. Mark Levine (D-45). Levine is in the awkward position of trying to defend his House seat from a primary challenger while also competing statewide.

SEE CONVENTION, PAGE 11

Democrats On the Ballot June 8

In order as they appear on the ballot
Some voters will also have a delegate race on their ballots.

Governor



Terry McAuliffe



Jennifer McClellan



Jennifer Carroll Foy



Lee Carter



Justin Fairfax

AT THE TOP of the ticket, voters will be choosing between Youngkin and the nominee Democrats pick as their nominee for governor on June 8. Public polling and campaign finance records show former Gov. Terry McAuliffe has a decisive lead heading into the election in an extremely strong position. Other candidates in the race for governor are Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax, Sen. Jennifer McClellan (D-9), former Del. Jennifer Carroll Foy (D-2) and Del. Lee Carter (D-50). A Wason Center poll last month showed McAuliffe with 47 percent support while all the other candidates were in single digits. Even if all

Carroll Foy has been all over the airwaves, thanks in part to \$600,000 from Clean Virginia Fund. And Carter has moved the field of candidates to the left by talking about issues like using tax revenue from marijuana sales to create a fund for reparations to account for the slave trade. McClellan has repeatedly pointed out that she has more state government experience than anyone else in the race.

"Unlike past recessions, we cannot simply focus on luring other companies here to Virginia," said McClellan. "We have got to stabilize and grow the small businesses, particularly our women and minority owned

Lieutenant Governor



Hala Ayala



Sam Rasoul



Andria McClellan



Elizabeth Guzman



Sean Perryman



Mark Levine



Xavier Warren

Call for School Board Member's Resignation Fosters Heated Conversation

Amid division, voices seek to be heard.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

With Ramadan's ending on May 13 and on May 14, Fairfax County School Board (FCPS) Member At Large Abrar Omeish posted what some considered controversial statements on her personal Twitter and Facebook accounts. The Twitter page qualified posts were her views. Omeish is a Libyan American Muslim. The timing of her posts coincided with airstrikes and rocket attacks. Civilian casualties mounted on the Gaza Strip, and Hamas launched barrages of rockets overwhelming Israel's Iron Dome of defense system.

On May 13, Omeish posted: "Eid Mubarak! Congrats on 30 days of worship! Hurts my heart to celebrate while Israel kills Palestinians & desecrates the Holy Land right now. Apartheid & colonization were wrong yesterday and will be today, here and there. May justice + truth prevail. #EidWith Palestine," - Twitter-Abrar Omeish@Abrar.

The following day, Omeish posted: "War is terrible for everyone. I hear those hurting. I continue to be here for each of you. People of all faiths deserve Holy Land peace. All forms of hate are unacceptable. Ensuring justice & honoring the humanity of everyone remains as urgent as ever. I look ahead to robust & empathetic engagement with Jewish leaders and all allies. Let's build together." - May 14, Abrar Omeish [Facebook].

What followed in the eight days after Omeish's posts were death threats to her, calls for her resignation, emails, and demonstrations. Events came full circle on May 20 during the FCPS School Board Hybrid Meeting held at Jackson Middle School. 3020 Gallows Road in Falls Church. It publicly convened shortly after 7:30 p.m.

SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR Dr. Ricardy Anderson (Mason District) opened by reading a statement, "...The School Board understands that the increased violence in the Middle East over the past weeks causes a range of emotions, including grief, anger, and fear... The Fairfax County School Board does not have a role in resolving geopolitical conflicts. However, we recognize that our students and families are hurting and are fearful of what is happening abroad and locally with increased acts of aggression against our Jewish and Muslim communities... In this, and every moment, it is important that we reject Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia."

Omeish is one of the 12 School Board members elected for the four-year term 2020-2024. Out of the 12 members, she is one of three elected county-wide who serve at large, representing all 1.2 million residents of the County rather than the popula-



Abrar Omeish Fairfax County School Board Member At Large speaks without notes during the FCPS School Board Meeting on May 20, 2021, saying, "I want to listen...because that is how we move forward, and that is how we grow."



Chairman Dr. Ricardy Anderson (Mason District) Fairfax County School Board says, "Our students and families are hurting and are fearful of what is happening abroad and locally with increased acts of aggression against our Jewish and Muslim communities."



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON /THE CONNECTION

Demonstrators in support and those against Abrar Omeish, FCBS School Board Member At Large.



MERCIA HOBSON /THE CONNECTION

Omar Elbaba, 15, of Vienna said, "The Fairfax GOP is trying to remove her [Omeish] from office. That is affecting the entire community and not just her."



MERCIA HOBSON /THE CONNECTION

Leslie Sandler of Fairfax Station says that Fairfax County Public Schools is not the place to have political rhetoric.

tion of one of the nine magisterial districts. She is an FCPS 2013 graduate, Yale 2017 graduate, Georgetown Law Juris Doctorate/Master of Public Policy candidate, and Blume fellow.

Omeish's social media posts resulted in a barrage of daily reactionary posts, live media interviews, and press releases by individuals and organizations who called for her to apologize, resign from her position as a school board member, or be recalled. Re-posting these statements occurred, including speakers' interpretations and perspectives of Omeish's views, ultimately resulting in death threats against her.

May 14, fellow school board member Melanie Meren (D-Hunter Mill) @HunterMillFCPS, posted: "As a S.B. Member I'm aghast at the alienation @AbrarOmeish's sentiment has cast on many in our community, including myself, & am appalled at the setback this puts in @FCPSEquity work. Rebuilding of relationships will need to happen. JCRCgw @VOICEVirginia ADAMS (not on Twitter),"

May 15, "Blasting the 'hateful screeds' of Abrar Omeish — and calling for the school board member's resignation," stated Press Release, Fairfax GOP Blasts "Israel Hater" on County School Board - Fairfax County Republican Committee issued by Fairfax Republicans. "Fomenting hatred and division," said Fairfax GOP Chairman Steve Knotts in the Press Release.

May 17, "I don't necessarily support recall efforts unless there's something egregious, and I think in this case there is ...and I will share it publicly," said Fairfax County Board Supervisor Pat Herry (R- Springfield), in the interview on The Larry O'Connor Show.

May 18, "Anti-Semitism and religious intolerance," said Gary Aiken, 2019 Republican candidate for Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Mason District, in a WMAL interview.

May 19, "The JCRC [The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington] has cancelled its decision to honor at its annual meeting to be held tomorrow, May 20, ... She has not taken down her tweet, she has not taken affirmative steps to try to stem the vitriolic, hateful rhetoric on social media triggered by her remarks," said Ronald A. Paul, MD President, JCRC and Ron Halber Executive Director, JCRC, in their joint statement.

Underpinning a selection of the posts and statements against Omeish was the call for FCPS to focus on core education. "The focus seems to be on everything but...You know, anti-racism, equity agenda...We need to take them [Fairfax County Public Schools] back and get them going in the right direction," said Herry in his interview on The Larry O'Connor Show.

While posts and media attention resulted in calls for Omeish to resign, they also triggered support on multiple fronts and for various reasons, including the May 20

Keep History from Repeating Itself

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



So traumatizing were the colonists' experiences with King George as a strong executive that the Declaration of Independence is filled with grievances against him, and the writers of the first state constitution in Virginia limited the governor's term to one year with a maximum of three terms. It was not until 1830 that the governor was granted a four-year term but as it remains today with a limit of one term, although a governor can run for a second term after being out of office for four years. Historically, governors who run successfully for a second term after having been out of office for a term have had a less than positive impact on the state's history.

William Smith first served as governor of Virginia beginning in 1846. During his second term that began in 1864 he was governor when Virginia seceded from the Union.

Mills E. Godwin is the only governor of Virginia elected by the voters to two terms under different political parties, serving as a Democrat from 1966 to 1970 and as a Republican from 1974 to 1978. Godwin was a member of the Byrd Machine and played a major legislative role in Virginia's resistance to desegregation of the public schools. He became more moderate as governor in his first term when his major accomplishment was creation of the Virginia Community College System.

During Godwin's first term as governor another politician burst on the scene. "Howling" Henry Howell with his theme of "Keep the Big Boys Honest" captured the attention of Virginia voters unlike any before him. Labor, Blacks, consumers, and opponents of what was left of the Byrd Machine provided him support to be elected to the House of Delegates, the Senate of Virginia and lieutenant governor. He was clearly headed to be elected Virginia's first progressive governor in 1973.

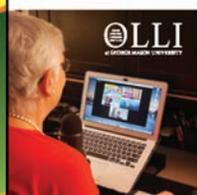
The establishment, Byrd allies, and Main Street businessmen could not stand the thought of the colorful Henry Howell as governor with his pro-consumer, anti-machine, pro-labor, liberal agenda. The only person who appeared strong enough to beat Howell was the still popular retired Governor Mills Godwin who was convinced to switch parties because Howell already had the Democratic nomination. Godwin narrowly defeated Howell.

Nearly fifty years later the progressive successes in the General Assembly make it clear that Virginia is willing to shake off its ultraconservatism of the past and elect a governor reflecting a new Virginia.

Clouding the picture for the election, however, is a former governor seeking a second term as he is now eligible since he has been out of office for a term. If elected I believe he would be the third example of a two-term governor stepping in the way of historic

SEE PLUM, PAGE 9

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Proposed Master Plan Key:
 1. Restrooms, concessions, dining pavilion; 2. Social plaza; 3. Open space; 4. Party pavilion; 5. New softball diamond; 6. Playground/game area; 7. Pickleball courts; 8. Dog park OR community garden plots; 9. One-mile trail loop; 10. Vehicle drop-off area; 11. New parking.



Big Changes Proposed for Braddock Park

Being considered: Dog park, pickleball courts, dining pavilions, etc.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
 THE CONNECTION

The draft Master Plan for Braddock Park is rapidly taking shape, thanks to the hard work of Fairfax County Park Authority staff, plus community input. A virtual public meeting about this Master Plan revision was held last fall, followed by another one on April 26.

“We got public comments and listened to you,” Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) told the residents watching online. “Your input helps to make it a better park.”

The 61-acre district park is at 13451 Braddock Road, bordering both Centreville High and Twin Lakes Golf Course. It currently has six, natural-turf softball diamonds; one, synthetic-turf rectangular field; a batting-cage area, picnic pavilion and restroom.

The original 1981 Master Plan also contained a social plaza, tot lot, volleyball courts, an area for table games, plus trails for walking and running. But these elements were never built, and 5.32 acres of the park are still undeveloped.

So the Park Authority is working with residents to determine how Braddock Park should be updated to best serve the community’s needs, now and in the future. It aims to offer both passive and active recreation there, while preserving the site’s natural resources.

DURING THE APRIL MEETING, Park Authority Project Manager and senior landscape architect Doug Tipsword revealed the needs identified and presented the results of the latest citizen survey. “There are few opportunities for community gardens on the western side of the county, but many people want one,” he said. “The nearest dog park is 20 minutes away, and there’s a large number of dog owners living near Braddock Park. There’s also a desire for pickleball courts, but none are currently in our parks.”

He said 984 people participated in the survey; 40 percent were age 60 and older; 29 percent, ages 40-59; and 26 percent, ages 18-39. And 84 percent of

them get to that park by driving. People said they mainly use it for softball, the running/walking trail, batting cages, dog walking and soccer.

What they want are improved ballfield conditions, fences or nets to stop the balls and a concession stand/dining area, as well as more parking, sidewalks and trails, plus better vehicle access and circulation within the park. Also on their wish list are more shade trees, natural-habitat areas, additional pavilions for gatherings, a walking/running-trail loop, an accessible playground and another softball field.

Tipsword then showed photos of the new park design incorporating these elements. They included dining pavilions, restrooms and concessions in the center; another pavilion with eight or more picnic tables; a new, 325-foot softball diamond; an accessible playground; four, dedicated pickleball courts in the southwest portion; a dog park or community gardens in the VEPCO easement area in the northwest; and a 1-mile, perimeter, trail loop with an ADA path to Centreville High, at the park’s western edge.

Also proposed are a possible stoplight at the park’s entrance, plus a possible second entrance from Braddock Road. More parking would be spread throughout the park. “We need 30 more parking spaces, plus even

more parking to accommodate the added facilities,” said Tipsword.

“We could expand the north, central parking lot – where the former mini golf was located – for the dog park or community gardens,” he continued. “And a parking lot in the southwest corner would be for ballfield and pickleball users. There’d also be a drop-off area for ADA vehicles, buses and firetrucks.”

THE FINAL DRAFT Master Plan will be completed in June, with its presentation to the Park Authority Board slated for June-July. Another public meeting is earmarked for some time in August, with a comment period open until September. The Plan will be finalized in September-October and then, hopefully, approved by the Board in October.

However, advised Springfield District Park Authority Board member Mike Thompson, “This is a conceptual plan. It doesn’t mean everything will be built right away, and it doesn’t address funding.”

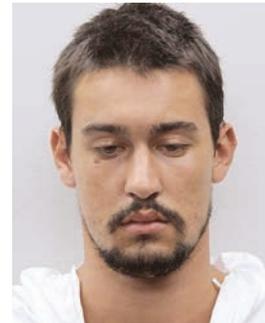
Meanwhile, pleased with what he heard during the meeting, Herrity said, “I like the direction the process is taking us.” For more information, go to <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/planning-development/braddock-park-master-plan-revision>.

“I like the direction the process is taking us.”

— Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield)

Detectives Investigate Domestic Related Homicide in Reston

A man is in custody following a domestic related homicide that occurred Saturday morning, May 22, in a Reston condominium community. Officers responded shortly before 9 a.m. to a home in the 11800 block of Shire Court for a welfare check



FCPD PHOTO
Alexander Jahelka, 24, of Reston

after receiving a call for help. Officers entered the apartment and discovered Kenneth Jahelka, 66, of Reston, suffering from stab wounds. He was pronounced deceased at the scene. Alexander Jahelka, 24, of Reston, later identified as the victim’s son, was also in the apartment. Following their preliminary investigation, detectives have charged Alexander with second degree murder. He is being held at the Adult Detention Center without bond.

Victim specialists from the Major Crimes Bureau’s Victim Services Division have been assigned to ensure that the family is receiving appropriate resources and assistance.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Fairfax County Police Department Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 2. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone – 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477),

by text – Type “FCCS” plus tip to 847411, and by web – Click HERE. Download our Mobile tip411 App “Fairfax Co Crime Solvers”. Anonymous tipsters are eligible for cash rewards of \$100 to \$1,000 dollars if their information leads to an arrest. If you would like to be contacted by a detective, please leave your contact information.

This is being investigated as the 8th homicide year to date in Fairfax County.

This remains an active investigation and The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will conduct an autopsy to determine cause and manner of death -- FCPD Public Affairs Bureau reports.

Centreville Man Killed in Bicycle Crash

A Centreville man died last week, following a collision between the bicycle he was riding and a car. Fairfax County police identified him as Raymond Buza, 64.

The tragedy occurred Friday morning, Feb. 21, just after 10 a.m. It happened at the intersection of Hidden Canyon Road and Bluemountain Drive in Centreville’s Virginia Run community. Police detectives from the Crash Reconstruction Unit preliminarily determined that Buza was on his bicycle traveling east on Hidden Canyon Road.

According to police, “The driver of a 2017 Hyundai Sonata turned left onto Bluemountain Drive in front of Buza, which resulted in the crash. Buza was taken to a nearby hospital, where he was pronounced deceased. The driver of the Sonata remained at the scene.”

Initially, say police, alcohol does not appear to be a factor of the crash for the driver. The investigation remains active, and details of the investigation’s findings will be presented to the Commonwealth’s Attorney’s Office for review.

Meanwhile, anyone with information about this event or who may have witnessed it is asked to call the Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips may also be submitted anonymously via Crime Solvers by phoning 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477), texting FCCS plus the tip to 847411, or going to <http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org/>.

Anonymous tipsters are eligible for cash rewards of \$100-\$1,000 for information leading to an arrest. They should leave contact information if they want a detective to contact them.

— BONNIE HOBBS

Just Can't Wait to Get Back on the Road Again

Vaccinated Seniors plan vacations, trips to reunite with family.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Shifting through photos of rafting trips through Labyrinth Canyon on the tranquil waters of the Green River and hiking in the Needles district of Utah's Canyonlands National Park, Arlene Richter recalls her past travels as she begins planning for new adventures. The adventure-loving Bethesda mother of two adult children is fully vaccinated and ready for her next trip.

"Travel is a great way to explore," said Richter. "I'm always curious and love to learn about the world and people."

Now that nearly 85 percent of those 65 and older in Montgomery County and almost 70 percent in Fairfax County, Arlington County and Alexandria are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, seniors such as Richter have less trepidation about resuming their travels. From trips to visit children and grandchildren to hiking in national parks, after a one year or more of near confinement because of their high risk due to the pandemic, seniors are ready to travel.

Travel advisors and tour companies have seen a dramatic uptick in requests of seniors who are planning to travel.

"When vaccines became available, the number of calls to our call center doubled from February to March. Nearly all of the programs we're operating this summer are filled to capacity," said Chris Heppner, spokesperson for Road Scholar www.roadsscholar.org, a not-for-profit educational travel organization for adults. "We require people to be fully vaccinated to participate. We have surveyed our participants and nearly 100 percent either have been vaccinated or plan to be."

One of those seniors is 76-year-old Tanya Levine, a widow from Arlington. She's heading to Chicago in June to visit her daughter and grandchildren.

"It's been so hard not seeing my family in person and missing certain milestones," she said. "We're going to celebrate all of the birthday parties, baptisms and graduations that we missed during the pandemic. The thought of it all is so overwhelming. I'm beyond elated. I know that tears of joy will be flowing the entire trip."

Most vacation requests have tended to be stateside and popular destinations are those that offer outdoor adventure.

"While we wait for the international world to fully open, senior travelers are looking toward domestic



PHOTO COURTESY OF ARLENE RICHTER

Travel enthusiast Arlene Richter, pictured here in the Needles district of Utah's Canyonlands National Park, is fully vaccinated and ready to resume her travels.

"The National Parks are, without doubt, incredibly popular. Seniors are incredibly excited and just want to get back out there and make up for lost time."

— Frank Marini

travel and exploration of the West in areas like Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming," said Adrienne Saxton, a Falls Church-based travel advisor and curator. "Domestic river cruises exploring the Mississippi, the Pacific Northwest and wine cruises are also high on the requests. These areas have been booking fast and furiously."

"The National Parks are, without doubt, incredibly popular for us," added Frank Marini, president of Amtrak Vacations. "Seniors are incredibly excited and just want to get back out there and make up for

lost time."

Vienna couple Barrie and Jane Taylor became fully vaccinated in March and are heading to San Diego to visit their son, daughter-in-law and granddaughter who was born last November. Their family visit will be followed by a trip to Glacier National Park.

"This will be the first time meeting our granddaughter. Zoom calls can in no way make up for being able to hold her in our arms," said Jane. "My husband and I usually take four big trips a year and at least two of those are international. We won't leave the country this year and we'll still wear masks and practice social distancing."

The freedom to travel is one of the best rewards of being vaccinated, said Richter. "I've been all over the place and hope to continue going to new places."

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Chantilly Man Honored for “Distinguished Public Service”

Marshall Dantzler inducted into NASS Hall of Fame.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Marshall Dantzler, a Chantilly resident and longtime member of the Centreville-Chantilly Rotary Club, was honored April 21 by the USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). He was one of three former employees inducted into its Hall of Fame, which recognizes those whose work has had a lasting impact on agricultural statistics and the service NASS provides.

Dantzler began his career as a student trainee in the South Carolina field office in 1965 and, except for a two-year stint in the Army, he spent the remainder of his 45-year public-service career with NASS – mainly serving field operations. During that time, he recruited and mentored countless NASS leaders, established the first NASS Regional Data Collection Center and guided 46 state statistical offices through many changes.

Pleased to receive the NASS honor, Dantzler said, “I was most surprised and deeply humbled. My job was all about the people, establishing relationships and mentoring individuals committed to a lifetime career in service to American agriculture.”

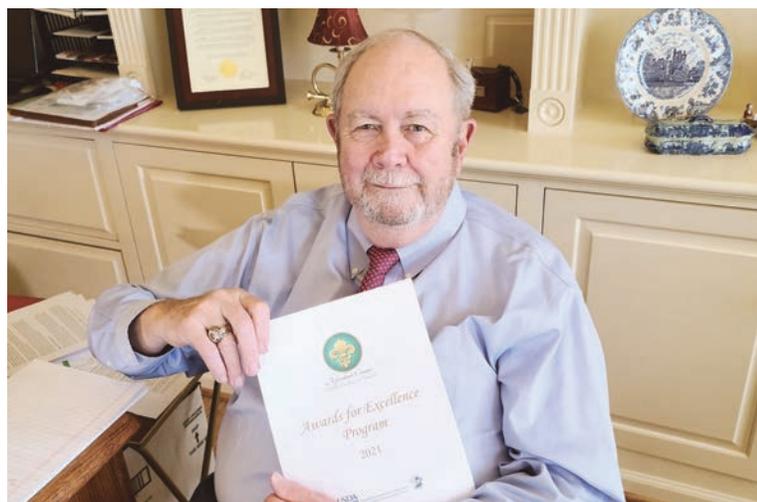
NASS established the Hall of Fame to recognize former employees whose contributions to the agency and to agricultural statistics transcend time and continue influencing the agency and its staff. These individuals exemplify integrity, honesty and commitment to public service.

“The 2021 Hall of Fame inductees all share a distinguished record of public service during which they helped to shape the agency’s operations and improve the quality and reliability of our work,” said NASS Administrator Hubert Hamer. “Beyond their talents in the field of statistics, our honorees are also remembered by coworkers as superior leaders and supportive colleagues.”

IN DANTZLER’S CASE, they said he knew how to make people feel valued and engaged in their work. He served in the South Carolina, North Carolina, Hawaii and Alabama field offices and in several, key headquarters positions. These included Director of the Census and Survey Division and Deputy Administrator for Field Operations.

In 1997, Dantzler received the USDA Award for Superior Service for “outstanding professional excellence in implementing cost-controlling measures” within NASS. Two years later, he was sworn into the Senior Executive Service.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARSHALL DANTZLER

Marshall Dantzler on the day he was inducted into the NASS Hall of Fame.



Marshall Dantzler

During his tenure in Field Operations, he led the modernization of field offices and orchestrated the installation of local area networks. He established the first NASS Regional Data Collection Centers and also conceived of and implemented the first Administrative Service Center.

“Everywhere he went, Marshall left a positive image and impression of NASS,” said Hamer. “He had an innate ability to bring people together – not tell them what to do but lead them toward a shared vision. Walking in the halls of the South Building, he called everyone by name, remembered your spouse and children’s names and had a joke or memory to share.”

“Every retirement, award ceremony, or birthday, Marshall always made time and was sure to attend” continued Hamer. “He made a point to recognize the value and contribution of everyone in the organization. To know Marshall was to know NASS.”

Dantzler and his wife Joyce, a former FCPS administrator, live in the Poplar Tree Estates community. Her career in education included being principal of Centreville Elementary and serving as GMU’s School Partnerships Coordinator until she retired in 2013. And since his retirement at the end of 2010, he’s used his time to expand his community involvement.

A longtime, active member of Centreville United Methodist Church, Marshall Dantzler has now been able to volunteer for additional tasks and responsibilities. He was also a charter member of the church’s Old Men’s Group that focuses on providing individual spiritual growth, networking, fellowship and adventure for its retired and semi-retired members.

A ROTARIAN since 1986, he’s held many director and officer positions, served two terms as president and was twice named a Paul Harris Fellow. He’s still active in the Rotary Club of Centreville and Chantilly and serves on its Board’s Foundation.

Besides all that, added Dantzler, “Retirement also gave me the opportunity to increase my participation in the support of Chantilly High School and CYA sports – activities that had a positive impact on our two sons, Mark and Brian, when they were growing up.”

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON / THE CONNECTION



Cindy Roeder, the Herndon Parks and Recreation Director, hands David Agland of Herndon his official t-shirt at the Herndon Pit Stop in front of the Old Town Hall and Train Depot.

Bike to Work Day Returns for 2021

20th Anniversary subdued but carries double the fun in Herndon.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

May is National Bike to Work Week, and this year, Bike to Work Day celebrated its 20th Anniversary. Countless cyclists pedaled the W&OD Trail into the Town of Herndon, one of over more than 100 regional pit stops. Most cyclists either resided in the town, like David Agland, or arrived in Herndon from areas to the west like a group of six riders from Ashburn and Leesburg.

Unlike other years where Bike to Work Day was equated with celebratory gatherings and, for many, a party-like atmosphere, things were a bit calmer this year due to COVID-19. On-site

consumption of food and beverages was prohibited, as were live music and vendors. Pit stops became “T-shirt pick-up points,” which suited riders just fine.

“I’ve been coming here a lot of years,” said David Agland of Herndon as he picked up his t-shirt at the Herndon Pit Stop in front of the Old Town Hall and Train Depot. Cindy Roeder found double the fun in the event as the Director of the Herndon Parks and Recreation Department.

“The riders appreciate being back at Bike to Work Day this year,” Roeder said. “And the staff is excited to be hosting their first event since the start of the pandemic.”



A nice shady spot with green grass proves a great place for cyclists to take a morning break at the Bike to Work Day 2021 pit stop in the Town of Herndon.

Black Lives Matter Banner Stolen - Again

The Unitarian Universalist Church in Reston (UUCR) discovered on Thursday, May 20, that the Black Lives Matter banner that they fly at the entrance of their property on a major street in Reston, had been stolen - for the third time in the past year. First erected following the murder of George Floyd, the banner is a symbol to support UUCR's commitment to racial justice.

"We will not be deterred by these hate crimes," said the Rev. Dr. Debra W. Haffner, minister at UUCR. "Once the vandalized poles are fixed, we will replace the stolen banner with a new one. And we will replace every banner that is stolen. Our religion calls us to welcome and include all people, assure all people's rights, and to live our faith aloud."

The Unitarian Universalist Church in Reston was founded 50 years ago to provide a voice for liberal religion that embraces all.



UUCR's new strategic plan includes a commitment to work for racial and environmental justice. Its mission is to nurture spirituality, the individual search for truth and meaning, and to help heal injustices in our community, state, nation, and world.

Herndon High Prepares for a 'Real Graduation'

Principal Liz Noto looks back on a crazy year, and forward towards brighter days.

By C.J. GRECO
THE CONNECTION

With summer upon us and COVID-19 cases on an encouraging decline, many of us are starting to relax for the first time in what feels like forever.

However, the stresses of pandemic life certainly have not yet subsided for area high schoolers. For 2021 graduating seniors as well as the teachers, staff, and parents that make up their community, the coming ceremonies are the finish line for lots of hard work.

"I feel hopeful," said Herndon High School's Principal Liz Noto, "and maybe relieved that things have loosened up right now because we're finally able to offer our students a real graduation this year."

Herndon's 2020 graduation ceremony, like so many others in the area, was hardly normal. And, while this year things are certainly more relaxed, the traditional Eagle Bank Arena event would still be impossible, as it is still being used as a vaccination center.

The planning and preparations necessary for the augmented event are ongoing and

subject to change by the day, but concert venue Jiffy Lube Live is going to host the Herndon High community, just as it has for several high schools in the area.

For Principal Noto, though, the venue is hardly the most encouraging thing on the horizon.

"I didn't know how much it was impacting me personally," said Principal Noto, "but our chorus did an outdoor concert in town

this week called Broadway Under the Stars".

"There was just something about seeing them perform," continued Principal Noto, "and at the end of the performance my [chorus] teacher said 'Can you guys believe that these students have been singing on mute for the last year and a half?' and it just totally brought a tear to my eye."

While Herndon's 2021 graduating class won't be performing at Jiffy Lube this year, they'll surely be gaining an unforgettable experience that people like Principal Noto are so eager to provide.

"I'm so thankful that these kids are going to get something more normal right now, after all this," said Noto, "this is an event they've been working towards for 13 years, you know? So, let's do it!"

"I'm so thankful that these kids are going to get something more normal right now, after all this: This is an event they've been working towards for 13 years, you know? So, let's do it!"

— Principal Liz Noto

School Board Member's Post Ignites Pro & Con Reactions

FROM PAGE 4

demonstration outside Jackson Middle School. Starting at 5 p.m., FCSB held a closed meeting inside the school, part of its Hybrid Regular Meeting. Two polarized protest groups formed outdoors in front of the school.

Earlier that day, the cease-fire took effect to end the violent 11-day conflict. Associated Press reported: "At least 230 Palestinians were killed, including 65 children and 39 women, with 1,710 people wounded, according to the Gaza Health Ministry... Twelve people in Israel, including a 5-year-old boy and 16-year-old girl, were killed."

UNDER THE EYES of Fairfax County school officers, organizers occupied the dual-walled entry with a wide staircase leading to the cordoned-off and protected front doors to the school and its adjacent patch of grass. At times, the larger group in support of Omeish grew dense, numbering upwards of 100 individuals. Mostly masked, they rallied together with signs that read, "Abrar is an equity champion" and "Melanie Meren, you do not represent us." They chanted following the lead of Mariam Abou-Ghazala of Fairfax and others who yelled into megaphones, "Freedom of Speech. You cannot impeach."

The smaller group, many challenging Omeish and opposing critical race theory (CRT), numbered approximately 30 individuals with a handful wearing masks. Waving U.S. flags, they played loud music attempting to drown out the other demonstrators' chanting. At times, they advanced in unison up to and into the larger group supporting Omeish.

"The Fairfax GOP is trying to remove her [Omeish] from office. That is affecting the entire community and not just her. We're trying to create a platform to raise awareness for our issues," said Omar Elbaba, 15, of Vienna.

"This is clearly an Islamophobic smear campaign to delegitimize her [Omeish's] position... and what she brings to the table ...What a world we live in where an elected official cannot pray for her people," said Shayma Al-Hanooti, FCPS graduate and Arlington Public School teacher.

"This is freedom of speech," said Hala Abdelaal of Fairfax, Class of 2015 Thomas Jefferson High School. "This is our Constitution." After multiple failed attempts to get comments from the smaller group, Leslie Sandler of Fairfax Station agreed. "Fairfax County Public Schools is not the place to have political rhetoric. We're here for our children," she said.

School Board member Omeish was one of the last to comment at the Fairfax County School Board Meeting. Omeish said she took pride in a community where all come to the table and can have a dialog, a place to "confront courageously the differences that come to the table."

"I understand that for many Jewish families, my constituents, that they share a deep and sacred relationship with Israel... I've been able to listen and dialogue with, and I want to continue to listen. The loudest thing I want to be heard today is that I want to listen...because that is how we move forward, and that is how we grow."

"Anti-Semitism is a real and growing threat that must be addressed in our schools, our country, and our world. And conflating the criticism with that only harms those of us seeking to advance justice and diverts our focus," said Omeish. "We must choose to step up and to ensure that we don't allow those seeking to sow hate and division to capitalize on our disagreement...We can and must fight these things together, anti-Semitism, racism, Islamophobia and especially that which is couched as a response to oppression of all kinds together." Video FCPS School Board Meeting 5-20-21 3:19:40- 3:29:43.

Keep History from Repeating Itself

FROM PAGE 5

progress in the Commonwealth. Former Governor Terry McAuliffe was a good governor, a persuasive talker, and a prolific fund-raiser, but it is time for the Commonwealth to move on. A McAuliffe win in the Democratic primary would stand in the way of one of two Black women who are vying with him in the primary from being Virginia's first woman gover-

nor and its second Black governor.

One of those women, Senator Jennifer McClellan, has more experience than all the other candidates combined. Her progressive leadership has brought Virginia this far. We cannot let history repeat itself by having one man's desire to regain a job he already had stand in the way of a truly gifted woman leader being governor of the Commonwealth.

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Convention Done, Primary Ahead

FROM PAGE 3

Attorney General

“When a candidate runs for two offices at the same time, they’re sending two messages,” said Stephen Farnsworth, political science professor at the University of Mary Washington. “One, I want something better than what I have, and two, I’m not sure I’m going to be able to get it.”



Jay Jones



Mark Herring

VOTERS WILL ALSO be choosing between Del. Jason Miyares (R-82) and the winner of the Democratic primary, which features incumbent Attorney General Mark Herring and challenger Del. Jay Jones (D-89). Herring was first elected in 2013, and he’s seeking a third term in office. During his time in office, he’s created a new Office of Civil Rights as well as a new conviction integrity unit and a new worker protection unit while also reorganizing the consumer protection section. Jones has criticized Herring for waiting until election season before making some of those changes, and he attacked Herring for wearing blackface at a college party in the 1980s.

“I sat in the room two years ago with the Black Caucus when you disclosed that you wore blackface just days after you called on Governor Northam to resign,” Jones said during a televised debate. “I was there when you took that paper out of your jacket, smoothed it out on the table and read us a

statement with no empathy, no compassion.”

Herring hasn’t been shy about criticizing Jones either. During a televised debate earlier this month, Herring brought up a bill Jones introduced that could have created a loophole for predatory lenders. The bill would have allowed for loans of 36 percent plus a daily fee that could amount to 320 percent a year. Jones never withdrew the bill, although it was left in committee. Jones ended up voting in favor of a different bill, one that Herring made a rare personal appearance to support in committee.

“When I was working to crack down on dangerous predatory lenders, Delegate Jones was actually supporting the predatory lenders and authored a bill that would have allowed them to charge 350 percent interest,” said Herring. “These are hard-working, struggling Virginians just trying to get by.”

BULLETIN BOARD

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

THURSDAY/MAY 27

Speaker Dr. Lauren Bell. 7 p.m. At Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation. Dr. Lauren Bell is a Professor of Political Science and Dean of Academic Affairs at Randolph-Macon College. She is an accomplished author and a former Congressional Fellow and Supreme Court Fellow. She will speak on the topic, “In the Shadow of the Capitol Dome: Virginia Politics in National Context.” Website to register: <https://nvhc.shulcloud.com/form/speaker-series-5/27.html>

JUNE 2-31

Behold! The Beauty Art Exhibit. At Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. A free art exhibit by Ava and Richard Neff. About 40 pieces of fabric creations and oil paintings are free for the viewing. Come and share the joy of art.

SATURDAY/JUNE 19

Family Yard Sale. 8:30-12 p.m. At Reston Association, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. Eighty families will be selling a variety of items, so this event is a great opportunity to find things for a new home or a college dorm. Sign up to have a booth or stop by to browse for great bargains.

Booth space is two parking spaces. Tables are not provided. Space is limited. All sales are final. No refunds unless canceled due to rain. Register for booth space through your Webtrac account or contact Ashleigh@reston.org or call 703-435-6577 for more information. Cost is \$45/RA members, booth space, \$55/Non-members. Visit the website: <https://www.reston.org/>

JUNE 5 AND 19

Reston Pride Festival. At Lake Anne Plaza, Reston. While Reston Pride operates year-round to fulfill its mission, it is the host of the annual Reston Pride Festival, a single day community event traditionally held at Washington Plaza at Lake Anne in Reston. To accommodate this mission, Reston Pride is planning to hold a hybrid festival event offering both in-person activities as well as an online program to reach an even broader audience than they have been able to reach in the past. To be held virtually on Saturday, June 5, 2021; and in-person - Saturday, June 19, 2021.

NOW THRU OCT. 2

Winedown Weekends in the Tea Garden. 12-7 p.m. At Elden Street Tea Shop, 714 Pine Street, Herndon. Enjoy the new wine bar in the tea gardens with music (mostly live) every Friday and Saturday. Will have seasonal wine selections, snack items, and food trucks (coming soon). Local caterers and more available for purchase. Visit the website: <https://www.eldenstreettea.com/>

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Philosophically Meandering



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As I discussed a few weeks back, having all this time off/apart from cancer-related activities is unsettling in a peculiar way. I’m not in remission. I’m certainly not cured, and I’m still receiving regular treatment: a bone-strengthening shot every four weeks at the Infusion Center and of course, my daily lenvima pill. Given the nature of what symptoms/side effects I experience, it’s only after my quarterly CT scan and recently added, a bone scan, followed-up by a post-scan video visit with my oncologist and endocrinologist (combined with my semi-annual brain MRI) that I have an accurate/real-time sense of whether I’m coming or going, if you know what I mean?

The result of these intervals and intermittent visits is that I, not the doctors, have my best sense of self. Though I can - and am encouraged to do so, email my doctors and/or call an advice nurse at all hours to discuss whatever ails me, realistically, on a daily, hourly and/or minute-by-minute existence, I’m the one that I have to talk to, and most likely, listen to. And though I think I know myself pretty well, a cancer diagnosis creates a prism through which all of our thoughts are filtered. Sometimes, what initially passes through is not identical to what comes out. Cancer is in control, sort of like the producers of “The Outer Limits” said they were in control of your television during the two years: 1963 and ‘64, when “The Outer Limits” was nearly must-watch television. They controlled more than just the horizontal on your television. They controlled the information going into your head. What you did with that information was entirely up to you. Only then, you were in control.

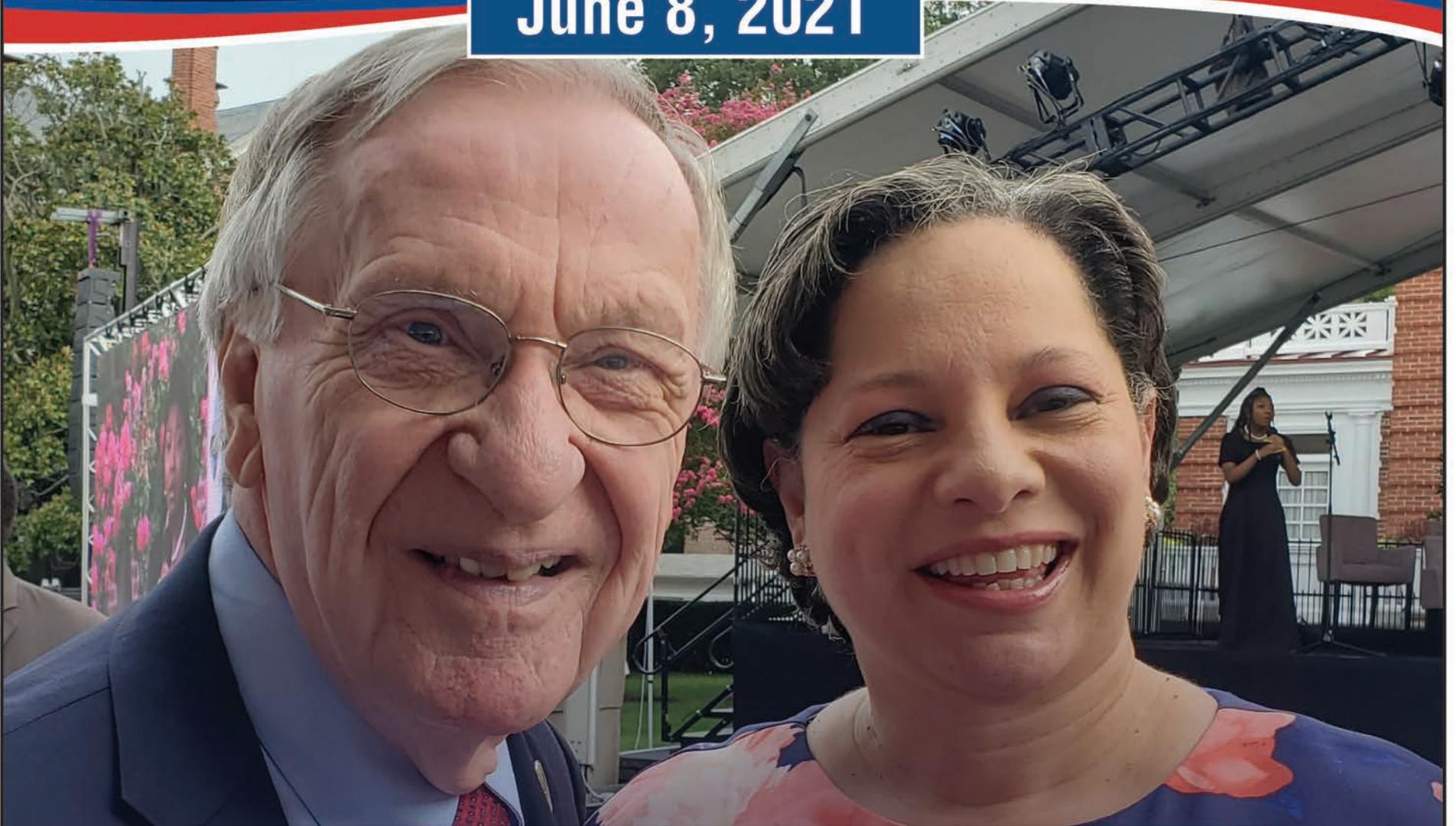
Much has changed in the almost 60 years since “The Outer Limits” was controlling television sets. And so too, much has changed for those diagnosed with cancer. However positive and hopeful, and effective the evolution of a cancer diagnosis and treatment has become, when “The cancer” (as “Forrest, Forrest Gump” called it) appears on your scan or marks your blood, you are no longer “the master of your domain.” In fact, your domain has shrunk considerably and quite precipitously. Whatever you thought was going to be happening in your life now takes a back seat to everything your oncologist says needs to happen. Integrating into your life all the unexpected, life-changing advisories will be a task unlike any you’ve previously ever undertaken. Pondering your cancer-patient future will not result in one gulp, it will result in a series of gulps. As a consequence of your diagnosis/prognosis, you’ll become an expert in gulps, morning, noon and night, when you’re alone or with others.

And as you are gulping, you are forever trying to find your place in the universe. As a diagnosee, you join an immense club, the kind of club Grouch Marx said he “wouldn’t join, if they would have me as a member.” Ignoring your new reality seems totally irresponsible, but focusing 24-7 on your less-than-ideal circumstances seems like overkill (pardon the double entendre). This focus likely emboldens the cancer while weakening your resolve. I mean, your situation is bad enough, you don’t need to make it worse by having it for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Having it once and a while, like a snack is more than enough. The weight of a premature death (any death is premature, right?) is simply too great a burden to bear without making it heavier. I’m not suggesting one ever acquiesce and give into their cancer. Instead, I’m suggesting, find a place for it in your life where it’s sort of along for the ride, rather than it being the driver.

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

DEMOCRATIC PARTY PRIMARY ELECTION

June 8, 2021



VOTE for the most experienced team in the Democratic Primary Election on June 8:

★ **Jennifer L McClellan for Governor**
(jennifermaclellan.com)

★ **Mark R. Herring for Attorney General**
(Herringforag.com)

★ **Kenneth R. "Ken" Plum for Delegate, 36th District**
(kenplum.com)



Thank you to all who have supported me for Delegate in the past. I ask for your vote once again. I have the enthusiasm and commitment to hard work to represent you and the values we share. I am honored to endorse Senator Jennifer McClellan for Governor. I have know Jennifer for more than 30 years, and I can tell you she has the knowledge, leadership skills and experience to be a great governor. I endorse Mark Herring for Attorney General. He is widely recognized as the best Attorney General in the country and deserves re-election. —Delegate Kenneth R. "Ken" Plum

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Authorized by Kenneth R. Plum.
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