

CONNECTION

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



The “Fight Suicide” Walk-a-Thon was held at Lake Fairfax Park on Saturday, Aug. 21.

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Carlo Siracusa, president of Weichert Residential Brokerage, announced that Weichert's Burke office and two top-producing sales teams have been recognized for exceptional performance at the company and regional levels in July.

The Burke office, which is managed by Michele Brantley, led the Weichert sales region in dollar volume from Weichert.com transactions for the month. The region comprises locations throughout Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Orange, Prince William and Warren counties.

Among teams, the team helmed by Kathleen Quintarelli led the entire company and the Weichert sales region in dollar volume from Weichert.com transactions. The team helmed by Monique Craft had the most listings in the region for July.

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Returning Strong to a ‘New Normal’

Area high schools welcome back their students and staff.

BY JESS KIRBY
THE CONNECTION

Although most FCPS students and staff will be returning to in-person learning this school year, the experience will be far from normal.

According to Lake Braddock Principal Dr. Daniel Smith, all FCPS students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear masks indoors. They will be continuing the same precautions as last year, such as social distancing when possible, using hand sanitizer, cleaning and trying to limit traffic in the hallways.

“We’ll have those layered prevention strategies in place,” he said. “When I think about this year compared to last year in terms of the strategies and mitigation measures we have in place, there’s not much that will change except for we’re obviously not going to be able to social distance at six feet. When you have 4,300 students, we are going to do it to the best extent possible.”

Jordan Moellendick, an AP Statistics and Algebra 2 Honors teacher at West Springfield High School, is confident that masks and vaccines will be effective against COVID.

“I’m not terribly worried about the Delta variant spreading at West Springfield,” he said. “Virginia has instituted universal masking for all K-12, and if you look at what’s been happening over the last year, especially with bringing students back in schools, it actually seems like masking has been pretty effective at preventing the spread of Coronavirus. And while the Delta is more transmissible, masks still help with that. In addition... everybody who attends West Springfield is old enough to get vaccinated, so you have the vast majority of the staff that’s been vaccinated and a good portion of

“I am excited for most everything to go back to normal, like football games and seeing my peers in school, but I am just worried about how normal it will be and what limits will be set in place still.”

— Ariana Hill, Springfield, junior, West Springfield High School

the student body.”

According to Smith, 76.5 percent of Fairfax County’s 12- to 17-year-olds have gotten at least one dose of the vaccine.

AFTER TWO SCHOOL YEARS impacted by COVID-19, Lake Braddock junior and Burke resident Natalie Garkey will head back to school with the acceptance of a “new normal.”

“I think [COVID] is something that’s always going to be in the back of our minds from now on,” she said. “They keep saying it’s going to go back to normal but it’s never going to be normal; we’re going to have a new normal.”

However, some students are disappointed by the return of masking.

“I am not the happiest about the mask requirement because I feel like we have had to deal with them for so long,” said West



Ariana Hill



Cali Dudek

“Personally, I’m excited about being able to go to the football games and hopefully have hoco and fun stuff like that.”

— Cali Dudek of Fairfax Station, senior, Lake Braddock Secondary School

Springfield High School junior Ariana Hill of Springfield. “Since everyone got vaccinated I was looking forward to not having to wear one in school, but I understand that it is what needs to happen with the Delta variant.”

Fairfax High School junior and Fairfax resident Kara Bellis agrees with the mask policy.

“I think it is the right decision to require masks because it’s keeping more people safe than if people weren’t required to wear one,” she said. “Especially with the new Delta variant going around, masks should be worn indoors.”

As a varsity cheerleader and gymnast at West Springfield, Hill is worried that her junior year will not be as normal as she hopes.

“I am excited for most everything to go back to normal, like football games and seeing my peers in school, but I am just worried about how normal it will be and what limits will be set in place still,” she said.

Cali Dudek, a Lake Braddock Secondary School senior and Fairfax Station resident, is hopeful that she’ll be able to attend football games and dances again.

“Personally, I’m excited about being able to go to the football games and hopefully have hoco and fun stuff like that,” she said.

Aria Miao, a Burke resident and junior at Lake Braddock Secondary School, is looking forward to learning hands-on photography after a year of only digital photos.

“One thing I am excited about is being able to go into the dark room and develop film and learn about different types of photography,” she said. “I took Photo 1 last year and, as part of the curriculum you are supposed to be able to do a lot of hands-on photography, especially film which you do in the dark room, and we didn’t get to do that last year.”

Moellendick is ready to get back in the classroom with his students.

“I’m just excited to see my students again,” he said. “Last year was endless hours of staring at black boxes on a computer monitor. There were some students last year who, God’s honest truth, I’ve never seen, I’ve never heard them talk, they never said anything in the chat; I know nothing about these students.”

However, he worries that one thing won’t go back to normal: snow days.

“If they do what they did last year, which is basically the ‘Hey, we’re going to go all virtual today because it’s a snow day,’ you can’t expect teachers to plan good lessons and create quality content for students and then, with less than an hour’s notice, change all those plans around,” he said.

AS FAIRFAX COUNTY HIGH SCHOOLS welcome back their students and staff, Lake Braddock has adopted the theme Every Bruin has a Story to honor every community member’s diverse experiences.

“It’s really going to be about developing those relationships and understanding what each one of our students and staff needs,” said Smith. “Everybody had different experiences through COVID, so we want to acknowledge them and we want to make sure everyone feels safe and supported here at Lake Braddock.”

Suspect Arrested in Double Homicide in Burke

A 33-year-old man is in custody and awaiting extradition at the Baltimore Central Booking Intake Facility for the murder of Susan Lister, 67, and Amber Currie, 41, both of Burke. Bradley Lister, 33, is facing two counts of second-degree murder and two counts of use of a weapon in the commission of a felony.

Detectives from our Major Crimes Bureau determined Bradley Lister killed his mother and sister in the home where they all resided in the 6100 block of Eagle Landing Road in Burke. Officers discovered the victims on the morning of Aug. 20 following a request for a welfare check. Detectives immediately sought Bradley Lister for questioning, but he could not be found or contacted.

Bradley Lister was located by the U.S. Marshals Service at a hospital in Baltimore and was taken into custody for charges unrelated to the homicides. Detectives responded to the Baltimore City Police Department Headquarters to interview Lister and determined he shot both victims on Aug. 17.

Following the murder, Lister fled to Baltimore City. Detectives believe Lister removed multiple firearms from the home. Lister will remain in custody at the Baltimore Central Booking Intake Facility until he is extradited back to Fairfax County.



Bradley Lister

Detectives from the FCPD Organized Crime and Intelligence Bureau are coordinating with the Baltimore City Police Department and federal partners for follow-up investigation related to the firearms.

Detectives are asking anyone with information about this crime to call the Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 3. 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.

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

This is being investigated as the 16th and 17th homicide year to date in Fairfax County. Detectives have made 12 arrests related to the 17 homicides with one outstanding warrant for Terrence Butler.

For ongoing updates, read the FCPD blog and follow on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram at @FairfaxCountyPD.

— FCPD PUBLIC AFFAIRS BUREAU

Be Smart About Immunizations

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



In elementary school I was given along with everyone else a stiff cardboard with ten slots that each held one thin dime. A dollar was a lot of money at the time, but everyone worked hard to fill their card that the March of Dimes assured us would provide money for research to end the feared disease of polio that was affecting more than 45,000 persons each year leaving many dead and others paralyzed. One of the most famous victims of the disease was Franklin Roosevelt who went on to become President of the United States four times even though he had to wear heavy leg braces to stand because of polio.

In 1955 research and the aspirations of the March of Dimes paid off as Dr. Jonas Salk discovered a vaccine against polio. Children in Franklin Sherman Elementary School in McLean, were selected to kick off a nationwide Polio vaccine program aimed at finally eradicating what was one of the most dreaded diseases ever. The number of polio cases fell rapidly to

COMMENTARY

less than 100 in the 1960s and fewer than 10 in the 1970s and is now considered to be eradicated in this country.

There are many other instances where the discovery of vaccines has eradicated diseases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention list fourteen such diseases with some more familiar than others: chicken pox, mumps, whooping cough, diphtheria, measles, flu, tetanus, rubella, and others. (<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/diseases/forgot-14-diseases.html>)

Governor Ralph Northam declared August to be Immunization Awareness Month in Virginia to recognize that "vaccines are proven to be an exceptionally safe method in preventing disease, as they are thoroughly tested before licensing and carefully monitored to ensure continued safety" and "to encourage all vaccines to be administered..." That encouragement is of course directed to those persons who have not taken one of the vaccines that provide protection against COVID-19 and its variants.

For those of us who lived through the polio threat and the other many childhood diseases that have been eliminated with vaccinations are left scratching our heads at the number of people who are taken in by the misinformation that has been spread about the COVID vaccines. In my mind the campaigns against the vaccines are immoral and can be easily shown to be dishonest. The latest surge of the Delta variant among persons who have not been vaccinated should provide proof of the importance of vaccination. An increasing number of bedside pleas from unvaccinated persons now nearing death who are advising others to get vaccinated may be enough to sway some of the hardest deniers.

The Virginia Department of Health has a wonderful website, <https://www.immunizevirginia.org/>, about immunizations with a schedule of ages when various vaccinations are to be administered. While many of these are for children and are necessary for school attendance, some such as tetanus and flu are advisable for adults. Seasonal flu shots are now available and should be taken in addition to a COVID-19 vaccination. As individuals and as a community, we need to be smart about vaccinations.

Make Eye Care Part of Your Back-to-School Planning

BY DR. GENE SWEETNAM

Your child's back-to-school checklist probably includes buying notebooks, pencils and new shoes – but does it include making an appointment with an optometrist for a comprehensive, in-person eye exam? After more than a year of virtual learning and increased use of phones, screens and other electronic devices, having your child's eyes examined can help set them up for success this school year.

The American Optometric Association recommends vision exams at age six months, three years and before entering first grade, as well as every two years thereafter until age 18. Although your pediatrician may have your child read a vision chart during an annual physical, these vision tests should not substitute for a complete eye exam conducted by a doctor of optometry.

Screenings done using letter or shape vision charts may detect nearsightedness and farsightedness, but they can miss up to 75 percent of children with vision problems related to eye focusing, eye tracking and eye coordination, which are skills essential for reading and learning. Undetected vision problems can also affect oth-



er aspects of a child's development including athletics, social interactions and self-esteem and may be misdiagnosed as ADHD, a learning disability, or a behavioral problem.

A comprehensive eye exam completed by an optometrist examines the health of your child's eyes and eye tissue as well as the sharpness of their vision. Many sight-threatening diseases can be cured or slowed with early diagnosis and treatment, and many common vision problems can easily be corrected once they're identified. In fact, with their extensive training and specialized equipment, doctors of optometry can detect more than 270 serious health conditions,

including diabetes, autoimmune diseases, high blood pressure and cancers.

Regular eye exams are an important step in maintaining your child's eye health, but it's also important to watch for vision problems throughout the year. A child may not realize they have a vision problem because they think everyone sees the way they do. Studies have shown that nearsightedness has been on the rise in children for years, and with increased screen time, eye strain, dry eyes and eye focusing problems are becoming more prevalent.

Parents and teachers should watch for warning signs like squinting, sitting too close to screens, holding reading materials too close to the face, covering or shutting one eye, rubbing eyes, and frequent headaches. And although there may be multiple reasons why a child has a short attention span, loses their place when reading, has difficulty remembering what they read, or avoids reading or other close activities, it's worth having your child's vision checked to rule out problems with eye focusing, tracking and coordination.

As children get ready to return to school, remind them of the importance of caring for their eyes.

Although masks are important for preventing the spread of COVID, they can lead to an eye condition called mask-associated dry eye (MADE). Symptoms include a gritty or burning sensation, red eyes, tearing and sometimes, blurry vision. To avoid this, be sure your child wears a mask that has some wire to provide a snug fit around the nose.

To avoid eye strain caused by an increased use of computers and tablets, encourage your kids to follow the 20-20-20 rule — for every 20 minutes spent looking at a screen, spend 20 seconds looking at something that is 20 feet away. They should also avoid touching their eyes if they haven't washed their hands and wear appropriate eye protection if they participate in sports.

As children go through growth spurts, their eyes continue to grow and develop. Watch for the warning signs shared above, and if you or your child have concerns, don't wait for their next eye exam. Make an appointment to see an optometrist right away.

Dr. Gene Sweetnam is an optometrist and owner of Sight for Vision in Burke.. He is the vice president of the Virginia Optometric Association.

CONNECTION

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

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

Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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NEWS

In this photo, the Fairfax Academy dance students and their teacher form a circle with their pointed toes on the first day of school, Monday, Aug. 23.



The First Day of School at the Fairfax Academy



Fairfax High's Lion mascots show their school spirit by forming a pyramid before heading to the Field House for the first day of school's first-period assembly with all the FHS students.



Fashion students at the Fairfax Academy begin work on a project. Their instructor is Stacy Chong.



Korean language and culture teacher Song Johnston, and her students, wave hello on the first day of school.



Photography instructor Kevin Smith (kneeling) poses with his students as the new school year starts.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ERIN MOLEK



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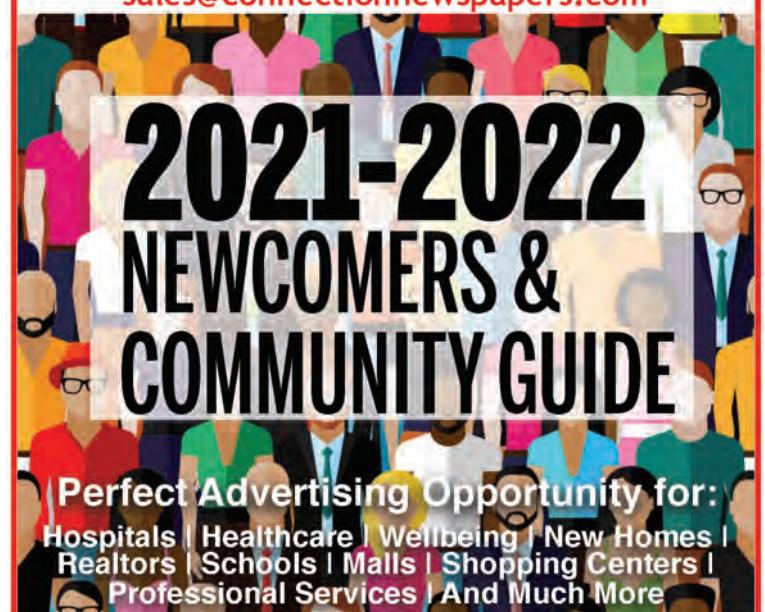
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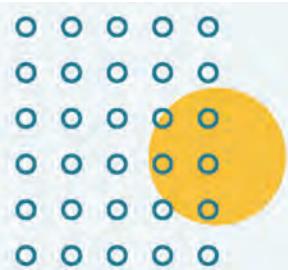
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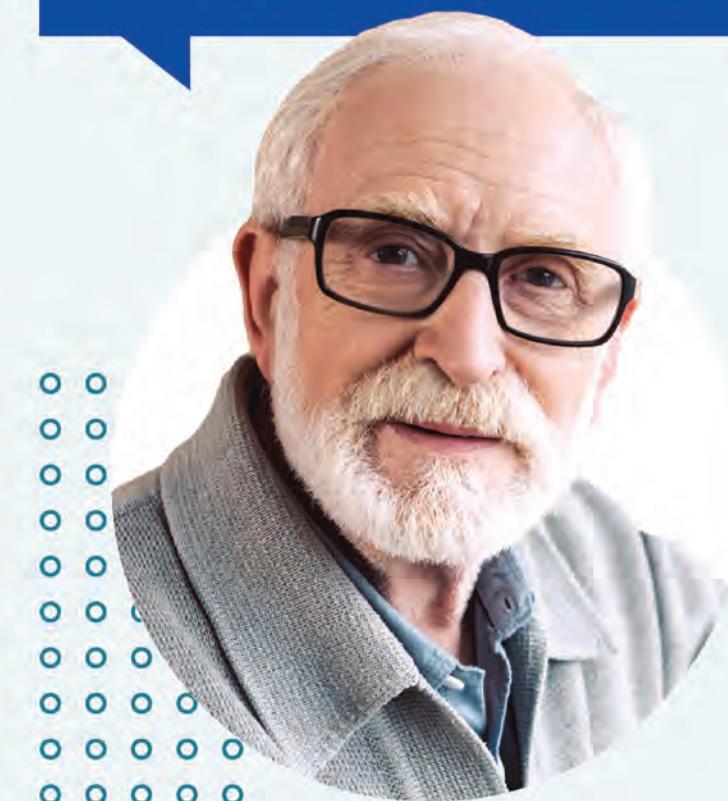
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Overcoming Mental Health Stigma

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The pandemic's psychological and socioeconomic fallout may be driving an accelerated trend in depressive symptoms and suicide ideation, attempts, and deaths in Fairfax County, reported experts in mental health at the "Fight Suicide" Walk-a-Thon at Lake Fairfax Park in Reston held Aug. 21. The need exists for the community to offer a hand to those who cannot ask for help or treatment.

Prolonged social distancing and self-isolation imposed by the pandemic are compounded by the daily burden of worries about family and self-employment, income falling, and Covid health and safety of loved ones. These concerns are raising the risk of mental health issues. Some individuals are at the breaking point into "darkness" and the "ultimate act," suicide, yet stigma and prejudice associated with reaching out for help stops them from doing so.

On Saturday, Aug. 21, the Family Counseling Center of Greater Washington located in Vienna hosted the "Fight Suicide" Walk-a-Thon. Partnered with the Fairfax Health Department, the event's purpose was to bring attention to mental health and the stigma that can be associated with it.

Daniel Park is the Executive Director of the Family Counseling Center of Greater Washington in Vienna. "Suicide is not a matter of personal concern. It is a matter of the community's responsibility," Park said. "This is why we must work together, especially for the Asian American community. It is not ready yet to speak about suicide because of stigma."

Cultural factors influence some Asian-Americans whether or not they seek access for behavioral or mental health concerns. Depending upon the individual's degree of acculturation, socioeconomic status, immigration status, and their given culture, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, etcetera, these factors may influence whether individuals seek diagnosis and treatment or not.

Cindy Han, CEO of the Family Counseling Center of Greater Washington located in Vienna, said that the practice's primary purpose is to serve those with mental illnesses. It offers to counsel individuals experiencing life's serious challenges.

THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC crisis on suicidality appears related to the increase in mental health problems. Han said, "We have encountered many families who have lost their loved ones to suicide and families struggling with a family member contemplating suicide.

"A person dies by suicide every 11 minutes in the United States," said Han. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among teenagers, particularly many Korean teenagers who take their lives with suicide, according to Han.

Binbin Yang, Community Health Specialist with Fairfax County Health Department works with the Asian and Pacific Islander



Supporters of the walk-a-thon gather for a group photo.



Gloria Addo-Ayensu, MD, MPH, is the Director of Health for Fairfax County.



Daniel Park, Executive Director of the Family Counseling Center of Greater Washington in Vienna.



Sophia Yu, 13, of Springfield



Gabriel Yu, 11, of Springfield

communities. "The American public is not aware that suicide is a national crisis," said Yang. "People seeking our mental health services have increased threefold since 2020 compared to 2019."

According to Yang, the impact of the pandemic is negatively compromising lives with "anxiety, depression, and a sense of hope-

lessness." She said the purpose of the day's event was "to bring people from darkness out into the light."

Yang said, "Mental health is nothing to be ashamed of. It is no different than having any other bodily ailment that you go seek a specialist for a cure." Yang added that when people suffer, have challenges, they need to

Suicide Walk-a-Thon brings awareness.

talk to others, so they do not go unnoticed.

"We want to be sure that it does not lead to the ultimate act. How devastating suicide is," Yang said.

Gloria Addo-Ayensu, MD, MPH, is the Director of Health for Fairfax County. She said that given the level of COVID transmission in the County and its isolation, people are not doing what they did previously. "When individuals have challenges with their mental health, isolation further exacerbates the problem... Silence fuels the stigma," said Addo-Ayensu.

School Board Member Melanie Meren (Hunter Mill District) said, "Mental health is just as important as physical health for our students and staff. This year we know that we must pay attention to the risk of suicide and listen to our students who are asking for help."

Robert Rigby is a teacher at West Potomac High School in Alexandria. He said that suicide touches LGBTQ+ students "very dearly." "I'm here to stand up for and represent all the students who are struggling and need someone to support them."

Shyamali Roy Hauth is the 1st Vice-Chair of Democratic Asian Americans of Virginia. According to Hauth, the Asian community needs to make sure they speak about suicide prevention. "Last week, we held a panel on mental health with the Democratic Asian Americans of Virginia...Speaking about mental illness, mental health, and suicide prevention is very important to our community."

GRACE NOH, 17, of Clifton, attended the walk-a-thon. According to Noh, the event was important to her because she knew people struggling with depression. "I thought this was a way to support them," she said.

Ester Lee, 17, of Centreville, said she saw a flier about the event and thought it a good way to connect. She, too, told of a friend who had been struggling with depression.

Sophia Yu, 13, of Springfield, came to the walk-a-thon with her mother. Sophia said what she learned that day was that someone in the United States dies by suicide every eleven minutes. Asked what she might do if she felt negatively overwhelmed, Sophia said, "I would talk to somebody, someone I was close to, if I felt sad or depressed."

Gabriel Yu, 11, of Springfield, said that he learned teenagers were "dying by suicide." If I felt depressed, I would talk with my mom or dad."

Thomas Rayner's father died by suicide. While not a mental health expert but holding personal knowledge, Rayner said, "When people get into that space, they don't see any other alternatives. They don't think about the impact they have on people around them and their loved ones. It's not that they're selfish, but they just can't think of another way."

Anthem HealthKeepers Plus, one of the event sponsors, offers Medicaid and FAMIS (Family Access to Medical Insurance Security Plan, the Virginia health insurance program for children). Open enrollment runs through Aug. 31.

Twins Ace, Community, Britepaths Raise Funds for School Supplies

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Each year, Fairfax-based nonprofit Britepaths raises money to purchase school supplies for students in need in Fairfax County. And this year, the need was greater than ever, but that only made Britepaths even more determined to help these students.

Local residents and businesses stepped up and answered the call, opening their wallets to contribute. Among them was Twins Ace Hardware in Fairfax City. During July, it raised \$2,000 for Britepaths' Collect for Kids Back-to-School program via a round-up campaign, whereby customers donated their change to round up their totals when they bought items from the store.

Fairfax City's Daniels Run Elementary was one of 15 Fairfax County Public Schools that received supply kits through Britepaths' program to distribute to students in need at its school. And last Monday, Aug. 16, Twins Ace co-owner Craig Smith went there and met with Britepaths' Shannon Bryant to present the store's donation.

Overall, Britepaths raised more than \$43,000 and used the donations to buy 4,250 Campus Survival Kits for Fairfax High School, Justice High School and their feeder elementary and middle schools. Inside the kits were folders, composition books, pencils, crayons, markers, scissors, glue sticks, erasers, a pencil sharpener and earbuds.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRITEPATHS

Twins Ace Hardware co-owner Craig Smith (center) presents a check to Daniels Run social worker June Bloedorn and Principal Christopher Smith.

In previous years, Britepaths has assisted 2,500 students with school supplies. But this year – because of the increased need due to the pandemic – it also asked its supporters to help with this endeavor.

In addition to Twins Ace, the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors' Cares Committee, plus Mara Hair and Mode Studio in Fairfax City, both provided sponsorship funds, and many individuals and families donated, as well. And thanks to their generosity, Britepaths was able to exceed its \$40,000 fundraising goal.

Britepaths' Back-to-School program is part of Fairfax County's Collect for Kids partnership to ensure that as many FCPS students as possible with identified needs are able to start the school year with all the supplies necessary for them to succeed in the classroom.

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CALENDAR

NOW THRU AUG. 29

Summer Table. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Building W-8, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Ceramic Artists Pam Eisenmann and Joan Ulrich offer two takes on convivial dining. Celebrating summer gatherings with lively handmade tableware: serving pieces, vases, sippers and more. Meet the artists on August 14th, 2-4 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 25

Lee District Nights. 7:30 p.m. At Lee District Park, Leonidas K. Plenty Amphitheater, Franconia. Aug. 25 - Sharon Clark Quartet (Jazz)

SATURDAY/AUG. 28

Summer Saturdays. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Summer Saturdays is back! Join them virtually or in-person for hands-on history activities. Cost is \$0 to \$10. This program occurs at the same time every Saturday until August 28th. Visit the website: www.gunstonhall.org/event

SATURDAY/AUG. 28

Mount Vernon Nights. 8 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. Schedule August 28 - The U.S. Army Field Band, Six String Soldiers (Americana, Folk, Bluegrass, Irish)

SATURDAY/AUG. 28

Kidz Korner -- Oh Susannah. 10:30-11:30 a.m. at Old Town Square, Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Join in a fun

morning with your family. 10:30 a.m. Saturdays at Old Town Square. Pre-registration is required. Visit the website: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts>

SATURDAY/AUG. 28

LESSON ZERO Performs. 6-9 p.m. At CraftHouse, 1161 Palace Way, Fairfax. For additional information see: www.youtube.com/lessonzero or www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero

SUNDAY/AUG. 29

Model Trains Running. 1-4 p.m. At The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK group will be running N gauge model trains. Admission: Children 4 and under and Museum members, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5, \$6 for special events. Seniors and military (active and retired) \$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, 703-425-9225.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 11

Second Saturday Art Walk. 6-9 p.m. At The Workhouse Arts Center on the second Saturday of each month. It's the perfect time to meet nearly 100 resident and associate artists, creating art in the studios or exhibiting in 12 campus galleries. Indulge in classes in the art of mixology or cuisines from around the globe. Experience art exhibitions of the region's finest sculpture, painting, glass, ceramics, and fiber art works.

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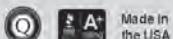
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Obituary

Obituary

Announcements



Diane Marie Dileo age 79, of Alexandria, VA was called to God and passed away from this life on Saturday July 31, 2021 at her home in Alexandria, VA after a short battle with cancer. Born June 29, 1942 in Pittston, PA. She is preceded in death by her beloved mother Margaret Madeline Komensky and father Edward Dolan.

She was of Catholic Faith.

She is survived by her daughter Donna Haefner Rood of Luray, VA. Son's Robert Dileo of Alexandria, VA and Anthony Dileo of Chesterfield, VA.

Stepchildren: Diana Dileo of Tappahannock, VA, Nicholas Dilieo of Chesterfield, VA and David Dileo of Misquamicut, RI.

Grandchildren: Joseph Haefner of Charles Town, WV. Robert Dileo Jr., Michael Dileo, Kaitlyn Dileo and McKenna Dileo of Spotsylvania, VA, Alexander Dileo and Noah Dileo of Chesterfield, VA. Patricia Snow Andre of Franklin, VA. Laurie Franklin of Richmond, VA. David Franklin of Saint Stephens Church, VA. Nancy and Jesse Dileo of Waterbury, CT. Rebecca Dileo of Naugatuck, CT.

Great Grandchildren: Weston Dileo, Jordan Elliott, Deontae and Ariana Lewis, Armoni and Londyn Branch.

She was a professional driver for Fairfax County Public Schools for 28 years. She so loved her career, the kids, friends and coworkers.

Diane truly lived life to the fullest with life's simple pleasures. She cherished every sunrise, sunset, and everything in between. She loved all her children immensely. A true role model for sure. People were just drawn to her of all ages and backgrounds. Going out of her way to help others. She was an avid Washington Football Team Fan and never missed a televised Washington Nationals game. She had an absolute love for the beach. A memorial service and celebration of life gathering will be held in her honor at a future date.

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PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

A full dumpster is a sign of a successful program.

A Full Glass Recycling Dumpster is a Sign of Success

Purple dumpsters are pulling in big numbers around the county and a few spots outside.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

It was a good sign when several cars pulled up to the Springfield purple dumpster for glass recycling and the portals were nearly overflowing with glass. People were recycling their glass, with a little finesse, they still managed to fit the glass in.

"I love it, glad they do it," said Enna, a Springfield resident. "It's definitely working," she said.

Another woman from Kings Park West managed to throw her bottles in too. "I live in a cul-de-sac and collect for three houses, this is a wonderful service," she said.

Bottles and glass aren't accepted with the curbside recycling in Fairfax County anymore, so the purple dumpsters located on county property are the option.

In fact, "the program is doing well, and we're pleased with the numbers," said Sharon North, at the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services. North had a chart that showed over 13 tons of glass had been recycled since the program started in April 2019. Fairfax County was responsible for over seven tons of that, and the rest was in other area jurisdictions like the City of Alexandria, Arlington County and Fredericksburg to name a few.

"People really embraced glass recycling."

— Supervisor Pat Herrity
(R-Springfield)

The Springfield dumpster is behind the police station on Rolling Road, and the Lee District dumpster is located out front of the Franco-Niemeyer Government Building.

Glass collected in purple containers is delivered to the county's glass processing plant in Lorton, the only glass processing plant in the region, the county said. Glass is crushed for use in a variety of projects and beneficial applications, such as pipe bedding, filter material and as a mix with asphalt on certain roads.

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"Enough Already"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As my late mother would have suggested after reading four consecutive weeks of Kenny's column being on the same subject: the second degree burns on my feet, I am finally moving on. Though my feet and mobility have not entirely returned to normal, I am nonetheless finished with this arc and am returning to my regular subject: cancer.

After being a cancer patient for so long now, it's easy to forget exactly what the side effects are for a particular medicine that you're presently taking versus one that you used to take. Granted, it's not rocket science, but it is confusing, especially after 12-plus years of treatment and having taken over a dozen different types of chemotherapy, targeted therapy, immunotherapy; most for lung cancer, some for thyroid cancer. Throw in that the patient (yours truly) is over age 65 and likely experienced a touch or two of "chemo brain" (a kind of memory loss brought on by chemotherapy) over the many years of treatment and before you can say alimta, avastin, tarceva and opdivo, you can't even distinguish one from the other. Considering these varying medicines kept you alive for a time, is a bit disconcerting at the least and really scary at the most. However, the bigger picture is that I'm still alive and whatever bumps and bruises I've experienced along the road, I'm still able to drive, if you know what I mean?

Nevertheless, it's important to stay current and aware of the likely side effects because not knowing/recalling them can lead to unnecessary and unhelpful worry: is this the cancer or some predictable side effect? Whatever makes this awareness/lack of awareness challenging is that the side effects vary from one treatment/medicine to the next and are not always consistent in their occurrence and/or intensity.

As an example, currently, I am experiencing shortness of breath. It is a side effect of levothyroxine, the thyroid cancer drug I'm taking daily. However, I haven't been as short of breath as I am now as I had been the previous few weeks. At least I know it's a side effect so I'm not freaking out. Still, is a side effect that was not happening, problematic, when nothing else (increased dosage) has happened? In fact, I've already had the dosage reduced twice from 24 mg to 10 mg primarily because I was too short of breath, and experienced a touch of dizziness/vertigo as well. The goal in deciding dosage, as I understand it/have been told, is to try and find the "sweet spot" where the minimal dosage results in the maximum benefit: controlled disease/no progression. And now, with my most recent cancer marker down to seven from a high of over 200 last year, the medicine certainly seems to be working. The dilemma is determining how much can the dosage be reduced before it allows the cancer to grow? My oncologist has always been concerned with quality of life so we've regularly adjusted doses depending on the results of lab work and my quarterly scans.

It seems silly to mess with success. And besides shortness of breath - to me, is a minor inconvenience considering the stakes. I just have to be aware and remind myself that a cancer diagnosis, especially one which started with a "13 month to two year" prognosis, is fraught with many challenges and inconsistencies. Sometimes, what's up is down and what's down is up. It's all very disorienting and if my life wasn't at risk, I might find this experience mildly amusing, even curious (as Data from "Star Trek: Next Generation" might say). But, on the contrary, my situation is as serious as a heart attack, which fortunately I've never suffered, thank God! I just hope if it does occur, I'll recognize the symptoms for what they are, rather than as a side effect of the medication I take for my thyroid cancer. What a mistake that would be. And I'd have no one to blame but myself. As a cancer patient, I have one key responsibility: pay attention to my body, and keep my eye on the ball.

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



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