

# CONNECTION

Reston ♦ Oak Hill Herndon ♦ Chantilly ♦ CENTRE VIEW

## Road to Recovery

NEWS, PAGE 8

Taralyn Tharp Kohler of Reston, COVID long hauler, donates convalescent plasma at Inova Health.

## Crisis in Afghanistan Comes Home

NEWS, PAGE 3

## Stuff the Bus on 9/11

NEWS, PAGE 5

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

PRSRRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
EASTON, MD  
PERMIT #322  
POSTAL CUSTOMER  
EGR WSS  
ATTENTION POSTMASTER:  
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL  
REQUESTED IN HOME 9-2-21





**Back to School**

If your child is entering 7th grade they must have the **Meningitis, HPV, and Tdap** vaccines in order to enroll. Talk to your doctor and vaccinate them now!

SCAN ME

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

[vdh.virginia.gov/backtoschool/](http://vdh.virginia.gov/backtoschool/)

ROUNDUPS

## Car Seat Inspections, Sept. 9

Parents are invited to get their children's car seats inspected on Thursday, Sept. 9, from 5-8:30 p.m., outside the Sully District Police Station. It's at 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. Inspections are done on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants are asked to wear a mask and adhere to social-distancing and safety precautions.

They should also install the child safety seat themselves so the inspection can be performed. The seat will be properly re-installed, if necessary, and parents will be taught how to install the seat properly, in the future. Another car-seat inspection is scheduled for Sept. 23, at the same place and time.

## Meeting on Braddock Park Changes

A public-comment meeting on the Draft Master Plan revision for Braddock Park is set for Thursday, Sept. 9, at 7 p.m. It'll be held in person at Liberty Middle School, 6801 Union Mill Road in Clifton (near

Centreville High).

The Park Authority is trying to determine how this park should redevelop to best serve the community's needs. It began revising Braddock Park's Master Plan in 2020 and then held virtual, public meetings in October 2020 and April 2021 to solicit ideas and feedback.

At the upcoming meeting, Park Authority staff will present a summary of the draft plan and take questions and comments. Attendees will be able to speak for three minutes and may register at the meeting.

Some of the possible uses to be added to Braddock Park include a concession stand/dining area, additional pavilions for gatherings, a walking/running-trail loop, an accessible playground, and another softball field. Residents have also recommended pickleball courts, a dog park, a community garden, a new softball diamond, plus more parking, sidewalks, shade trees, trails, and natural-habitat areas.

Comments and suggestions will be accepted through Friday, Oct. 8. Staff will then revise the plan, based on the comments received, and present a final version to the Park Authority Board for consideration in November. For more information or to review the plan and comment, call 703-324-8662 or email [Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### BULLETIN BOARD

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

#### SATURDAY/SEPT. 11

Sept. 11 Remembrance Ceremony. 9 a.m. At Great Falls Freedom Memorial, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Great Falls lost six residents to the attacks on September 11. The ceremony will honor them and all who sacrificed on that day and in its aftermath. The event will

include a color guard, patriotic songs, remarks by retired Army three-star general Robert Wood who was present at the Pentagon on 9/11, and a candle-lighting for each of the September 11 victims from Great Falls. The Freedom Memorial is located behind the Great Falls

Library at 9830 Georgetown Pike. The ceremony is open to all. Ample parking is available in the library parking lot. In case of rain, the ceremony will move to the library meeting room. Limited seating will be provided. Attendees are encouraged to bring portable chairs.

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

## TWO POOR TEACHERS

### Kitchen and Bathroom Remodeling



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

Fully Insured & Class A Licensed Since 1999



**10% down** nothing until the job is complete for the past 17 years

**Free Estimates 703-999-2928**

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

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

The annual Newcomers and Community Guides for each of our 8 communities with inside facts on what makes each community special, their secret places, the real power players, how to get involved and more.

Including the history, schools, parks, libraries, local people, elected officials, county/city offices, how decisions are made and other vital community information.

For Advertising: Call 703.778.9431 or Email [sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com)

THE CONNECTION  
Newspapers & Online

Alexandria  
Gazette Packet

Mount Vernon Gazette

POTOMAC  
ALMANAC

Publishes:  
Sep 29, 2021

**2021-2022  
NEWCOMERS &  
COMMUNITY GUIDE**

Perfect Advertising Opportunity for:

Hospitals | Healthcare | Wellbeing | New Homes | Realtors | Schools | Malls | Shopping Centers | Professional Services | And Much More



## Crisis in Afghanistan Reverberates Locally

### Afghan Americans speak out.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The United States and other countries have welcomed more than 150,000 Afghans and their families since the emergency evacuations began in mid-August. Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, fell to the Taliban on Aug. 15 after withdrawal of most of the United States forces. The U.S. and other nations offered refuge to many Afghans who aided them during the last twenty years.

Afghan interpreters and translators who worked directly with the U.S. Armed Forces or under the Chief of Mission authority at U.S. Embassy Kabul applied to the U.S. for humanitarian visas known as a Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) for themselves and their family members.

With events rapidly unfolding and the U.S. racing to complete withdrawal, Three local Afghan Americans, twenty years apart in ages, share their perspectives on the troop withdrawal, rescue operation, and humanitarian crisis.

**SENZEL SCHAEFER** of Reston escaped Tehran, Iran, at age 5 when her family rushed to the airport in 1979. The family was in Tehran for her father's job, a city editor of the Tehran Journal, where he was printing anti-Khomeini articles. The Soviet-Afghan war began in 1979 also.

The family arrived in New York with two suitcases.

Because Schaefer speaks Farsi and Pashto, she spent these last two weeks volunteering for a company with 150 employees in Afghanistan trying to get out.

"Little did I know what I was getting into. These people are trapped in Afghanistan today," said Schaefer. "They call me day and night. They're pleading; they're

crying; they're fearful. And so, between my work, my children, and my life, I've spent the better part of six, seven hours a day emailing and messaging them through WhatsApp or talking to them on the phone, trying to calm them down. I have nothing to offer them. They have no way out of the country. You have to understand [it is] 150 people (employees). And an average family of five or six people." Schaefer added that President Biden said the evacuations wouldn't stop after the withdrawal, but she questioned how that would look.

"You cannot wrap your head around the impact of a decision that hits 38 million Afghans but also millions of people around the world that were involved in this so-called War on Terror for 20 years. I think 750,000 Americans [military] filed in and out of Afghanistan on tour. It's the biggest of anything of that nature in our country's history," Schaefer said.

Schaefer hoped for the women of Afghanistan to have found their voices through education and employment. Now she worries about potentially half of the country's population to be shut down.

Schaefer said Afghans who settle in this area are prepared to help new arrivals. She told of the outpouring of the local community, including an attorney who is helping process the refugee paperwork.

Of Americans, she says: "We're in a state



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

**Dor Niaz stands outside the family-operated restaurant in Great Falls.**

of shock because our government does things that we don't agree with; it gets us into these situations, and we are left to pick up the pieces. ... The level of pain that reverberates through all of America is immense.

"We cannot be ungrateful to this host country that took us in. ... I have lived a great life because of that."

**DOR NIAZ**, Great Falls restaurant owner, left Afghan alone in 1984 at age 17; later he was able to bring family members, including his parents, to join him in the United States.

### How to Help

The local resettlement agencies for the Northern Virginia area are:

#### CATHOLIC CHARITIES

<https://www.cceda.net/need-help/immigrants-and-refugees/migration-and-refugee-services/>

#### LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES

[https://lssnca.org/take\\_action/afghan-allies.html](https://lssnca.org/take_action/afghan-allies.html)

#### ETHIOPIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

<https://www.ecdcus.org/>

Because Fairfax County has a sizable Afghan population, it is anticipated that many refugees will eventually resettle here.

"As for myself, my family, and my kids, we feel responsible," said Niaz. "Because America, if it takes the risk to bring them over, ... then it's our time to back it up."

"My heart, I'm crying to those people, those moms, and dads [left behind]. You grab your kids, your wife, and if you are lucky, you get out; your parents you are leaving behind. ... There is no welfare system. How will the elderly get on? They are being kicked out on the street. This is the fabric of a country that has been destroyed," Niaz said, with tears.

Niaz will donate, he will volunteer to serve as a translator. He will tell the refugees who have arrived in the United States that they are "in the land of opportunity. ... There is nothing like it. It will take time for you to understand it. It's not easy, but you have to be able to adjust and be flexible."

Niaz said the terrorists who killed 13 United States Servicemembers, at least 160 Afghans, and injured many more, "are the scum of the earth. They need to be dealt with."

"America leaves on Tuesday...then you will see the killing fields...When you kill one, the second one is just like a moth you kill. No problem ... God says when you kill one human being, you are killing the entire family," Niaz said.

**AUROZO NIAZ** is 21 years old and lives in Vienna, an Afghan American born in the United States and daughter of Dor Niaz.

"The past two weeks, I have been in touch with the whole Afghan diaspora. We're trying to support each other at this time, mentally, emotionally; whatever we can do for one another because we are suffering abroad as we are, domestically. We have been trying our best to come together and get donations and organize the donations ... cash, and materials so that they go directly into the hands of the refugees," Aurozo Niaz said.

She described Go Fund Me solicitations, collections of money for apartment rentals, furnishings, hygiene kits, clothes, and school supplies for the children. Aurozo Niaz said that A-1 Carpet Service in Chantilly coordinated a drop-off site, and trucks were assisting. "We have 20 to 30 people at a time unloading full on. We organized these donations," said Aurozo Niaz. "We want to contribute as much as we can because these



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Senzel Schaefer, Afghan American, and her daughters, pack 100 small backpacks, each with a workbook, markers, and a set of clothes and socks for Afghan refugees. Later, the girls wrote letters to enclose.**



# Record Setting Times

BY DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN"  
PLUM



COMMENTARY

Not intending to repeat a column I wrote a few weeks ago, but it is hot outside! That column focused on the findings of experts with the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine (VASEM) with data mainly about Coastal Virginia but with an explanation that what happens in the coastal region has repercussions across the state. The report is now online where you can read about sea-level rise, more frequent and intense weather-related events, and more variability in seasonal temperature. [http://www.vasem.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/VASEM\\_VirginiasCoastalAreasReport\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.vasem.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/VASEM_VirginiasCoastalAreasReport_FINAL.pdf).

As soon as I had turned in my column for publication, the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued its most recent report that verified its past findings on climate change, but with a great sense of urgency as to how rapidly changes are occurring. They termed climate change as "widespread, rapid and intensifying." <https://www.ipcc.ch/2021/08/09/ar6-wg1-20210809-pr/>

As though we did not have enough evidence

already, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) issued its State of the Climate in 2020 with more than 530 scientists around the world verifying what we have been hearing from others. <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/reporting-state-climate-2020>.

Greenhouse gases are the highest on record. Global surface temperature as well as upper atmospheric temperature and sea surface temperatures are at record or near-record highs. July was earth's hottest month on record. The Arctic and Antarctica are warming and losing record levels of ice. Crazy weather patterns are occurring around the world.

These are not the kind of records we want to set as part of the upward trends that virtually all scientists are reporting. Reversing the trends for which all experts seem to agree is of great urgency; the task at hand will not be done easily or quickly, but we must get started. Ultimately action must occur on an international level. In the meantime, we must act at the national level by ensuring that our infrastructure improvements, about which there has been much

congressional debate, be done in earth-friendly ways that help to curtail climate change.

Incentives and tax breaks to businesses and industries must have requirements for environmental action that will contribute to greenhouse emissions reductions.

The Clean Energy Act passed in Virginia is a major step in the right direction. The law requires new measures to promote energy efficiency, sets a schedule for closing old fossil fuel power plants, and requires electricity to come from 100 percent renewable sources such as solar or wind. Energy companies must pay penalties for not meeting their targets. Construction is underway in the Atlantic Ocean 27 miles offshore from Virginia Beach on what will be the nation's largest wind farm. When completed by Dominion Energy the wind farm will provide zero-emissions electricity to 660,000 homes. Solar farms are sprouting up across the Commonwealth as consumers and businesses are installing small solar farms until larger ones are constructed.

I know you did not ask for or expect two columns so close together on the subject of weather, but the threat to life as we know it is real and closer than we may have thought. Let's continue to do our part in our personal ways to be kind to Mother Earth, and let's ensure that our leaders do the same.

# Detailing Relief in Dollars

BY SEN. ADAM EBBIN

On Monday Aug. 2, the Virginian-General Assembly convened in Richmond for a Special Session to allocate federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and appoint judges to fill eight vacancies on the Virginia Court of Appeals. The judicial slots were created by legislation passed earlier in the year to create an automatic right to appeal and proportionately increase the number of jurists to meet the heightened case load. For the first time since COVID hit Virginia, the House and Senate have returned to their respective chambers in the Capitol. Due to close quarters, our desks are surrounded by plexiglass to prevent possible transmission of the increasingly common COVID-19 Delta variant.

Unlike previous special sessions, the Senate and House agreed to limit legislative action to a single bill which allocates \$3.2 billion of the \$4.3 billion in ARPA funds, and makes several emergency policy changes through budget language.

As parents, students, and educators prepare to return for a fully in-person school year, their safety and ability to learn best is top-of-mind to all of us. A key way to improve the long-term safety of our students and staff is to ensure that schools have high quality ventilation and HVAC systems. That is why the General Assembly allocated \$250 million to repair and improve these systems in elementary and secondary schools.

During the pandemic, mental health issues and addiction have become drastically more prevalent, leading to devastating impacts on

families and overburdening our psychiatric hospitals to the point that, in mid-July, state facilities were forced to stop admitting new patients. The final budget bill provides the necessary funding to staff up and open more admission slots in these critical facilities, and makes a massive, \$485 million downpayment on improvements to our mental health and substance abuse treatment programs in Virginia. Righting the trajectory for these services will create a brighter future. In concert with improvements to mental health services, the General Assembly invested an additional \$354 million in public health including facility infrastructure improvements and modernization of our public health technology to ensure that Virginians can receive high-quality services.

To continue to improve public safety, we also allocated close to \$93 million for anti-violence initiatives, including \$75 million to increase state police and state supported sworn officers of sheriffs' departments salaries to competitive levels, \$13.2 million for support services for victims of crime including sexual and domestic violence, \$4 million to improve mental-health training for law enforcement to implement the new "Marcus Alert" system which requires mental health professionals respond with police officers that are called to deal with a person in crisis, and \$5 million in gun violence prevention programs.

The social distancing we have practiced over the past year has, in many cases, only been possible because of affordable access to reliable internet — from online school, to work, to accessing e-books from the library, to telehealth services, the internet has been a lifeline for many. However, for many Virginians, access

to broadband is still out of reach. But that will change with the passage of this budget bill. The General Assembly allocated \$700 million to bring high-speed broadband to every home and business in the state by 2024. (Currently some 234,000 still remain unconnected!)

Small businesses can also expect \$250 million in relief via RebuildVA grants and \$50 million in tourism and marketing grants to draw customers back in and start to make up for the incredible impact the pandemic had on hospitality and destination based small businesses in Virginia. To prevent future tax increases on small businesses and ensure Virginians get the help they need if they are or become unemployed, the General Assembly deposited \$862 million into the depleted coffers of our Unemployment Trust Fund.

Finally, the General Assembly continued to work on a core priority of mine: preventing evictions and increasing affordable housing. We appropriated a combined \$750 million in housing assistance, \$250 million of which will be used to cover overdue mortgage bills, taxes, insurance, and HOA fees. To learn how to access these funds, visit <https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/rmrp>.

With the Governor's signature, these historic investments will begin flowing, shovels will go into the ground, businesses will continue opening, and Virginians will begin to feel some weight lifting from their shoulders as a more robust safety net is constructed. A firm base has been laid for the future of our Commonwealth, and I look forward to building on it in the years to come.

It is my continued honor to serve the 30th District.



# Unattended Candles Cause Herndon Storage Unit Fire

**O**n Friday, August 20, at approximately 2:11 p.m., units from Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Fire and Rescue Department were dispatched for a reported building fire in the 2900 block of Centreville Road in the Herndon area of Fairfax County.

Units arrived on the scene of a one-story, multi building storage facility with smoke showing from two storage units. The involved building had multiple interior and exterior storage units. Crews were able to quickly address a variety of access issues and extinguish the fire. There were no reported civilian or firefighter injuries.

The fire was discovered by a passerby who observed smoke emitting from one of the outside storage units and called 9-1-1. There were no working smoke alarms in the building.

Fire Investigators determined that the



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Unattended candles cited as cause of storage fire.**

fire was accidental in nature and started in one of the storage units. The cause of the fire was unattended lit candles too close to combustibles.

No one was displaced because of the fire. Red Cross services not required. Three exterior units sustained smoke and fire damage. Damages as a result of the fire were approximately \$165,000.

## Millions in Federal COVID Aid Coming to the Town of Herndon

Much needed federal COVID dollars are making their way to the Town of Herndon. The total is \$25,523,946, to be exact, payable in two installments under the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). The U.S. Congress passed the act on Mar. 11, 2021. Congress also authorized "relief funds to support State, local and Tribal governments in responding to the impact of COVID-19 and in their efforts to contain COVID-19 on their communities, residents, and businesses," according to Interim Final Rule, U.S. Treasury Department. Congress established the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund of \$360 billion of one-time aid.

On Tuesday, Aug. 10, following Town Council Public Session, ([https://herndon.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=2&clip\\_id=2123](https://herndon.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=2123) starting at minute 44:21) in a vote of 6-0, the Herndon Town Council approved the American Rescue Act (ARPA) Allocation Plan and appropriated ARPA funds for FY 2022. Councilmember Naila Alam was absent.

Councilmember Jasbinder Singh said that the Council had the benefit

of hindsight. They could recall when Town Manager Bill Ashton presented the Town's scaled back FY21 budget caused by COVID. There was little money and projects were put on hold. "He did such a good job," said Singh. "I feel very confident ... that [Ashton] and the Director [of Finance Robert Tang] will consult with us about how we want to move our resources and give us the option to ... spend the money very wisely," said Singh.

Robert Tang, Director of Finance at the Town of Herndon, told the council the U.S. Treasury Department distributes the funds by state in two equal installments, and Herndon received approximately \$12.7 million, the first installment, on June, 30, 2021. The second installment is expected summer of 2022. Town staff proposed millions be spent on vehicles, sewers, building maintenance, replacements of police body cameras, and tennis bubble maintenance. According to the presentation, thus far, funding to Operations & Maintenance, and capital projects had stopped during the pandemic.

SEE COVID AID, PAGE 7

# Neighbors Here Are Hungry; The Community Can Help

## Stuff the Bus events slated for Saturday, Sept. 11.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**W**hile the average Fairfax County resident has enough to eat, many do not. And when school isn't in session, children often go to bed hungry. That's why the work of local food pantries and the county's Stuff the Bus events are so critically important – as is the generosity of people willing to help feed their neighbors in need.

Stuff the Bus started in 2011 when local food pantries, such as Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM), issued urgent pleas for help restocking their shelves after the holidays. Now in its 10th year, this program is a collaborative partnership between

Fairfax County Government and local nonprofits.

Area residents bring food to designated Stuff-the-Bus events which, in turn, help provide food for local families and households by contributing the donations to the food pantries. Since its inception, Stuff the Bus has collected more than 220 tons of food to feed hungry people in this county.

In honor of the National Day of Service, the next Stuff the Bus events are set for Saturday, Sept. 11, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Collection locations in the Sully District will be at the Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly, and at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St Germain Drive in Centreville.

People are asked to place their items for donation inside the rear door of the bus and leave the door open. A second round of Stuff the Bus events is slated for Saturday, Oct. 9, at the same times and places.

### What to Contribute

Because the average size of a family seeking food assistance is four people, the sizes indicated below are preferred. In addition, items that are high fiber, low sugar and low sodium not only feed hungry people, but also contribute to their overall health and wellness. The most-needed items are as follows:

Canned tuna, salmon or chicken (15 oz. or smaller); soup - lower sodium (19 oz. or smaller); canned pasta (16 oz. or smaller); macaroni and cheese; canned fruit in light syrup or juice (20 oz. or smaller); peanut butter (40 oz. or smaller); jelly (32 oz. or smaller); bags of dried beans, peas or lentils (16 oz.); rice - brown or white (5 lbs. or smaller); instant potatoes (16 oz. or smaller); canned tomatoes - low sodium, no salt added (29 oz. or smaller); pancake mix (32 oz. or smaller) and syrup; hot and cold cereal (42 oz. or smaller); canned vegetables - low sodium, no salt added (29 oz.

or smaller); canned beans or peas (29 oz. or smaller); and healthy snacks (raisins, granola bars, etc.).

### Monetary Donations Also Needed

For those unable to donate in person, monetary donations may be made by visiting Volunteer Fairfax's Stuff the Bus Donation Page at <https://www.volunteerfairfax.org/home/stuff-the-bus-virtual-food-drive/>.

Financial contributions are beneficial for several reasons. Nonprofits can turn a donated dollar into more meals by purchasing food in bulk or through special discounts from retailers. Monetary donations also enable food pantries to buy culturally appropriate foods, which better meet the needs of the diverse communities they serve.

Furthermore, canned and dry food are a vital part of food pantries, but a healthy diet also requires fresh fruit and vegetables, low-

SEE STUFF THE BUS, PAGE 7

# Arlington

## Labor Day Weekend Art Festival

September 4th - 5th Sat./Sun. 10am - 5pm

Outdoors on N. Highland St. & Washington Blvd.  
in the Clarendon District in Arlington, VA



CLARENDON ALLIANCE



Howard Alan Events  
ArtFestival.com  
561-746-6615



LUIS GONZALEZ



TO ADVERTISE IN THIS PAPER, CALL BY MONDAY 11:00 AM 703-778-9411

## A Smarter Way to Power Your Home.

**GENERAC PWRCELL SOLAR + BATTERY STORAGE SYSTEM**

**REQUEST A FREE QUOTE!**

**ACT NOW TO RECEIVE A \$300 SPECIAL OFFER!\***  
1 (833) 688-1378

\*Offer value when purchased at retail. Solar panels sold separately.



## TRANSFORM YOUR BATH OR SHOWER IN AS LITTLE AS ONE DAY

**CALL NOW**

**FOR \$500 Off\***

OR

**NO PAYMENTS & NO INTEREST FOR 18 MONTHS\*\***

Offer Expires 9.30.2021

**BCI BATH & SHOWER** Military & Senior Discounts Available  
**844-945-1631**

\*Includes product and labor, bathtub, shower or walk-in tub and wall surround. This promotion cannot be combined with any other offer. Other restrictions may apply. This offer expires Sept. 30, 2021. Each dealership is independently owned and operated. \*\*Third party financing is available for those customers who qualify. See your dealer for details. ©2021 BCI Acrylic, Inc.



### Services

**Fairfax Plumbing NV Inc**  
**A-Z Plumbing Service.**

Drain Cleaning  
Gas Piping & More  
Family Owned 35 YR Exp.

**\$35** coupon

**Tel: 703-987-5319**



## Need Rent Relief?

**VIRGINIA RENT RELIEF PROGRAM**

Millions of dollars in assistance available.

Apply now at [dhcd.virginia.gov/eligibility](http://dhcd.virginia.gov/eligibility)




## Upgrade Your Home with a NEW METAL ROOF

Guaranteed to Last a Lifetime!

**LIMITED TIME OFFER**

**60% off** YOUR INSTALLATION

+ TAKE AN ADDITIONAL **10% off**

Install for Military, Health Workers and First Responders

**ERIC Metal Roofs**

Warranty: Limited Lifetime Transferable to subsequent owner from original purchase. Terms and conditions apply. Heavy duty. Appearance of the surface coating beyond normal wear and tear. Expires 12/31/21

Call today to schedule your **FREE ESTIMATE**  
**1-844-902-4611**

ERIC Metal Roofs New orders only. Does not include material costs. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Minimum purchase required. Other restrictions may apply. This is an advertisement placed on behalf of Eric Construction Mid-West, Inc ("Eric"). Offer terms and conditions may apply and the offer may not be available in your area. Offer expires December 31st 2021. If you call the number provided, you consent to being contacted by telephone, SMS text message, email, pre-recorded messages by Eric or its affiliates and service providers using automated technologies notwithstanding if you are on a DO NOT CALL list or register. Please review our Privacy Policy and Terms of Use on [homeservicescompliance.com](http://homeservicescompliance.com). All rights reserved.



### PRESSURE WASHING PROS

In Business for 25 Years

- Soft Wash
- Deck Cleaning/Staining
- Fences
- Driveways

[pwashingpros.com](http://pwashingpros.com)

**(703) 378-8645**

Call the licensed and bonded pros with the best pricing in the NoVA area today.



### Legals

**ABC LICENSE**

Lake Anne Brew House LLC trading as Lake Anne Brew House, 11424 Washington Plz W, Reston, VA 20190-4310. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Jason Romano, Member. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at [www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or 800-552-3200.

## Sign up for FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION to all of our papers

[www.connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe)



**Let us know about an upcoming event**

[connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar](http://connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar)

## Prepare for power outages with a Generac home standby generator

**GENERAC**

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

**FREE** 7-Year Extended Warranty\*  
A \$695 Value!

Limited Time Offer - Call for Details

Special Financing Available  
Subject to Credit Approval

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



## LeafFilter GUTTER PROTECTION

**BACKED BY A YEAR-ROUND CLOG-FREE GUARANTEE**

**EXCLUSIVE LIMITED TIME OFFER!**

**15% OFF** YOUR ENTIRE PURCHASE

**10% OFF** SENIORS & MILITARY!

**+ 5% OFF** TO THE FIRST 50 CALLERS ONLY!

**WE INSTALL YEAR-ROUND!**

**FINANCING THAT FITS YOUR BUDGET!\***

Promo Code: 285  
\*Subject to credit approval. Call for details.

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

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

\*For those who qualify. One coupon per household. No obligation estimate valid for 1 year. \*\*Offer valid at time of estimate only. †The leading consumer reporting agency conducted a 16 month outdoor test of gutter guards in 2010 and recognized LeafFilter as the #1 rated professionally installed gutter guard system in America. ‡Manufactured in Plainwell, Michigan and processed at LMT Mercor Group in Ohio. See Representative for full warranty details. CA Lic# 1035995, DO Lic# 1098952-5601, License# 7696, License# 50145, License# 41354, License# 59338, License# 128344, License# 218294, WA USBI# 603 233 977, License# 2102212586, License# 2106212546, License# 2705482153A, License# LEAFINW8227, License# W056912, License# WC 29598 H17, Nassau HIC License# H01007000, Registrations# 238947, Registrations# HIC 2649952, Registrations# C122229, Registrations# C122230, Registrations# 365929118, Registrations# PC6479, Registrations# H233804, Registrations# 13M0955300, Registrations# PA065983, Suffolk, HIC License# 52229 H, License# 2205169445, License# 20200022, License# 262000403, License# 0085990, Registrations# H-19114.




## Back to School

If your child is entering 7th grade they must have the Meningitis, HPV, and Tdap vaccines in order to enroll. Talk to your doctor and vaccinate them now!

**VDH** VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

[vdh.virginia.gov/backtoschool/](http://vdh.virginia.gov/backtoschool/)





# Crisis in Afghanistan

FROM PAGE 3

people coming here are our family ... It's a collective culture."

Aurozo Niaz added that pain, loss, and grief are a permanent part of the Afghan identity. "We're in constant mourning. I ache for my country that I will never have the chance to visit ... step on the soil of my roots. I ache for the children of Afghanistan who have known nothing but war; for the refugees, my brothers and sisters, who only wanted peace in a world of greed and violence."

Aurozo Niaz said she and other Afghan Americans are angry and experiencing survivor's guilt. They can freely walk down a

street in the U.S. without a man beside them and have access to all the resources offered here.

"The reason I'm a refugee right now is complete luck. I was born in America and not one of the most overexploited, destabilized countries in the world... I think that's why we put so much effort into having these donations."

She said the U.S. goes into countries "under the guise of freedom and defense, and it conquers, leaving the country in absolute chaos, abandoning the promises to take care of it. ... Now our government destroys and destabilizes these countries, then pats itself on the back accepting the refugees that they displaced."

## Saturday, Sept. 11 Stuff the Bus

FROM PAGE 5

fat dairy products and lean proteins – items that can't be collected through food drives.

Additionally, nonprofits often rely on the work of volunteers to sort and shelve donations. The COVID-19 virus has greatly impacted volunteers' ability to serve; and having cash on hand helps food pantries keep their shelves stocked during times of the year when donations drop off.

### Why Helping Is Critical

Because of the pandemic, the need for

food in Fairfax County has greatly increased. According to the Feeding America Impact of Coronavirus on Food Insecurity projections (published March 29, 2021), the food insecurity rate in this county is currently at 7.4 percent – up from 5.8 percent in 2019. It means that some 86,716 people here don't have enough to eat.

But that's not all. The Capital Area Food Bank surveyed people using food-bank services this year and learned that:

- ❖ Across the region, people who are newly food insecure (those who started going to free-food distribution locations after March

Aurozo Niaz said the withdrawal is not a partisan issue; blame is not for one President or another but on the U.S. empire as a whole. The United States had been intervening in Afghanistan since the Carter administration, Aurozo Niaz said.

"We just failed the people of Afghanistan."

Kerrie Wilson, Chief Executive Officer, Cornerstones said: "We're worried about the families that we serve here who have relatives that are coming over or still stuck there [in Afghanistan] ... We work with our partners to direct people to the right places, Catholic Charities, Ethiopian Community Development Council, Lutheran Social Services, and some of the other groups that have been the frontline."

2020) are more likely to have larger households and more children. They're also more likely to be working, compared to those who visited free-food distribution sites before the pandemic.

- ❖ In Fairfax County, about 35 percent of people visiting free-food distributions revealed that most or all of their food comes from such events.

- ❖ Food costs are on the rise, and nearly 37 percent of people who went to these distributions said their household spent \$500 or more a month on food to prepare and eat at home.

That's why the community's help is vitally important. Food providers are working hard to ensure their clients receive food that fits their nutritional, dietary and cultural needs. But they can't do it alone, so they're hoping residents will participate somehow in the upcoming Stuff the Bus events and open their hearts and wallets to help feed their neighbors in need.

— STATISTICS PROVIDED BY SULLY DISTRICT SUPERVISOR KATHY SMITH

## Federal COVID Aid

FROM PAGE 5

Instead, funds were allocated to address immediate health and risk concerns.

Any unused funds would have to be paid back, Tang said. Funds must be obligated by Dec. 31, 2024, and expended by Dec. 31, 2026. "The funds have to either support public health expenditures, address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, replace lost public sector revenue, provide premium pay for essential workers, [or] invest in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure," said Tang.

Looking at projects and their description on the ARPA Allocation Plan, Councilmember Sean Regan asked Tang, "A lot of these items are deferred maintenance type issues. Is there an opportunity to look at bigger swings and larger capital projects at a later allocation?" "Absolutely," Tang said. "We can do future budget amendments and appropriations as needed."

— MERCIA HOBSON

# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CALL 703-549-0004

FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION

ELECTRICAL	
<b>K &amp; D ELECTRIC</b>	
COMMERCIAL / RESIDENTIAL SERVICE	
Family Owned & Operated	
Recessed Lighting	Licensed/Bonded/Insured
Ceiling Fans	Office 703-335-0654
Phone/CATV	Mobile 703-499-0522
Computer Network Cabling	lektrkman28@gmail.com
Service Upgrades	
Hot Tubs, etc...	

LANDSCAPING	
<b>Quality Tree Service &amp; Landscaping</b>	
Reasonable prices. Licensed & insured.	
	<b>Summer Cleanup...</b>
	Tree removal, topping & pruning, shrubbery trimming, mulching, leaf removal, planting, hauling, gutter cleaning, retaining walls, drainage problems, etc.
25 years of experience – Free estimates	
<b>703-868-5358</b>	
<b>24 Hour Emergency Tree Service</b>	

Landscape Drainage	Landscape Drainage
A JES Services, Inc Company	
Eco-Friendly Landscape Drainage Experts	
Drainage, Erosion, Landscaping, Hardscaping, Patios, Retaining Walls & More	
Your Neighborhood Company since 1987!	
<b>703-772-0500 www.ProDrainage.com</b>	
VA. Licensed Class A Contractor	

Sign up for **FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION** to any or all of our 15 papers

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



## Get a 24-step vehicle inspection for just \$20

Since 1933, the Safety Inspection Program has helped keep Virginia's motorists safe, with affordable annual checkups that ensure your car – and all those around you – are roadworthy, reliable and ready to go. Learn more at [vasafetyinspection.com](http://vasafetyinspection.com).



# COVID Turned Her Life Upside Down

## COVID long hauler gives back and fights back.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Not all races are about the time; sometimes, they are about the athlete knowing she is stronger with the support of others, allowing her to thrive. When Taralyn Tharp Kohler of Reston enters the finish chute of the 26.2-mile run course of the 2022 IRONMAN Cozumel after completing the 2.4-mile open ocean swim and the 112-mile bike course on Nov. 21, she will not be alone.

Ten miles off the eastern coast of the Yucatán Peninsula, in Quintana Roo estado (state), southeastern Mexico, Kohler will be running under the wings of loved ones, her son, Quinton, 19, daughter, Kailyn, 17, her COVID pod, friends who became family, and a new supporter.

A year ago, Kohler could barely walk, part of a group of people called COVID, “long haulers.” Now she is running again and living her passions. “We are so proud of our mom. She’s always encouraged us to shoot for the stars,” said Quinton and Kailyn.

The ironman will not be Kohler’s most grueling race. She says she is a comeback story, not a pity party. The Connection first interviewed Kohler on March 12, 2021. The date approached the first anniversary of Virginia’s 2020 COVID lock-down, but more significantly, it neared a day forever burned in Kohler’s brain and one that changed her life, March 23, 2020. Kohler said she recalled phoning her physician, feeling very sick and saying, “I may have COVID.”

According to Kohler, she might have been one of the first COVID-19 patients in Reston. Kohler competed in seven half-ironman competitions before being infected with the virus and “was in stellar shape” when she got COVID.

“I had a lot of different symptoms; I vividly remember, like I had an alien in my stomach, with child-birth level pains. It was excruciating. I had headaches, chills, and absolutely no energy, where you are so sick you cannot walk down the stairs to get medicine,” Kohler said in the March 2021 interview. Symptoms proved debilitating and long-lasting.

“I quarantined myself and tried to get back up ... and resume life... Kohler said. “I felt like I had adult mono, no energy for a month and a half, and brain fog... Weeks later, I realized I couldn’t taste or smell,” she said. [Then] my hair started coming out in gobs ...I had really odd rashes and still do, like the one I have now,” Kohler said, showing her arm. “All of these are COVID long hauler symptoms,” she added.

Time passed after the initial COVID symptoms. Kohler recalled that in August of 2020, she experienced extremely high blood pressure. In the emergency room, doctors told



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Taralyn Tharp Kohler, COVID long hauler, donates convalescent plasma at Inova Health.**



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Taralyn Tharp Kohler, Olympian Andy Potts, and Gail Gottfried at Legacy Triathlon in Alamitos Beach, Long Beach, Calif., in July 2021.**

Kohler her high blood pressure and other symptoms were consistent with a condition called COVID-19 syndrome or “long COVID.”

A positive antibody test indicated Kohler’s body had produced antibodies as part of her immune response to COVID. Long COVID affects otherwise healthy people as well as those with underlying conditions, the young and old alike. Kohler, an endurance athlete, had gone from working out two hours a day pre-Covid to barely walking around the block as a diagnosed COVID long hauler.

Undaunted, Kohler committed to help others and help herself. In August 2020, the Food and Drug Administration announced an Emergency Use Authorization for convalescent plasma for patients with COVID-19. With the fight against COVID escalating in the United States, Kohler donated her blood plasma as a possible treatment for hospitalized patients with active COVID-19 infections.

Now, since spring of 2021, she was rebuilding her fitness, getting back on her bike and back into the pool, trying to figure out how to do things differently to get her body to respond and “work at a pace that it want-



PHOTO BY TARALYN THARP KOHLER

**Taralyn Tharp Kohler is treated at Fair Oaks Inova Hospital Emergency Room for extremely high blood pressure, a possible COVID long hauler symptom.**



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**On the road to recovery and thriving, Taralyn Tharp Kohler and her son Quinton prepare to skydive.**

ed to work at.”

“When I started running in the spring, I couldn’t run a mile,” she said.

She regained some of her strength but wanted greater improvement. “I’m also a level one, USA Triathlon certified coach. I got my certification during COVID. So, I decided I would try to coach myself. ... But what I found out is, I can’t coach myself,” she said.

Kohler participated in the Legacy Triathlon in Alamitos Beach, Long Beach, California, last month, July of this year. The inaugural event was part of the lead-up to Los Angeles’ 2028 Olympics. Long Beach is poised to host water polo, handball, Triathlon (Olympic and Paralympic), marathon swimming, BMX racing, and sailing. While she has crossed many finish lines, Kohler said that the Legacy Tri meant the most to her for various reasons and not because of her time. It was not a personal best.

At the Legacy Tri, Kohler said she was “incredibly honored and humbled to be part of history in the making [and] be surrounded by such an inspirational, accomplished group of giving Olympians and amateurs.”

In one event, age-groupers like herself were paired with a former Olympic athlete in a celebrity competition to benefit USA Triathlon Foundation.

Kohler found herself partnered with Andy Potts, who competed in triathlon at the 2004 Summer Olympics and was 2007 Ironman 70.3 World Champion.

Potts agreed to coach Kohler. “[Kohler’s] great attitude and desire to learn and improve are exactly what will help her reach her goals,” said Potts. “I am so excited to work with Taralyn.... She is open to new ideas and also willing to put in the work.”

Kohler continues to work toward the November 2022 IRONMAN Cozumel. “I’ll cross that finish line taking everyone with me who’s been on this journey.”

“Stronger Together was the hashtag we used with CORE,” said Kohler, who is Executive Director of the Reston-based CORE Foundation.

Calling herself “a badass” in her determination to knock down COVID, her teenage children picked up on the phrase.

“It’s inspiring to see her setting an example and kicking butt,” said Quinton and Kailyn.