

# Great Falls CONNECTION

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After a morning hike at Great Falls Park, it is a stop at the Great Falls Creamery for Dawn Tilley and Heather Wilson.



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## Pandemic Evolution — Not Ending as Hoped

Local health leaders forecast endemic management.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

People in Fairfax County will need to learn how to navigate COVID-19 as individuals and in their communities because we probably cannot eradicate the virus. Hope for herd immunity is fading for multiple reasons, even though many people are vaccinated.

The pandemic is expected to become endemic, something we learn to live with and manage as it circulates, mutates, and lands on every doorstep across the globe.

High rates of COVID vaccination along with common-sense mitigation measures should mean COVID-19 can be controlled, say local experts, including Benjamin Schwartz, M.D., Medical Epidemiologist for Fairfax County Health Department, and Thomas Taghon, D.O., MHA, Chief Medical Officer at HCA Healthcare Reston Hospital Center.

The highly contagious Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 may not be the last or the worst variant people in Fairfax County see, given that so much of the world is not vaccinated.

In separate interviews, Schwartz and Taghon indicated that we are unlikely to attain COVID zero. They each shared how best to manage the contagious virus and navigate the disruption to everyday lives.

Schwartz oversees health concerns for the county's population of 1,171,848 residents. Taghon oversees the 209-bed Reston Hospital Center.

**Dr. Benjamin Schwartz,  
Fairfax County Health  
Department Director  
of Epidemiology and  
Population Health**

Schwartz said that in Fairfax County, since the middle of June, they have seen an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases. "Our community transmission level increased from being low at that time to now where it currently is defined as high transmission," he said. Schwartz noted that in no way has the level been at rates seen in Florida or Louisiana or the other states that have lower vaccination rates. Increasing case numbers reflect the Delta variant, but higher vaccination rates here have led to lower hospitalizations and deaths.

Schwartz said that the variants were named [by World Health Organization] using letters of the Greek alphabet, i.e., Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, easier to pronounce. For example, the B.1.1.7 variant, first identified in the United Kingdom, is known as Alpha.

Schwartz said that the County dashboard



Fairfax County Health Department Director of Epidemiology and Population Health  
Dr. Benjamin Schwartz.

reported on Sept. 3 that in Fairfax County, among all residents 18 years and above, the vaccination rate with at least one dose was at 78.8 percent, and 71.7 percent were fully vaccinated.

Schwartz said he thought that COVID was going to be a "part of our viral ecosystem."

"We won't be able to eliminate it, but with high rates of vaccination and high levels of immunity in the population, it will be controlled," he said.

Schwartz said that there are endemic diseases with seasonal outbreaks, such as influenza.

"Each fall and winter respiratory syncytial virus or RSV is part of our viral ecosystem and every year causes disease outbreaks," said Schwartz. "So, I think seeing occasional peaks of the viruses is again just part of the viruses that we have in our community is one likely future for Coronavirus as well."

There are two ways to develop immunity to COVID-19, by being vaccinated or by getting the disease.

"If people develop immunity, what we are going to see are lower levels of infection, and the infections that do occur are not going to have the severe consequences."

At some point, Schwartz said children would get authorization to receive the vaccine and that will be very significant. "We will have the ability to achieve high levels of immunity across our populations, and I think the rates of disease ... and the number of outbreaks are going to go down substantially."

Schwartz reinforced the use of the well-promoted mitigation measures, especially masks. "But I don't think we need to envision a future where these measures are necessarily part of our daily lives. The ability to achieve population-wide immunity is just

really the most important thing that we can do," he said.

**Thomas Taghon, D.O.,  
MHA Chief Medical  
Officer at HCA  
Healthcare Reston  
Hospital Center**

Taghon said what they have seen at Reston Hospital since early to mid-July is a sustained increase in the number of COVID patients, from the single digits up to the teens, both coming through the emergency room and admitted to the hospital.

"The patients who are being admitted to the hospital, are for the vast majority not vaccinated, and as a percentage, the number that is requiring a higher level of service, including in the intensive care unit, is higher than we have seen previously," said Taghon. "While the number of patients was not as high as earlier in the pandemic, the percentage that is requiring ICU care has increased. "So, patients are sicker. I am cautiously optimistic that it has leveled off. But some of the models suggest that we may see a continued increased number of patients here throughout September and October." He added that most patients have the Delta variant because that is the data they see from across Virginia.

Asked his thoughts if we could ever attain a "COVID zero," Taghon said, he thought it difficult to imagine any time soon. The reasons are probably include vaccine hesitancy and low vaccination rates in parts of the

U.S. We could continue to see different variants emerge from around the world because we're such a globally connected society, Taghon said.

"Things don't stay local. They spread," Taghon said. "I think we are going to have to learn how to deal with it, keep ourselves safe and treat these patients."

Asked if we were transitioning from a pandemic to endemic, a continuous COVID activity level we live with, Taghon said he thought that we were "starting to see that play out now." The virus continues to evolve with new variants detected, some more infectious than others and vaccination rates variable. "From that perspective, I do think there's going to be sort of this level of infection that's in the community or endemic ... going forward."

Learning how best to navigate life with COVID-19 is still an evolving situation, but we are learning all the time, Taghon said. "What I would say is the following. One, I would continue to encourage everybody to become vaccinated. I think that's the best defense that we have right now."

"Stay connected to the news," Taghon said. "Talk with your health care providers so that when those recommendations come out, you are aware of them, and you can decide with your doctor when and if you should get a booster. That's the second part," he said.

"And the third part is to continue to be smart when you wear a mask... Masking is still advisable whether or not it is required by the government," Taghon said. "And other things like good hygiene... If nothing

else that protects you against the spread of a host of other viral and bacterial infectious diseases that can compound the problem."

**Global Vaccine Shortfall**

The world's poorest countries are facing the Delta variant with too few vaccines and too late to halt the pandemic.

As of Sept. 3, 40.2 percent of the world population had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, but only 1.8 percent of people in low-income countries had received at least one dose, according to Our World Data, an International COVID-19 vaccination dataset.

"Vaccine injustice is a shame on all humanity, and if we don't tackle it together, we will prolong the acute stage of this pandemic for years when it could be over in a matter of months," said World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus at a media briefing on Aug. 18.

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Thomas Taghon, DO MHA,  
Chief Medical Officer at  
Reston Hospital Center.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## When Odds Are Stacked Against the Many ...

BY ANDRES JIMENEZ

Out of many, one. It's a phrase carved into marble facades across Washington and the United States and woven into the founding fabric of our country. Whenever a moment arises where the odds are stacked against the many, unification is usually the only path forward -- unite or die.

This principle has been at the foundation of the three great passions of my professional life. First, I've spent decades fighting for our environment. I've seen that when it comes to tackling problems on a global scale, we need unified voices to carry a loud message to those that need to hear it.

Second, I fight every day to diversify organizations. I know that when a group of people don't have a seat at the table that it's time to get a bigger table.

And last but not least, I've always stood shoulder-to-shoulder with my brothers and sisters in the labor movement. Their fight is the fight of all working families everywhere and they know that there's always strength in numbers.

For generations union members have organized, vocalized, and realized better outcomes for not only

**We need our local leaders to set an example for the type of world class workers' rights that will attract and keep working families, budding professionals, and hungry entrepreneurs here.**

themselves and their co-workers, but the betterment of all in our society. The core mission of a labor union is to take the key components that make up a company (its employees) and unify them to provide equal and solid footing for the fair and equitable treatment of its workforce and serve as an example to all others. In essence, it is the most American, democratic, and equitable thing I can think of. It is no wonder that the United States is a global leader on workers' rights -- it's in our society's DNA to fight for what's right.

Yet, it's not enough to simply know this. You have to understand it, appreciate it, and build upon it. That's why I'm hopeful that not only will the Commonwealth of Virginia continue to welcome this new era of labor organizing with open arms, but that my home locality of Fairfax County will usher it in by leading the way on thoughtful, respectful, and forward-thinking

collective bargaining.

Fairfax County has a rich tradition of tackling new, complex problems head on. It's that spirit that's transformed this area into one of the country's most diverse, beautiful, and prosperous economic engines. However, it's not enough to attract world class businesses to our community. We already offer incredible schools, safety, and transportation. Now we need our local leaders to set an example for the type of world class workers' rights that will attract and keep working families, budding professionals, and hungry entrepreneurs here. The Board of Supervisors can do that by passing a meaningful collective bargaining ordinance.

If we're going to live out the values we preach; if we're going to stand up in front of working families year after year and tell them we're here to fight with them; if we're going to truly live up to the One Fairfax policy, then we need

to admit that out of the many that make up Fairfax County, we can never be one until we recognize that its most significant constituency is that of its dedicated workforce across every industry.

Whether you're a fellow civil servant, advocate, worker, or simply a citizen that appreciates a 40-hour workweek, a newfound ability to work from home, or the sacrifices so many made to keep our community afloat through this pandemic, I encourage you to reflect on the many benefits we've all reaped from generations of labor organizing, learn more about how pivotal a tool collective bargaining truly is, and call on the County to pass collective bargaining today.

*Andres Jimenez is an at-large Planning Commissioner in Fairfax County and sits on the Commonwealth's Attorneys Advisory Council on Criminal Justice Reform, among other community service positions.*

## Visit to a Sausage Factory Redistricting, now in public.

BY DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM

The quotation, "Laws are like sausages, better not to see them being made," has been attributed to several different writers and scholars over the years. Regardless of who said it first, that person had obviously observed law making and sausage making up close. Because of its messiness, there has been a tendency on the part of legislators to do the work behind closed doors without the public being able to see the trade-offs, the bloodletting, and the deal-making that is so much a part of the legislative compromise inherent in passing complex legislation.

At no time has the reference to legislative sausage making been more relevant than in the constitutionally-mandated requirement that a census be conducted every decade and that the results of the counting of all the people be used to draw legislative districts that adhere to the Baker v Carr Supreme Court ruling of one person, one vote. Although the case was not decided until 1962, the abuses that occurred with the malapportionment of legislative bodies are

as old as the republic.

In his definitive book on the subject, *Gerrymanders: How Redistricting Has Protected Slavery, White Supremacy, and Partisan Minorities in Virginia*, (University of Virginia Press, 2019), historian Brent Tarter focuses on Virginia's long history of gerrymandering. Tarter exposes practices going back to nineteenth century and colonial times and explains how they protected landowners' and slave owners' interests. The consequences of redistricting and reapportionment in modern Virginia clearly thwarted the will of the majority and held the state back in many regards.

I was in the House of Delegates in the majority party in some instances and in the minority in others for the redistricting of 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, before the redistricting that is currently taking place. In all those redistricting processes prior to the one underway, the decision making took place behind closed doors without public involvement. During those stressful events in which the future control of the legislature for the next decade was decided by the majority party, there were deliberate decisions to put

legislators of the minority party in the same district to make them run against each other or to have one retire. There was much gnashing of teeth and figuratively bloody struggles as power was divided up. The absolute assertion of power of one group of politicians over another in rooms outside public view was at times horrifying. Both Democrats and Republicans were equally guilty. In almost every instance the action was appealed to the courts that often overturned the work of the legislature for its lack of equal protection of everyone.

The voters took charge of the process with the approval last year of an amendment to establish a commission to do the work of drawing legislative boundary lines. The major difference between the past way of doing redistricting is that the process, as complex and messy as it may be, is open to public view in every instance. There will be complaints as there always are that there are winners and losers as there always are. What will

be missing are the domination of one party over another and strict partisanship as the guiding principle for the work that is being done. The result I believe when the grinding and stuffing carried out by the commission is done will be a better "sausage" with which to govern the Commonwealth.

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## NEWS

# Great Falls Creamery, Where Summer Doesn't End Icy treats pair well with Great Falls Park.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
GREAT FALLS CONNECTION

**P**ossibly only one thing can accentuate a morning hike at Great Falls Park and keep summer from coming to a close.

Heather Wilson and her friend Dawn Tilley had arrived at the park early Saturday morning, it opens at 7 a.m. to spend some time outdoors, experience the various hiking trails, and watch the waters of the Potomac River build up speed and fall over the jagged rocks.

Great Falls Park has 800 acres of opportunities to explore nature and history. It is, as the National Park Service calls the park on its website, "a destination for recreation."

The pair of hikers turned up shortly after noon at another destination, an icy one where people celebrate life's events, big and small, like a morning hike. Hot and

sweaty, the duo stopped for a cool down at the Great Falls Creamery, 766 Walker Road in the Village Center, to check out the buzz about the place. It has been a fixture in the local community since 2014 when Patti McKeown and her husband, Gary, opened the family business,

Wilson and Tilly placed orders for sorbets. Wilson said she is new to the area. "I love living so close to a National Park with differ-



From left, after a morning hike at Great Falls Park, it is a stop at the Great Falls Creamery for Dawn Tilley and Heather Wilson.

ent trails to hike."

They had seen something that morning they'd remember for a while, Tilley said. "People kayaking over the falls. Over. They landed on a rock."

The kayakers were fine. "They went past and then did it again."

Entrance fees and Great Falls Park annual passes may be purchased online at Recreation.gov.

to remember those we lost and honor those who served on Sept. 11, 2001. Now, 20 years later, we come together in remembrance at Fairfax County's Fire Station 10, where many first responders deployed from to assist at the Pentagon. This ceremony is taking place in the afternoon in order to accommodate the Pentagon's 9/11 Ceremony and morning volunteer activities at the Government Center. RSVP to [publicaffairs@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:publicaffairs@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### MONDAY/SEPT. 13

About Time Travel. 5-6 p.m. Via Zoom Meeting. Dr. Robert Ehrlich, professor emeritus and former chair of the Physics and Astronomy Department at GMU, discusses the possibility of time travel and how one might build a time machine. Free. Registration is required. Register here:

<https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/7979664>

A Zoom link will be sent the day before the event.

### SEPT. 14, 28

Great Falls resident and expert on native plant  
SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

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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.

### SATURDAY/SEPT. 11

Fairfax County 20th Anniversary 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony. 2 p.m. At Bailey's Crossroads Volunteer Fire Department, 3601 Firehouse Lane, Falls Church. Join Fairfax County

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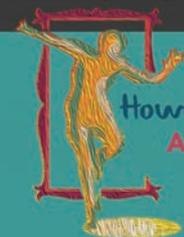
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# Facing Eviction

Virginia has new protections for renters, but temporary measures expire next year.

By MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE CONNECTION

The clock is ticking for renters across Virginia who are in danger of being evicted. Now that the federal moratorium on evictions is over, landlords are finally able to start filing paperwork at the courthouse. That means a wave of evictions could be on the horizon for people of color and low-income Virginians who have been disproportionately hit by job and income loss during the pandemic, according to data compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau.

“People are worried,” said Jon Liss, executive director at Virginia New Majority. “There’s a huge concern about a massive wave of evictions, both nationwide and in Virginia.”

Last month, members of the General Assembly approved a new protection for renters who are struggling to make ends meet. Landlords who want to evict tenants for non-payment of rent are now required to apply for federal relief before evicting anyone. That’s just one of the many new requirements on landlords, who must wait 45 days to move forward with an eviction if a rent relief application is under consideration. Ultimately, though, those temporary protections will run out June 30, 2022.

“We’re concerned that the lifting of the CDC moratorium will embolden landlords to increase their mass eviction filings,” said Larisa Zehr, a legal fellow at the Legal Aid Justice Center. “Mass eviction filings are always a problem in Virginia, but that will be an increased problem right now because so many people are still struggling to pay rent because of the pandemic.”

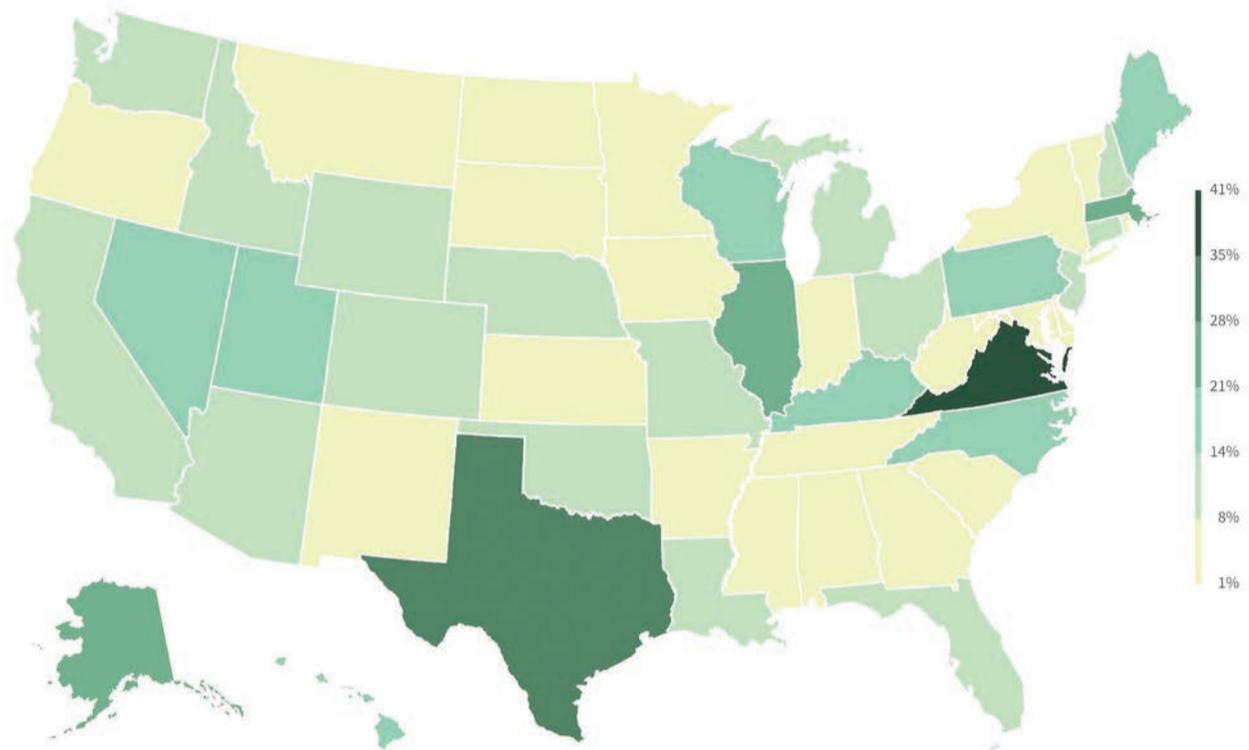
**THE FEDERAL MORATORIUM** on evictions was issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in September 2020. The United States Supreme Court struck down that moratorium last month, opening the door to landlords across the country evicting people who have not been able to pay the rent. Here in Northern Virginia, low-income people are likely to spend 50 percent of their income on rent. The Department of Housing and Urban Development suggests households spend no more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs, which means many people in Northern Virginia were caught in a trap.

“You took a very vulnerable population that was walking a financial tightrope every month to get the rent paid, and you just pulled out tightrope,” said Christie Marra, director of housing advocacy for the Virginia Poverty Law Center. “If these tenants get evicted for not paying their rent, that becomes what I call the Scarlet E.”

Marra says don’t expect a sudden rush to evict tenants based on violations of leases that have nothing to do with non-payment of rent. Landlords who wanted to get rid of a tenant for damage or drugs have been able to evict those problem tenants all along, which is why Marra bristles at the word

## Texas and Virginia have distributed the largest percent of funds

2021  
Percent of first round emergency rental assistance money spent by local and state governments, as of June 30th

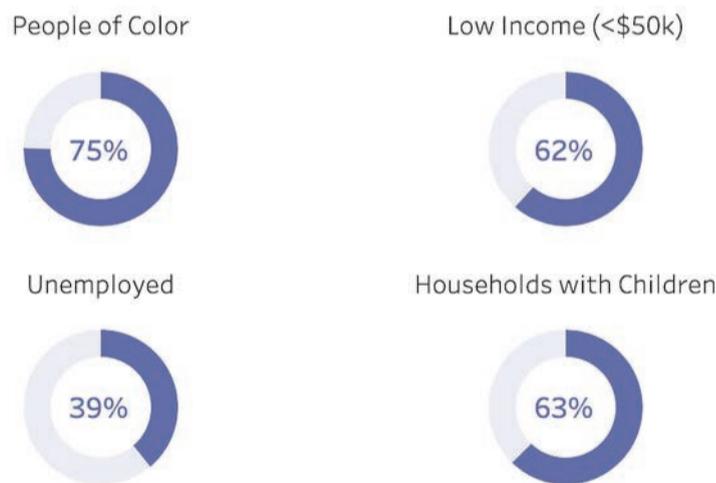


USAFACTS

Virginia has spent more than a third of its federal rental assistance funds, a much higher percentage than most states in the race to get the funds to renters who are facing eviction.

## Those behind on rent are overwhelmingly low-income households who have experienced job and income losses during the pandemic.

Characteristics of Renters Behind on Rent



NATIONAL EQUITY ATLAS

People of color and low-income people in Virginia are disproportionately more likely to have experienced job and income losses during the pandemic.

“moratorium.” The CDCs order applied to people who were unable to pay their rent, not for other reasons. That means the people who are now at-risk of being kicked out of their homes are low-income people struggling to make ends meet during a pandemic.

“There has never been 100 percent protection for tenants,” said Marra, noting that Virginia ranks poorly in terms of protections for renters.

**LANDLORDS AND TENANTS** have been in a state of suspended animation since the

pandemic struck. Normal rules of economics no longer applied, and evictions were put on the back burner to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Many landlords are eager to get rid of renters they view as deadbeats, holding down a property without paying the bill. During the Virginia Senate debate on the new requirement for landlords to seek federal assistance before evicting anyone, state Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) argued that he didn’t want to require too much of property owners.

“We’re changing the terms of the con-

“If these tenants get evicted for not paying their rent, that becomes what I call the Scarlet E.”

— Christie Marra,  
director of housing advocacy for  
the Virginia Poverty Law Center

tracts. These people already have written leases,” said Petersen, who is often an outlier in the Senate Democratic Caucus. “They have residential leases, and to try to add these additional obstacles, it’s not correct.”

Here in Alexandria, city officials are planning to invest in a workforce of people known as “navigators” who can work with landlords and tenants to help apply for federal rental relief. Eventually, though, all that federal assistance will dry up. Tenants who have not been able to pay the rent since the pandemic struck will be facing eviction, and then the challenge of finding a new place to live with a paper trail that includes nonpayment of rent.

“I think there’s a big backlog of cases, and the first period will probably be a bit rugged,” said Stephen Haner, senior fellow at the Thomas Jefferson Institute. “In the long run, I think the changes Virginia has made will make eviction harder two years from now, five years from now, six years from now. And you will see fewer evictions.”

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## HOME LIFESTYLE

# Mud Room Design that Keep Chaos at Bay

Style and function combine to create an organized space.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

A mud room is a small space with a big job. It needs to be hearty enough to stand up to items ranging from muddy soccer cleats to overflowing backpacks is no small feat. Local designers share ideas that marry style and function.

“Mudrooms continue to be a popular request when renovating as young families search for ways to organize backpacks, school books, sports equipment, team uniforms, cleats and sneakers,” said Stephen Gordon, president of InSite Builders & Remodeling, based in Bethesda, Md. “Traditionally, mud rooms were attached to or an extension of the garage; however, I’m seeing a trend towards placing mud rooms in a wider variety of locations throughout a home — off a kitchen or eating area, at a basement entrance, and even as an addition on the front of a house.”

When creating a mud room, assessing your needs is the first step. “A mud room is a great landing zone for everyone’s shoes, jackets and backpacks,” said Jessica Parker Wachtel, GTM Architects. “A few must-haves include a locker or cubbie for each family member, a dog washing station, and a closet for additional out-of-season jackets. Each member of the family can have their own hooks and baskets for extra storage. Additional elements to consider include durable flooring and lots of baskets.”

The purpose of a home’s mud room will vary, but organization is the end goal. “For families, mud rooms serve as a great drop zone for everyday items [such as] car keys, purse, wallet, shoes, coats, jackets, dog leashes, kids’ sports equipment and backpacks,” said Danielle Steele, Lead Designer, Marks-Woods Construction Services, based in Alexandria. “Having a dedicated mud room prevents clutter from happening in other areas of



PHOTO BY JENN VERRIER

Mud rooms serve as a great drop zone for everyday items — car keys, purse, wallet, shoes, coats, jackets, dog leashes, kids’ sports equipment and backpacks, advises Danielle Steele, designer for Marks-Woods Construction Services.

“Having a dedicated mud room prevents clutter from happening in other areas of the home.”

— Danielle Steele,  
Marks-Woods Construction Services

the home.”

Function might be the impetus for including a mud room in the design of a home, but elements of style can be just as important.

“[They] are the perfect place for a surprise, whether it’s crazy wallpaper, a colorful floor, brightly painted cubbies, or a whimsical light fixture,” said Annie Elliott, Annie Elliott Design. “Because mud rooms are separate from the main living area, they don’t have to match anything else in the house, and they don’t have to stay tidy. They’re chaotic spaces by nature so why not have a little fun?”



PHOTOS BY STACY ZARIN GOLDBERG



Mud rooms continue to be popular as young families search for ways to organize backpacks, school books, sports equipment, team uniforms, cleats and sneakers, says Stephen Gordon, InSite Builders & Remodeling.

Mud rooms are the perfect place for a surprise, whether it’s crazy wallpaper, a colorful floor, brightly painted cubbies, or a whimsical light fixture says Annie Elliott of Annie Elliott Design.

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# 7th Annual Paint Great Falls Plein Air Event



Artist Debra Dartez sets up at Great Falls Park to paint for Paint Great Falls Plein Air Competition.



Pattee Hipschen paints in plein air (outdoors) at a 250 year-old farm in Great Falls.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Quick Paint participants Theresa Miller (left) and Jay Pigeon (right) find a spot in the Village Centre to complete a painting in 2 hours for judging.



Sept. 8 – 12, 30 artists will converge to compete in the 7th Annual Paint Great Falls Plein Event. This year's competition is sponsored by The Arts of Great Falls with prizes by Celebrate Great Falls Foundation. This is the largest to date with 30 participating artists, to include several award-winning artists from the DMV area.

Painting en plein air, outside without the use of a photo reference, is a challenging event. There

are elements such as heat, changing light, rain and insects that studio artists do not have. That's what makes this event exciting. This year, artists will find spots within Great Falls to create art on scene. The public is encouraged to engage and watch the artists at work.

In addition to the daily plein air painting, there will be a Quick Draw event in the Great Falls Village Centre on Friday, Sept. 10, 6 - 8 p.m. The Quick Draw is an excellent opportunity for the public

to view artists painting in their element in changing light. In just two hours, artists will identify a composition and complete a painting that will be judged. Quick Draws are popular activities during plein air events. The Arts of Great Falls is excited to bring this activity to Paint Great Falls.

The Judge for the Paint Great Falls event is Gavin Glakas and the judge for the Quick Paint is Marcia Klioze. All artwork will be available for viewing on our online

gallery, at <https://greatfallsart.org/exhibits/and> by appointment.

The paintings will hang in The Arts of Great Falls Gallery through Sunday, Sept. 26. Artwork can be viewed at OPEN HOURS, Saturdays, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. or by ap-

pointment. All art is for sale and proceeds will benefit The Arts of Great Falls foundation.

The Arts of Great Falls is a non-profit organization bringing art and art education to the community.

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## Unusual Increases For Car Tax

About 12% of Fairfax County residents will see an increase in their car tax bills because of the pandemic.

The average increase is \$25 compared to last year for vehicles valued at \$20,000 or less, say Fairfax County tax officials. The county wants to notify taxpayers now as personal property tax bills begin to go out in the mail.

What's driving the rise in tax bills for some vehicle owners? The low supply and high demand for used and new cars are pushing prices to record levels. Automakers have been hit by a global computer chip shortage due to the pandemic that's hampering their ability to build new cars. As such, many car buyers have turned to used vehicles instead, driving prices higher.

While a car's value normally decreases every year it ages, the price tag for used vehicles has been climbing steadily since last year. Low interest rates and stimulus payments are also helping to fuel car purchases, pushing prices higher.

Fairfax County bases car taxes

on a vehicle's value on the J.D. Power Used Car Guide. For most vehicles, the value is based on the "Clean Trade-in Value" as of Jan. 1 of the tax year.

Car owners can file an appeal of their taxes if they believe their vehicle has been overassessed. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/taxes/vehicles/appealing-your-vehicle-assessment> A vehicle's value can be appealed based on body damage, rusting or high mileage.

Car owners still must pay their tax bill by the due date.

Car tax bills are due on Tuesday, Oct. 5. Paying online is quick and easy, and it's free to use an e-check. The county offers other payment options, and cash or money order payments can also be placed in the red drop-off boxes at the Fairfax County Government Center. Additional drop-off locations at select library branches will be available starting Sept. 15.

Visit the Fairfax County Department of Tax Administration at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/taxes/> or call 703-222-8234, TTY 711.

# ENTERTAINMENT

## WOLF TRAP PERFORMANCES

At Wolf Trap Farm Park  
September 14 – Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit with special guest Waxahatchee  
September 22 – Indigo Girls with special guest Ani DiFranco  
Visit [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org) for tickets. By phone at 877.WOLFTRAP

## ALEXANDRIA OLD TOWN ART FESTIVAL

19th Annual Alexandria Old Town Art Festival  
Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Sunday, Sept. 19, 2021, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Where: 300 John Carlyle St. in Alexandria, VA  
Free Admission  
<http://www.artfestival.com/festivals/19th-annual-alexandria-old-town-art-festival>

## SEPT. 3-30

Transitions to Abstractions -- Five Painters.  
Exhibition at the Great Falls Library, Large Meeting Room, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. A collective of local painters show their work at the Great Falls Library. The show features a group of experienced artists who began working in more abstract painting after exploring other mediums and styles. Featured artists include two sculptors and an architect. They are a part of the Great Falls Studios group.

## THURSDAY/SEPT. 9

Reston and Mid-Century Modern. 7-9 p.m. At 1639 Washington Plaza, Reston. All virtual program. This presentation showcases early Reston interiors, exploring how mid-century modern style and architecture influenced their look and use. Learn about Reston's early designers, see how interiors were furnished, and how Registration Required. Free.

## FRIDAY/SEPT. 10

Friday Night Live. 6:30 p.m. At Herndon Town Green, Herndon. Popular free outdoor concert series returns to regular performances. This will be the 27th season for the concert series which is produced by the Herndon Chamber of Commerce.

### Schedule

Sept 10 -- Keaton + 8 Track Jones;  
Sept 17 -- The Reflex;  
Sept 24 -- Screaming Mönkeys.

## SEPT 10-19

Ken Ludwig's Sherwood: "The Adventures of Robin Hood." At NextStop Theater Company in Herndon. NextStop will create an open-air theatre in the parking lot of the Northwest Federal Credit Union headquarters in Herndon. This production will give audiences the chance

to come together with their neighbors for a rip-roaring romp through Sherwood Forest, featuring all the thrills and romance you could possibly ask for. Flying arrows, clanging swords, and perilous feats of daring fill this not-so-ye-olde tale of everyone's favorite hero outlaw and his noble quest to steal from the rich and give to the poor.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 11

Storytime Live. 10:30-12:30 p.m. At Kiddie Academy South Riding, 43060 Edgewater Street, South Riding.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 11

Clifton Caboose 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run. 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk starts at 6 p.m. 5K Run starts at 6:30 p.m. Intersection of Clifton Rd, Newman Rd, and Main St, Clifton. A 5K Run and 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk beginning in Clifton. The scenic course winds down a gently rolling country road, across a creek, and past a horse or two.

Early Pick-Up/Registration: Cash/Check only. Friday, September 11, 5-7 p.m. at the Barn 7139 Main St, Clifton. Race Day Registration and Pick up packets (cash/check only) from 4:00-5:30 pm at the Barn, 7139 Main St., Clifton. Cost: 5K Run - \$25, One-Mile Fun Run/Walk - \$20. Visit the website: <https://c25k.com>



Parinaz Bahadori's "Peace in Pieces" is part of the Transitions to Abstractions -- Five Painters exhibition at the Great Falls Library.

[redpodium.com/clifton-caboose-5k-run-c25k](http://redpodium.com/clifton-caboose-5k-run-c25k)

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 12

Concert on the Green. 6-8 p.m. At the Village Centre Green, behind the Old Brogue, Great Falls. Featuring Four Star Combo Band. Sponsored by Rossen Landscape.

## MONDAY/SEPT. 13

Lawn Care Issues. 7 p.m. At Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Fairfax County Master Gardener Tony Makara will discuss with GFCA EP members lawn care issues that are best addressed in the Fall and also environmentally friendly. Tony will talk about the advantages of healthy turf, particularly as it protects the Fairfax County Watershed and ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay. Tony will suggest what to expect from lawn services and what questions to ask them regarding their use of fertilizer, herbicides, etc.

## TUESDAY/SEPT. 14

Author Mary Lipsey. 7-8:30 p.m. At Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. Local author Mary Buckingham Lipsey will discuss, sell and sign her book *Almost Forgotten Women: Yesterday's Headliners*, which includes the stories of over 60 women between the years of 1840 and 1940 who made a difference. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/7885646>

## WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 15

Movies for Kids and Families. 12:30 p.m. in the McLean Community Center Community Hall. Bring an indoor picnic and introduce your kids to the animated movies that you love. Free.

## SEPT. 16-26

"Bo-Nita." At Boro Park at The Boro Tysons, 350 Broad Street, Tysons. When: September 16 at 8:00 p.m., September 17 at 8:00 p.m., September 18 at 8:00 p.m., September 19 at 8:00 p.m., September 22 at 8:00 p.m., September 23 at 8:00 p.m., September 24 at 8:00 p.m., September 25 at 8:00 p.m., and September 26 at 8:00 p.m. Tickets: More information about tickets and event details are available at [www.1ststage.org](http://www.1ststage.org)

## FRIDAY/SEPT. 17

Celebrate Garba (Sharad Navratri) Workshop (Virtual). 6 p.m. At The Alden at McLean Community Center, McLean. When people in the northwestern Indian state of Gujarat want to celebrate, the ecstatic dance, traditionally known as Garba, often provides the fuel. An essential component of wedding celebrations and of the nine-day, fall Hindu festival Navratri, Garba refers to both a style of Indian folk dance as well as the event at which the dance is performed. The dance is an intoxicating, high-energy dance style marked by handclaps and twirls. Purchase tickets online at [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org).

## Here's What's Happening at MCC!

### The Old Firehouse



**Friday Night Trip: Escape Room**  
Friday, Sept. 10, 4-10 p.m.  
\$60/\$50 OFC Members

### Sponsored by The Alden



**Movies for Kids and Families**  
Wednesday, Sept. 15, 12:30 p.m.  
In the MCC Community Hall  
Free admission

### Sponsored by The Alden



**Celebrate Garba (Sharad Navratri) Workshop (Virtual)**  
Friday, Sept. 17, 6 p.m.  
\$7/\$5 MCC district residents  
(fee is per device)

### The Old Firehouse



**Family Bingo Night (Virtual)**  
Friday, Sept. 17, 7-9:30 p.m.  
\$5 per person for 5 Virtual  
Bingo Cards

### The Old Firehouse



**OFC Block Party**  
Saturday, Sept. 18, 1-4 p.m.  
1440 Chain Bridge Rd.  
Free admission

### Sponsored by The Alden



**Buckets N Boards Comedy Percussion Show**  
Saturday, Sept. 18, 5 p.m.  
McLean Central Park

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[www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org)

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[www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org)

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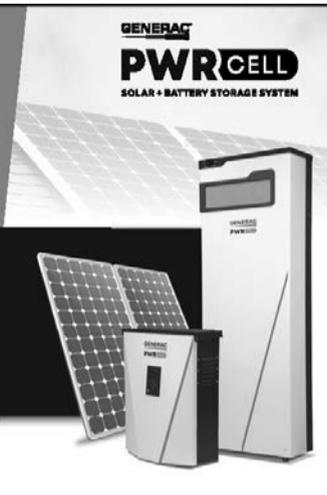
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**NEWS**

**McLean Project for the Arts Seeks Youth Art Entries for Fall Festival Submissions for MPAartfest Virtual Children's Art Walk accepted Sept. 18 and 25**

The McLean Project for the Arts (MPA) currently seeks submissions for the 15th Annual MPAartfest Children's Art Walk. A perennial favorite at MPAartfest, the Children's Art Walk is an open-air gallery of student art sponsored by the New Dominion Women's Club of McLean. This much-loved community tradition will return to McLean Central Park during MPAartfest 2021, Oct. 3, 2021 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The show will be juried and open to students in the Langley and McLean Fairfax County Public School pyramid, as well as students at private and parochial schools. Student artwork submissions are welcome Saturday, Sept. 18 and 25, 2021. Submissions may be dropped off at McLean Project for the Arts (1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean, VA 22101) from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Limit one submission per student. Artwork may be any size 11x14 or smaller. Following MPAartfest, submissions may be picked up from MPA on Oct. 9 and 16 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

McLean Project for the Arts (MPA) provides high-quality art exhibitions showcasing the work of established and emerging artists, educational programs, art classes, MPAartfest, summer art camps, and ArtReach, an award-winning program serving students in grades K – 12, seniors, and individuals with special needs. For more information, visit [www.mpaart.org](http://www.mpaart.org).

Let us know about an upcoming event

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# NEWS

## Deer Management Archery Begins Sept. 11

Fairfax County Deer Management Archery Program begins Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021 and runs through Saturday, Feb. 19, 2022. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/wildlife/archery-program>

Under the oversight of the Fairfax County Police Department, in collaboration with the Fairfax County Park Authority, NOVA Parks, and other public landholders, the archery program is conducted in parks and other locations throughout Fairfax County.

The archery program began in FY 2010 and is part of an integrated Deer Management Program to reduce and stabilize the white-tailed deer population in Fairfax County in efforts to minimize safety and health hazards and other impacts related to an overabundance of deer. These impacts include deer-vehicle collisions, potential spread of diseases, and environmental damage attributed to deer that can impact the ecosystem. The program was approved by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in 2000 and is recognized as a safe and efficient method of deer population control by the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources.

Because of its proven track record of safety, archery is a preferred deer management method in Fairfax County. Archery is a compatible use with residential areas and community parks, allowing for deer population management in urban and suburban areas. Since Virginia began tracking hunting injuries in 1959, no bystanders have been injured by an archer hunting deer anywhere in the Commonwealth. The Fairfax County Deer Management Program is conducted on approximately 100 properties countywide. Last year, archery hunters in the county program killed 823 deer. The archery program accounted for 94 percent of the total deer harvests in the Fairfax County Deer Management Program.

Fairfax County's Archery Program standards require that all archers meet state hunter licensing, education and safety requirements and must pass qualifications to demonstrate skill and marksmanship, in addition to carrying program identification. Archers are also required to have completed



FILE PHOTO

The deer archery program is designed to minimize environmental damage from deer.

additional training through the International Bowhunter Education Program to participate in the Fairfax County Deer Management Program. All archers must also pass a criminal background check to be eligible for the program.

Parks remain open to the public during the archery program. Fluorescent orange signs are posted in parks where hunting is authorized. Hunters can only take shots at deer from elevated tree stands; hunting from the ground level is prohibited in county parks. Tree stands must not be located closer than 100 feet from property lines or closer than 50 feet from established park trails. Archers are not allowed on private property without permission by the owner or tenant. Archers are approved to hunt at assigned sites Monday through Saturday during legal hunting hours, 30 minutes prior to sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

No hunting is allowed on Sundays in county parks.

More information about the Fairfax County Deer Management Program can be found at: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/wildlife/deer-management-program>

and to pick up gardening tips and advice. EP members may remember Meghan's Zoom presentation in October 2020.

### VIRGINIA STATE POLICE OFFERING NEW PAYMENT OPTIONS

Beginning Sept. 7, 2021, customers doing business in-person at Virginia State Police offices within our Fairfax Division will be able to pay using a credit or bank card. Currently customers are restricted to using business and cashier's checks or cash to pay for services such as fingerprinting and background checks. The ability to use a card to pay for Virginia State Police services will be more convenient for the public and will make processing more efficient. In-person customers will be able to pay with MasterCard, Visa or Discover, in addition to business and cashier's checks or cash at the Fairfax Division Headquarters. At the same time, Fairfax Division Area Offices will transition from accepting cash and checks to only accepting MasterCard, Visa or Discover.

### BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

gardening Meghan McGinty, Ph.D., will be offering five free clinics in September and October at Freedom Memorial in Great Falls from 11 a.m. to 12 noon. Following are the dates: September 14 and 28 October 5, 19, and 26. If interested, please register at [CultivateNature@gmail.com](mailto:CultivateNature@gmail.com). The clinics will be held rain or shine, except for extreme weather. They will be casual, question-driven sessions. Meghan is a botanist with a Ph.D. in Ecology and Environmental Biology from Columbia University. In 2013, she and her husband purchased a five acre property in Great Falls where she has slowly been restoring native plants. In addition to planting native trees in a meadow to restore forest on her property, she also has removed lawn to establish a fenced native plant garden. The garden has thrived and is now home to butterflies and songbirds, skinks, toads, native insects, hawks and so much more. Check out Meghan's Instagram account @cultivatenature to follow the seasons of her garden

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## Left Wondering If I'm Right



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I admit, I watch more than my share of television. However, that being admitted, there certainly seems to be an awful lot of campaign-style, public service-type, advertising/announcements on television. From Medicare negotiating drug prices - or denying access to much-needed medication, to building back America by fixing our infrastructure, to creating millions of climate-improving, alternative energy driven "good paying jobs" to the NRA espousing their core values that everyone should carry a gun, and on and on and on. Where it stops, nobody knows.

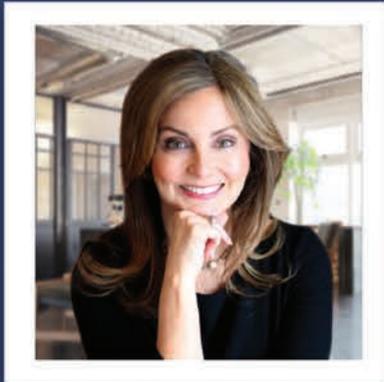
I can appreciate how important it is for one to get their message out as often as possible, but now the message is not only often, but on multiple channels. And it's not even an election year. However, it is a legislative year and there's still a few months before Christmas recess. Will all the bills presently under consideration, amid the hyper partisan politics affecting pending legislation, allow any bills to ever see the tip of President Biden's pen? Nevertheless, there appears to be no shortage of dollars to promote any and all viewpoints. Now how much of it makes sense is beyond me. But since I don't really have a direct vote, I suppose a phone call will have to suffice. It seems too little too late though. The elected officials have their own agendas, and my voice is really only heard every two years anyway.

But with the Republican Party making it ever more difficult for us average voters (those of us not already in "the Big Tent"), perhaps all these "info-type-mercials" will fall on deaf ears, so to speak, or at least attached to heads attached to bodies finding it ever more difficult to actually vote. Granted, I may not be in the minorities that seem to be particularly targeted, but I am in a minority nonetheless: the percentage of Americans that actually casts a ballot. Often elections are won not by a majority, but by a plurality. If more people voted, perhaps some of us wouldn't be so angry about a regularly disenfranchised minority being further discriminated against. It's not fair, but apparently it's partisan: divide and conquer.

And right now, with all this pointed outreach on television, I feel, as a country, we're going backwards instead of manifesting our destiny going forward. So what if there's diversity? My grandparents were part of that diversity. It's what made all of us big and strong. Obviously it's wrong to restrict access for any segment of the population. America has always been about diversity. That's what's been right about this country ever since George Washington crossed the Delaware and forever changed the fortunes of America. You can't stop a trane (and I don't mean the HVAC company) of thought that is, or change; and certainly you can't stop free speech (except in a movie theatre). It happens naturally and frequently because it's been characteristic of America ever since the Founding Fathers took quill to parchment.

Now, after some of the legislative changes which have occurred, and some others which have been "filibustered" to near death, there's a sense that what's blowin in the wind is not going to make Bob Dylan happy or guarantee my constitutional rights since I may play for the wrong team. I'm not looking to denigrate a percentage of the population, or restrict people's access to life-saving medication or censor all the news that's fit to print. Moreover, I don't want anything inhibiting my ability to find a job, raise my family, get an education or deny other groups similar opportunities. Quite frankly, I wish I could just mind my own business. Unfortunately, that seems short sighted and ill-advised. And besides, there's no "I" in my team.

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



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