



PHOTOS BY KATHERINE FOGDEN

Ron Chase, president of the Gum Springs Historical Society & Museum, waits for the coffin to move to the head of the line of protesters.

Queenie Cox, president of the New Gum Springs Civic Association, leads protesters into the street behind the coffin.

## Coffins Illustrate Deadliness of Richmond Highway — Now and Then

Pedestrian deaths along the corridor show need for safer, less vehicle-focused design.

BY MARY PADEN  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

**F**ifty-seven years ago, Gum Springs leaders brought forth the symbols of death — coffins — at a protest to illustrate the deadliness of Richmond Highway and demand a traffic light at Sherwood Hall lane.

“And here we are again,” Jube Shiver Jr. told a crowd of protesters gathered near the intersection of Richmond Highway and Sherwood Hall Lane Thursday, Sept. 9. They were there to protest the proposed widening of that intersection to 13 lanes, “wider than half a football field.”

Shiver’s father, Jube Shiver Sr., owner of Spring Garden Apartments, and Nelson Greene Sr., owner of Greene’s Funeral Home in Alexandria, planned the first protest. The second was planned by Shiver Jr. and Greene’s son Nelson Greene Jr., and granddaughter Nina, who escorted a coffin across Richmond Highway Thursday followed by a procession of sign-carrying protesters.

Organizers also included the New Gum Springs Civic Association, and the Gum Springs Historical Society & Museum.

This time they were supported by many other organizations including the South County Task Force, Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation, United Community, Fairfax NAACP, Coalition for Smarter Growth, Audubon Naturalist Society, Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling, Greater Morning



Protesters and coffin cross Richmond Highway with police assistance.



Protesters gather on the corner to march across Richmond Highway.

Star Apostolic Church, Woodlawn Faith UMC. The Mount Vernon Council of Civic Associations and the Mt. Vernon Lee Chamber of Commerce have also declared support for a narrower, safer roadway.

In a rally before the march, Fairfax NAACP President Karen Campbell noted that historically, it has been tragically common for highway projects to disrupt and destroy African American communities. Coalition for Smarter Growth chair Sonya Breehy pointed out that new urban design and road safety guidelines being proposed by the county call for narrower roads and slower vehicle speeds to enhance pedestrian safety. Jeff Gauger of the Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling pointed to two recent fatalities of cyclists as a need for safer streets.

State and local elected officials pledged to support a narrower,

SEE PEDESTRIAN DEATHS, ON PAGE 8



Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck told protesters he opposes a 13-lane intersection.

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## County Goes to Bat for River Farm in Mount Vernon

**Move is for preservation but never say never.**

By MIKE SALMON  
GAZETTE PACKET

**O**n Tuesday, Sept. 14, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors took another step to try to save the River Farm, and approved the Zoning Ordinance Amendment for Historic Overlay Districts by a vote 9-0-1, with Supervisor Herryty abstaining. This tightens up zoning restrictions, part of a continuing effort to save the land at River Farm. The zoning effort began last April when the Board of Supervisors looked to establish the land as the Wellington at River Farm Historic Overlay District (“WHOD”).

The amendment states that any locality may adopt an ordinance setting forth the historic landmarks within the locality as established by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources, and any other buildings or structures within the locality having an important historic, architectural, archaeological or cultural interest, any historic areas within the locality.

Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon) is happy with the decision, but notes that preservation is not etched in stone. “The County Board has consistently been very



Save the River Farm has been said more than once over the last year.

supportive of protecting this natural resource and committed to ensuring it remains available to future generations. I am pleased with the decision to add this additional protection to the Wellington at River Farm Historic Overlay District.

I also think the vast majority of Mount Vernon residents are very pleased with the decision, although I am not sure they understand that this protection still does not necessarily preserve the property. While this step is helpful, until the [American Horticultural

Society] Board comes to a consensus on a plan that preserves, protects and keeps River Farm open to the public, we will need to be vigilant of any actions the AHS Board takes,” Storck said.

The American Horticultural Society owns River Farm, and in May the AHS Board said they would begin formal negotiations with NOVA Parks and the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust for those organizations to buy River Farm and keep it open to the public.

But Alan Rowsome, executive director of Northern Virginia Con-

servation Trust, recently said that the AHS has not engaged in any meaningful negotiations, and has kept the property listed for sale. “It appears that a developer has submitted a letter of intent to purchase River Farm – along with several adjacent properties – to build a large-scale commercial business there,” Rowsome said. “Accepting such an offer would be a betrayal of the original intent of Enid Annenberg Haupt’s financial gift that AHS used to purchase River Farm in 1973 and would cast aside their commitment to work with local government, parks organizations, and conservation groups to ensure the future of this unique community asset.”

But with prime homes in the area selling for top prices and little land left for new development, the pressure to develop the property is likely to continue.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION



The view of the Potomac River from the farm.



This old tree is part of the landscape at River Farm.

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## NEWS



### Northam Visits United Community

Gov. Ralph Northam visited Creekside Village Apartments and Colchester Towne Condominiums to discuss urban forestry and watersheds on Thursday last week. Renee Grebe of the Audubon Naturalist Society and Jim McGlone of Virginia Department of Forestry invited United Community to show Governor Northam and Bettina Ring, Virginia's Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, the partnership between our organizations by teaching the youth involved at the Community Center about watershed conservation and urban forestry, supported by a grant from the Community Foundation of Northern Virginia. "It's not about forestry, it's about community," said Renee as she explained to Governor Northam how they work with local arborists, residents of Creekside and Colchester to ensure that the trees to be planted this winter will be a benefit to the community.



Valerie, an 8th grader who lives in Creekside Village and volunteers at the Community Center, showed Gov. Northam the resources and various activities of the Center, and how she loves to help out with the younger children after school. "It takes a village," was the Governor's response to the people who work hard to empower the local community and bring positive change.



Renee Grebe and Jim McGlone of Virginia's Department of Forestry coordinated the visit, also with Sen. Scott Surovell (36), Del. Paul Krizek (44), Casey Trees, Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services, and Fairfax County's Urban Forestry Management Division.

# 'Respond. Resolve. Results.'

City remembers 20th anniversary of 9/11 attacks.

By JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandrians from across the city gathered in Waterfront Park on the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York, Arlington, and Shanksville, Pa., and to pay homage to the first responders and nearly 3,000 victims of that day.

Rep. Don Beyer (D-8) and Mayor Justin Wilson were joined by Alexandria Sheriff Dana Lawhorne, Fire Chief Corey Smedley and Acting Chief of Police Don Hayes as more than 500 people gathered for the ceremony to remember and honor both the victims and those who responded and gave their lives in the search and rescue effort to save others.

"September 11 was an incredibly sad day," said Alexandria resident Melissa Riddy. "But the ceremony today was a beautiful reflection of what our community did and has done and it was wonderful to see everyone come together to celebrate and remember at the same time."

Alexandria lost 16 victims in the attacks and firefighters and first responders from the city were among the first to answer the emergency call at the Pentagon following the crash of American Airlines flight 77 into the building at 9:37 a.m. Victims included 64 passengers aboard the plane and another 125 in the building.

A wreath-laying and the traditional Return to Quarters bell ringing were part of the ceremony honoring the 2,977 victims of the attacks that saw passenger planes turned into missiles and silenced the skies across the country.

More than 2,700 people died at the World Trade Center, including the passengers of American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175. Another 44 died when United Flight 93 crashed outside Shanksville, Pa.

"I had just completed my paperwork to join the United States Air Force the day before the attacks," said AFD Capt. Sokthear Van. "After completing five years of service, I returned to this area to be near my family and friends and become a firefighter. I wanted something challenging and this is the perfect fit for me."

Added AFD Lt. Durant Cephers, "I was a sophomore in high school when the attacks took place. My father was in fire service so I was inspired by him and becoming a firefighter was a natural next step when I was ready for a career."

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An honor guard of first responders participates in the Waterfront Park wreath-laying ceremony commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York, Arlington and Shanksville, Pa.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Resident Patrick Andriuk was among those in attendance at the ceremony.

"Everything today was beautifully presented," Andriuk said. "But what stands out are the words of Police Chief Hayes – 'respond, resolve, results.' His words really resonated and made you think back to that powerful day."

Rep. Don Beyer (D-8) speaks at the Waterfront Park remembrance ceremony commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.



Acting Chief of Police Don Hayes, Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and Alexandria Fire Chief Corey Smedley attend the Waterfront Park remembrance ceremony commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.



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## Time to Vote

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

This Friday, Sept. 17, marks the first day of early voting here in Virginia for the important Nov. 2 gubernatorial and state delegates election. We expanded early voting in Virginia to begin 45 days prior to an election, providing citizens with ample time to exercise their right to vote around their own schedules. Thanks to the leadership of our Democratic majority prioritizing voting rights in the General Assembly during the last two years, Virginia now ranks as the 12th easiest state in the country to vote in, a meteoric climb of 37 places since 2016. Just to name a few of the critical enhancements to voting in Virginia, we have enacted an automatic voter registration law, eliminated the photo ID requirement, created no-excuse absentee voting, and made Election Day a state holiday.

The deadline to register to vote or update your registration is Oct. 12. If you want to vote absentee by mail, you must request a ballot from the office of elections by Oct. 22. You can do this online and it takes only a minute or two. Oct. 30 is the last day for early in-person voting ahead of the election. To return your absentee ballot by mail, your ballot must be postmarked by Election Day and received by the office of elections by noon no later than three days after Election Day. Cast ballots can also be put in a drop-off box at any early voting site during the hours they're open.

There is also a secure, 24-hour drop-off box available outside the Fairfax County Government Center. If an absentee voter chooses to vote in person after receiving a ballot by mail, they should bring and surrender the ballot when they visit the poll.

Three early voting sites in Fairfax County will open on Friday, Sept. 17, with one of them here and easily accessible in Mount Vernon: the Mount Vernon Governmental Center at 2511 Parkers Lane. The other locations are the Fairfax County Government Center and the North County Government Center. Voters from anywhere in the County can cast their ballots at any one of these three locations, which is why you may see political signs from Delegate candidates from all over the county here at the Mount Vernon voting site. But you can only vote for one of your district's candidates. (Hint: if you live in the 44th district, here in much of Mount Vernon and some of Lee, I am your Delegate and running for re-election!)

The Fairfax County Government Center will be open for early voting on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. At the Mount Vernon and North County Governmental Centers, voting hours are from noon to 7 p.m. on weekdays. These three sites will be open on Saturday, Sept. 18, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Thirteen other early voting sites across the county will open beginning on Oct. 21. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/early-voting> for locations and hours.



This year will mark the first time we have added Sunday voting, which will take place at these locations on Oct. 24 from 1 to 5 p.m. Also, keep in mind that if there is a line at the end of the voting period during any early voting date, you may still cast your ballot, as long as you were in the line prior to the 5 p.m. — or 7 p.m. on weekdays — poll closing time. That was a bill I introduced three years ago.

What will be on your ballot when you receive it? As a Fairfax County voter, you will have the opportunity to cast your vote for three statewide offices: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General; and for your House of Delegates member; in addition to a \$360 million public school bond question.

What should you bring with you when you go to vote? Virginia law requires all voters to provide either an acceptable form of ID or sign an ID Confirmation Statement at the polls. While photo IDs are no longer required to vote, they remain an acceptable form of identification, and an expired Virginia driver's license will be accepted no matter how long it has been expired. In addition, utility bills, bank state-

ments, paychecks, valid student IDs, and many other documents can be used as identification; visit [www.elections.virginia.gov](http://www.elections.virginia.gov) for a full list of accepted identification. Voters who do not present an acceptable form of ID may vote provisionally, which means a voter will have until noon on the Friday following the election to deliver a copy of their identification or sign and submit an ID Confirmation Statement to the local electoral board in order for their vote to count.

As always, you can visit <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/Voter-Information> to register to vote, update your current Virginia voter registration, apply to vote absentee by mail, or view your polling place, election district, absentee ballot status, and voting history.

You can view sample ballots and details of the school bond at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/sample-ballots>

See you at the polls this season, and please don't hesitate to reach out to my office with any voting questions or concerns that I can assist with. It is my honor to represent you in the Virginia House of Delegates.

## #CallTextLive is for Everyone September is suicide prevention month.

BY JOSEPH GETCH  
CEO, PRS

We are not post pandemic. We are not post pandemic-related stress and anxiety either. And if our current state is the "new normal," then my job and those of my colleagues and peers will continue to grow. As the head of a local behavioral health nonprofit, that is not our goal.

COVID-related anxiety, depression, loneliness and decreased stress tolerance has made suicide prevention efforts more important than ever. In fact, 36% of callers to PRS' CrisisLink Program—Virginia's crisis intervention and suicide prevention hotline, text and chat service—identified COVID-19 as the primary stressor in their lives

with a third of those experiencing acute suicide thoughts.

Our PRS staff report seeing younger children with increasingly aggressive behaviors and teens with increased hospitalizations, suicide ideation, risky behaviors and drug use.

We all have a role to play. September is suicide prevention month, and throughout the month, we have activities as part of our annual #CallTextLive Campaign to help everyone be part of the solution. The campaign works to create awareness about preventing suicide and calling or texting a hotline to receive help and support. On our website, we have informa-



Joe Getch,  
CEO of PRS

tion designed to support populations at a higher risk for suicide behaviors; facts and data about understanding the problem of suicide; resources about identifying when someone is in crisis; and invitations to PRS supported events including NAMI NoVa Walk and AFSP Fairfax Walk. Social media is an important part of the campaign, used to engage people in sharing stories and photos on PRS Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Suicide, a serious issue locally

SEE #CALLTEXTLIVE, PAGE 7

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## #CallTextLive Is for Everyone

FROM PAGE 6  
and nationally and exacerbated by the pandemic, claims the lives of more than 47,000 people annually and is the second leading cause of death for people aged 10-34. A simple call or text to a crisis hotline—(800) 273-TALK [8255]—and the textline—“CONNECT” to 85511—provides the empathetic, trained voice that someone in crisis often needs to reduce their pain and provide alternatives and connections to care.

We know that prevention works. For every death, 278 people manage to move past thoughts of suicide and survive. That’s why we need to continue reducing the stigma around discussing issues that contribute to suicide and encourage people to seek help. By participating in #CallTextLive, our community can find simple ways to effect change. Visit our campaign site at [www.prsinc.org/calltextlive](http://www.prsinc.org/calltextlive) to discover how to get and give help so that more people can adapt and live in our new and changing normal.

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Please be advised that a fireworks display will take place as part of a private evening event at George Washington’s Mount Vernon on

**Saturday, September 18, 2021**

between 9:00pm and 9:30pm (5 minutes).

The Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association thanks you for your tolerance and apologizes for any disruption. To receive Mount Vernon fireworks notifications via e-mail, write to [Events@MountVernon.org](mailto:Events@MountVernon.org)

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# Pedestrian Deaths Along the Corridor Show Need for Safer, Less Vehicle-Focused Design

FROM PAGE 1

safer road. When they saw a Virginian Department of Transportation (VDOT) plan for the road in July, many local groups sent angry letters to the board of supervisors, which then gave the task of reviewing and approving the final shape of 11 intersections to a committee consisting of Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck, Lee Supervisor Rodney Lusk, and Chair of the Board of Supervisors Jeff McKay. The committee asked VDOT to revise the road plan for their review.

At the rally, Storck said, "I am not going to accept 13 lanes at an intersection. I wrote VDOT a letter this morning saying we wanted a narrower road, narrower lanes (10.5ft), and a slower speed limit (35 mph). VDOT has assured me that it will look carefully at the proposal for these intersections and revise them. They are used to building rural roads for cars only.

"This road is our main street. People on both sides of Richmond Highway have come together on a plan for a center bus rapid transit (BRT) with three lanes of traffic in each direction, plus a bike and pedestrian lanes, and a series of pedestrian-friendly town centers along the road," Storck said.

He promised public engagement on the revised intersection plans before a vote.

Lusk said he also opposes the 13 lanes and wants a 35 mph speed limit. He recalled that when there were pedestrian fatalities each of the first four months after he took office in January 2020, he urged the board transportation committee to do a countywide bike and pedestrian safety study that "will address all the major intersections along this corridor."



Fairfax County Department of Transportation image of plan for Richmond Highway-Sherwood Hall intersection.

State Sen. Scott Surovell recalled that as a delegate, he and then Sen. Toddy Puller got a transportation study for Richmond Highway that resulted in plans for the BRT and a possible metro extension to Hybla Valley, as well as bike and pedestrian paths.

"None of us thought we were buying into a 13-lane intersection," he said.

Surovell met recently with top VDOT officials who said they were now looking at a 35 mph speed limit and fewer turn lanes. He said the meeting came about partly because he sent them a letter from Shiver recalling the 1967 road safety protest and wondering if another such even was needed.

Surovell told the crowd, "This progress is happening because of the noise you folks are making."



Lee District Supervisor Rodney Lusk said he helped instigate a county safe streets study.



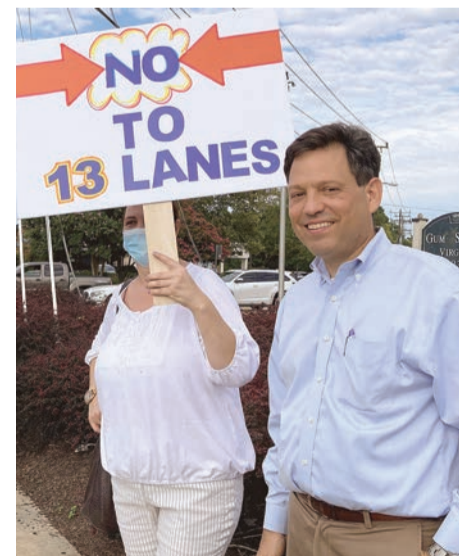
Nina Greene (in black) and a co-worker move a coffin from Greene's Funeral Home in Alexandria into position for a protest about pedestrian safety.



Fairfax County NAACP President Karen Campblin.



Jube Shiver Jr.



State Sen. Scott Surovell said VDOT is considering a slower speed and narrower road.

PHOTOS BY  
KATHERINE FOGDEN



# VolunteerFest, 2021

Volunteers work on projects countywide for the National Day of Service and Remembrance.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

In communities across Fairfax County, more than 800 volunteers turned out on Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021 for the National Day of Service and Remembrance.

“Our older volunteers are so critical to everything we do in Fairfax County,” said Supervisor Pat Herrity (Springfield). “This is a day to celebrate those volunteer activities and encourage more people and young people to volunteer.”

On the National Day of Service and Remembrance 2021, whether the volunteers undertook in-person day-of or virtual at-home projects completed that week, people in Fairfax County stepped up. Andrew Daniels, the senior coordinator of corporate service events at

Volunteer Fairfax, said they wanted “to offer as many opportunities in as many different locations” as possible.

At Chalk4Peace.org art event at the Government Center youth chalked positive messages of peace on the sidewalks leading to the ceremony.

At 10 a.m. Fairfax County’s Stuff the Bus food drives began, one at the Government Center and 22 at other locations.

Volunteers fanned out across the county, clearing overgrown areas at the Burke School, Centreville Elementary School, South Run Rec Center in Springfield, and Marshall Road Elementary Courtyard in Vienna.

At a woodworking project in Chantilly with Community Residences, Inc., volunteers helped

construct outdoor wood structures, benches, and garden beds, for the participants of the Newbrook Day.

In Reston, volunteers assembled celebration boxes and packed them with food and party supplies for Cornerstones’ upcoming fundraiser event for its 50th anniversary.

At-home projects expanded opportunities to serve. According to Daniels, people made homemade dog and cat treats for rescue animals at the Homeward Trails Animal Rescue in Fairfax Station.

Volunteers wrote cards for those in homeless shelters, like the one in Reston. Others made face masks for people with mental health, substance use, and homelessness issues at Recovery Programs Solutions of Virginia center based in Alexandria. And in tribute, they served.



VolunteerFest 2021 Chalk4Peace at the Fairfax County Government Center.



PHOTOS BY SARA HOLTZ/VOLUNTEER FAIRFAX



VolunteerFest 2021 Invasive plant cleanup.



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## Public Notice

### Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Jurisdiction	Fed Structure ID	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
AMELIA	1247	615	NAMOZINE RD	DEEP CREEK	8/27/2021
PATRICK	13246	103	DRY POND RD/ROUTE 103	BACK CREEK	8/26/2021
PATRICK	13245	103	DRY POND HY/ROUTE 103	SANDY CREEK	8/24/2021
MONTGOMERY	12292	663	WALTON ROAD/ROUTE 663	CRAB CREEK	8/19/2021
LYNCHBURG	20519	9	NINTH ST	KANAWHA	8/19/2021
PITTSYLVANIA	13623	686	MARKHAM RD	GEOGES CREEK	8/18/2021
WYTHE	19710	649	ATKINS MILL RD	SPILLER BRANCH	8/17/2021
GRAYSON	8910	732	LAUREL CREEK RD	LAUREL CREEK	8/16/2021
SCOTT	16635	611	LOWER GRASSY CREEK	GRASSY CREEK	8/15/2021
AMHERST	1451	631	STONEWALL CREEK RD	STONEHOUSE CREEK	8/10/2021
BLAND	3048	604	WALKERS CREEK RD	BIG WALKER CREEK #3	8/9/2021
WYTHE	19714	653	GREASY CREEK RD	STUFFLE RUN	8/5/2021
LEE	10768	421	ROUTE 421	STONE CREEK	8/3/2021

The list above is not a comprehensive list of all structures with weight restrictions in the Commonwealth, but shows only structures that have new or changed weight restrictions within the last 30 days. The list contains only basic structure identification and location information and the date the new or changed weight restriction and signage became effective.

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit [www.virginiadot.org](http://www.virginiadot.org) and navigate to Info Center/Trucking Resources. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact, [haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov](mailto:haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov).

*The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT's Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730.*

## Murder Investigation

Fairfax County Police detectives are asking for the public's help identifying the individuals pictured in surveillance footage that may be related to the fatal shooting of Tafari "Trey" Nadhim, 30, of Maryland. On July 8, Nadhim was found deceased by a community member in the 7800 block of Janna Lee Avenue. Detectives report that they determined that Nadhim was attending a block party on July 4 in the nearby neighborhood. At some point in the evening, Nadhim was involved in a verbal dispute and was shot between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. on July 5.

A man was found deceased by a community member on July 8. Officers were dispatched to the 7900 block of Janna Lee Avenue for a death investigation at 10:14 a.m., after an unresponsive man was found lying under brush. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner responded to the scene and preliminarily declared the death a homicide on July 9, after evidence indicated the man suffered trauma to the upper body. Detectives believe Tafari Nadhim, 30 of Maryland, had been deceased in the area days before being discovered. Detectives are asking for the

community's help in providing information that can assist them in their investigation.

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

During the investigation, detectives found video surveillance of a man walking behind a row of apartments displaying a firearm 100 to 200 yards away from where Nadhim was discovered. The man was followed by a group

of two men and one woman. Further investigation through social media accounts identified the same woman from this group was attending the Fourth of July block party.

Detectives would like to speak to the individuals seen in the videos as they believe they may be involved or have information about the fatal shooting of Nadhim.

If you can identify anyone in the video, contact detectives at the Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 2.

Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone - 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

## A Coin to Maintain The WWII Memorial

As America's longest war ends and our country welcomes evacuees from Afghanistan, I am reminded of a time over 80 years ago that feels eerily similar. My family escaped Nazi Germany and the Holocaust when I was a young boy and started a new life in America. I was lucky and fortunate.

I felt a sense of duty and returned to Germany as an American soldier to fight in World War II. This was a time when our country was unified, had shared values, and came together for a common goal. Our generation, which included all Americans - those

serving on the battlefield and the home front - had a binding and enduring commitment in the face of authoritarianism and fascism. We were united as a country in our goal of defeating those great evils.

For those of us still living, our greatest symbol of that generation and our spiritual home is the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

The Memorial honors the 16 million who served in the Armed Forces of the U.S. during World War II, the more than 400,000 who died, and the millions who supported the war effort here at home.

For many young visitors, their

SEE A COIN, PAGE 13

## THESE FLOWERS HAVE A LOT OF FIGHT IN THEM.

The Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's® is full of flowers, each carried by someone committed to ending this disease. Because like flowers, our participants don't stop when something's in their way. They keep raising funds and awareness for a breakthrough in the fight against Alzheimer's and all other dementia.

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

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

**SATURDAY/SEPT. 25**

**NPS Trash Cleanup.** 9-11 a.m. At Belle Haven Park, Alexandria. Join the Friends of Dyke Marsh and the National Park Service on National Public Lands Day to clean up trash along the Potomac River shoreline. Free. Meet at the registration table near the Belle Haven Park south parking lot to pick up supplies. NPS will provide gloves, tools, trash bags, and hand sanitizer. Please wear sturdy shoes, long pants and sleeves, and sun protection. Bring water.

**COMMUNITY MARKET ON SATURDAYS**

Workhouse Arts Center hosts its Community Market Every Saturday from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. through October 30, 2021. Located at 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. September celebrates Harvest Fest all month long. Local vendors include:  
Bites by Sam  
Apple Juice Tea Party  
Honeycakes  
Bangkok Bites  
Bowls by Bowles  
Jen and Pat Designs

**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.

**STEM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

The AAAS STEM Volunteers Program, [stemvolunteers.org](http://stemvolunteers.org), needs STEM professionals to assist K-12 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) teachers in school districts in the D.C. metro area during the 2021-22 school year. If you care about K-12 STEM education and have time to share your knowledge with students and teachers, send a note to [bcalinge@aaas.org](mailto:bcalinge@aaas.org) with your home address.

**FREE CYBER TRAINING**

The Virginia Cyber Skills Academies (VCSA) is a state-sponsored training program for NOVA residents financially impacted by COVID-19 that provides free cyber training to residents ready to start or boost a career in cyber. VCSA was recent-

ly launched to help current cybersecurity professionals with upskilling and those wanting to enter the sought after cybersecurity field with reskilling. The program is only open to citizens who are stationed in or permanent residents of Northern Virginia and is only funded for this year, so applicants should apply as soon as possible. Applicants can earn certifications from the SANS Institute, a highly regarded and well-recognized cybersecurity learning platform. Visit the VCSA website at [www.vacyberskills.com](http://www.vacyberskills.com).

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

The Washington Library at Mount Vernon is seeking additional volunteers to staff its front desk. No library experience required. Duties include greeting and directing Library guests and assisting with general Library and building operations. Available shifts are 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 1 - 5 p.m. Monday - Friday. Benefits include access to the estate and behind-the-scenes Library happenings, discounted estate admission for friends and family, as well as food and retail discounts. Qualifications include basic computer skills including MS Office, familiarity with office phone systems, and friendly and welcoming demeanor. Email [FWSLibrary@mountvernon.org](mailto:FWSLibrary@mountvernon.org) to learn more.

**ONGOING**

Local, farm-fresh produce - including strawberries and asparagus - and more will be featured at the now-opened McCutcheon/Mt. Vernon Farmers Market. From 8 a.m. to noon every Wednesday (through Dec. 22), 16 local farmers and food producers will sell fresh, locally grown vegetables and fruits; meats; Chesapeake Bay seafood; breads and pastries; honey, jams and jellies; milk, cheese and eggs; herbs and plants; and more. The market is located at the Sherwood Hall Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. All of the items sold at the market are grown or produced by the vendors and come from within a radius of 125 miles. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT cards can be used. As a bonus, the market will match up to \$20 per market visit in SNAP dollars for fruits and vegetables. This year's vendors are:  
Arnest Seafood - crab cakes, scallops, shrimp, rockfish, oysters and more  
Grace's Pastries - cakes, pastries and breads, with a Caribbean touch  
Great Harvest Bread - breads and pastries  
Honey Brook Farms - meats and vegetables raised with no chemicals, gluten-free baked goods  
House of Empanadas - variety of empanadas  
King Mushrooms - variety of locally grown mushrooms  
Locust Grove Farm - vegetables and herbs  
Misty Meadow Farm Creamery - milk, ice cream, cheese and eggs  
No. 1 Sons - pickles, kimchi, sauerkraut and kombucha teas  
Ochoa Produce - vegetables, herbs and flowers.

NEWS

Architecture in Alexandria, And Mount Vernon

It is the perfect time to explore Alexandria's architectural gems spanning several centuries and styles, from Georgian to Victorian to Mid-Century Modern. Step into Old Town and embark on our Self-Guided Architecture Stroll popping by cobblestoned Captain's Row and architectural wonders like Spite House, Carlyle House and more. <https://www.visitalexandriava.com/things-to-do/architecture/>

**Discovering Alexandria Architecture Tour**

Sept. 18, Oct. 9 and Nov. 13, 2021, at 10 a.m. Admission: \$20 per person  
Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria, VA 22314  
703-549-2997  
[novaparks.com/parks/carlyle-house-historic-park](http://novaparks.com/parks/carlyle-house-historic-park)

Alexandria has grown from a small town in the 18th century to a bustling small city in the 21st century. Join Carlyle House for a tour of Alexandria looking at the various architecture styles that adorn

the city streets and make it one of the best places to live and work. Reservations are required as space is limited. Please wear comfortable shoes for this one-and-a-half hour guided tour. Tour is held rain or shine unless there is severe weather.

**79th Historic Homes Tour, 'Garden Glimpses'**

Sept. 25, 2021, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission: \$30 in advance; \$35 day of tour  
Old Town Alexandria, Va.  
703-683-5544  
[thetwig.org/homes-tour](http://thetwig.org/homes-tour)

The TWIG's 79th Historic Homes Tour, "Garden Glimpses," will include 14 addresses located in the southeast quadrant of Old Town, the majority of which are new to the tour. The tour will include gardens and backyard areas, with docents narrating information about the property. Tour maps can be picked up the morning of the event at the Alexandria Visitor Center, TWIG Thrift Shop, Boxwood and

Old Presbyterian Meeting House.

**Hollin Hills House + Garden Tour**

Sept. 25, 2021, from 12 to 6 p.m. Admission: Regular: \$50 per person; VIP: \$80 per person  
Registration at Hollin Meadows Elementary School, 2310 Nordock Place, Alexandria, VA 22306  
[hollinhillsmodern.com](http://hollinhillsmodern.com)

This self-guided walking tour will showcase stunning examples of mid-century modern architecture, landscaping and interior design.

New this year, participate in special activities throughout the day such as morning yoga, a furniture showcase and more. All ticket holders are required to check in at registration to receive a wristband and program that includes a listing and map of all the homes and gardens open during the tour. The tour will take place rain or shine. Sponsors and VIP ticket holders can register beginning at 10 a.m. and access the tour early at 11 a.m.

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# ENTERTAINMENT

## NOW THRU SEPT. 25

"Stigma" Art Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. The STIGMA exhibit at Del Ray Artisans Gallery features art that shines a light on stigma — how it feels, how it affects lives, and how it can be overcome. Stigma affects many different people in many different ways. These art works include viewpoints on mental health disorders, HIV, homelessness, disabilities, sexual orientation, bullying, race and ethnicity, and more. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. Visit <https://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits>

## SEPT. 16-18

By the Seashore. At Leonadus K. Plenty Amphitheater at Lee District Park, 6601 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. This sensory-filled production specifically designed for children ages 0-3 uses an imaginative mix of puppetry, movement, and sound to take children on a magical journey to the beach. Dates:

Thursday, September 16 at 10:30 a.m.

Friday, September 17 at 10:30 a.m.

Saturday, September 18 at 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

Visit the website:

<https://www.artsonthehorizon.org/by-the-seashore-2021.html>

## THURSDAY/SEPT. 16

Poetry & Reception. 5-7:30 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Gather at Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey to immerse yourselves in the imagined emotions, words, and voices of enslaved ancestors of the former Woodlawn plantation as told through poetry, spoken word, music, and artistic expression. This event will include special readings from the Voices of Woodlawn poets, artwork by Diane Wilbon Parks, music by Cliff Bernier, and written poetry displayed throughout the Woodlawn mansion. Refreshments will be provided. Please register to attend this free event.

## THURSDAY/SEPT. 16

Virtual: Love French films and cocktails? 7-8:30 p.m. Virtual event via Zoom. The Alexandria-Caen Sister City Committee invites you to join the online movie discussion to review "Le Chant du Loup" (The Wolf's Call), a 2019 French action thriller about a submarine's sonar officer who must use his brilliant sense of hearing to track down a French ballistic missile submarine and prevent a nuclear war. After the demo of the fun evening cocktail, they will lead a discussion about the story, its characters, and the military context with insights from our members and exchanges with the audience. The movie is available on Netflix and you must watch the movie before participating in the online discussion.

## THURSDAY/SEPT. 16

The Taste of Old Town North. 4-8 p.m. At Montgomery Park, 901 North Royal Street, Alexandria. The Taste of Old Town North is free, kid-friendly, and offers the chance to sample a variety of delicious food from local restaurants including Cafe 44, Grateful Kitchen and St. Elmo's Old Town North. Visitors to the Taste can also shop at the local farmers' market, try their hand at Art in the Park with KidCreate, watch a karate demonstration from Seichou Karate, and picnic in the park. Live music will be provided by two local bands - Sally and the Mander, starting at 5 p.m. and Three Man Soul Machine, starting at 6 p.m. The rain date for the Taste of Old Town North is Thursday, September 30, 2021 beginning at 3:30 p.m. Visit [www.oldtown-north.org](http://www.oldtown-north.org) or call 703-836-8066.

## FRIDAY/SEPT. 17

Garden Talk: Landscaping with Shrubs. 1:30-2:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (Adults) Is it time to replace those overgrown and tired-looking shrubs? Fall is the best time to plant new ones. Extension Master Gardeners introduce you to easy-care shrubs that



Dinner with George Washington will take place Saturday, Sept. 18 at Landini Brothers Restaurant in Alexandria. Pictured is Brian Hilton as General George Washington.

## Dinner with George Washington

Saturday/Sept. 18, 7:30-10 p.m. At Landini Brothers Restaurant, 115 King Street, Alexandria. Spend one-on-one time with General Washington at the George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee's fundraising dinner with historical interpreter Brian Hilton. General Washington will visit each table during this intimate event and will answer questions about the country's founding, the Revolutionary War, slavery, equality, or any other question you have about his life and times. Space is limited. Cost is \$135. Visit <https://shop.alexandriava.gov/EventPurchase.aspx>

add shape and structure, fragrance, berries, and seasonal color to your landscape. \$12 per person. Register online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes) or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code HVL.ZX20.

## SEPT. 17-18

Movie Night on King Street. Friday, September 17 - Featured Movie "Cocktails," starring Tom Cruise; Saturday, September 18 - Featured Movie "Casablanca" starring Humphrey Bogart. 7:30 p.m. At the parking lot at the 910 King Street, Alexandria. Presented by Jack Taylor Toyota. What fun it is to be outdoors and under the stars. Gather together with the drinks and food available on-site to make this night even more special. Bring your own chairs or blanket. Dogs are not allowed.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 18

Discovering Alexandria Architecture Tour. 10 a.m. At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Alexandria has grown from a small town in the 18th century to a bustling small city in the 21st century. Join Carlyle House for a tour of Alexandria looking at the various architecture styles that adorn the city streets and make it one of the best places to live and work. Reservations are required as space is limited. Please wear comfortable shoes for this one-and-a-half hour guided tour. Tour is held rain or shine unless there is severe weather. Visit [novaparks.com/parks/carlyle-house-historic-park](http://novaparks.com/parks/carlyle-house-historic-park)

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 18

Cinema Del Ray. At dusk. At Mount Vernon Recreation Center fields, 2701 Commonwealth Ave., Alexandria. The Jen Walker Team presents an outdoor screening of "Raya and The Last Dragon" at the Mount Vernon Recreation Center fields. Visit [facebook.com/cinamadelay](https://facebook.com/cinamadelay).

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 18

Floral Design Workshop: European Hand-Tied Bouquet. 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (16-Adult) Hand-tied bouquets are the European standard for flower gift-giving and bridal bouquets. Certified designer Betty Ann Galway shows you the techniques for constructing and balancing this lovely arrangement, which you can use

to make floral gifts and bouquets for any occasion. Please register for both program and supply fee. \$40 per person (plus \$30 supply fee). Register online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes) or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code CA0.U5DK.

## SEPT. 18-19

Annual Dog Swims. Treat your pooch to an end-of-summer dip in a City of Alexandria public pool. Friendly dogs of all sizes can enjoy swims on Saturday, September 18 from 11 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. at Warwick Pool (3301 Landover St.) and on Sunday, September 19 from 11 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. at Old Town Pool (1609 Cameron St.). Tickets are required for all dog handlers to attend. Tickets may be reserved online for your preferred location and time frame. Dog handlers must be at least 16 years old and cannot enter the pool with their dogs. Dogs must be sociable. In order to gain entry, each dog must either wear a current vaccination tag or have a current rabies certificate or veterinarian letter. Space is limited to 50 people and 100 dogs in the pool area at one time. Visit [alexandriava.gov/Aquatics](http://alexandriava.gov/Aquatics) to register.

## SEPT. 18-19

Colonial Market & Fair at Mount Vernon. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Take in the sights and sounds of the marketplace on Mount Vernon's 12-acre field. Chat with colonial artisans selling traditional handcrafted food and wares, hear live music from the colonial era and watch as expert artisans demonstrate period crafting techniques. Plus, see General Washington in the General's Tent. Visit [mountvernon.org](http://mountvernon.org)

## SEPT. 18-19

Old Town Cocktail Week. Guests can celebrate the world of cocktail innovation enjoying special libations at Old Town Alexandria restaurants, bars, and as well as themed events at boutiques, historic sights, and other places. The week will conclude with a Meet the Makers Tasting Event at Market Square.

## 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.

Visit <http://www.artfestival.com/festivals/19th-annual-alexandria-old-town-art-festival>

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 19.

Alpha Course. At Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton, on U.S. Route 1 between Telegraph Road and Pohick Road. Alpha Course is an 11-week course that is a dynamic and interactive course about basic Christianity. The course is open to the community. Participants can explore difficult questions about faith and the meaning of life. They will meet starting September 19, on Sundays in between 8 and 10 a.m. services. The Alpha Course will meet at 9:15 a.m. in the Vestry Meeting House. Call 703-339-6572.

## TUESDAY/SEPT. 21

Famine Immigration. 1 p.m. Via Zoom. Tyler Anbinder will discuss using genealogical research to tell the story of Irish immigration to New York City during the Great Famine. Anbinder is professor of History at George Washington University and the author of City of Dreams: The 400-Year Epic History of Immigrant New York. He also served as a consultant to Martin Scorsese's "The Gangs of New York." Visit the website: <http://www.mvgenealogy.org>. Register to this free zoom event at <https://mvgenealogy.org/cpage.php?pt=111> OR by emailing [contact-us@mvgenealogy.org](mailto:contact-us@mvgenealogy.org).

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 25

Classic Car Show. 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. At the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street in Old Town Alexandria. Classic car show featuring a variety of Packards and other "orphan" vehicles. This show will bring together cars that are no longer manufactured - hence the term "orphans." The show is free and is co-sponsored by Packards Virginia and the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum. Visit [packardsva.org](http://packardsva.org) or call 703-424-5871.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 25

Hollin Hills House + Garden Tour. 12 to 6 p.m. Admission: Regular: \$50 per person; VIP: \$80 per person. Registration at Hollin Meadows Elementary School, 2310 Nordock Place, Alexandria. This self-guided walking tour will showcase stunning examples of mid-century modern architecture, landscaping and interior design. New this year, participate in special activities throughout the day such as morning yoga, a furniture showcase and more. All ticket holders are must check in at registration to receive a wristband and program that includes a listing and map of all the homes and gardens open during the tour. The tour will take place rain or shine. Sponsors and VIP ticket holders can register beginning at 10 a.m. and access the tour early at 11 a.m. Visit [hollinhillsmodern.com](http://hollinhillsmodern.com)

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# OPINION

## A Coin To Maintain The WWII Memorial

FROM PAGE 10

visit to the Memorial is a first glimpse at a grateful Nation's remembrance of the sacrifices made by the brave men and women who fought against tyranny. For World War II veterans like myself, the Memorial is a special destination, a rendezvous point, and a gathering place for reflection, reunions, and commemorative programs.

As a World War II veteran who lives just across the river in Virginia, I'm fortunate enough to be able to visit the Memorial from time to time. It causes me great distress to see this wonderful treasure fall into disrepair because it cannot be properly maintained. I understand and greatly sympathize with the backlog of maintenance issues with the National Park Service. It is not their fault.

There is good news though. Representatives Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) and Adam Kinzinger (R-IL) introduced the National World War II Memorial Commemorative Coin Act in February, a bill to authorize the U.S. Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the National World War II Memorial. Proceeds from the sale of the commemorative coins will be used to maintain and repair the Memorial, as well as for commemorative and educational programming.

The legislation ensures that the World War II Memorial will be properly and appropriately maintained, and that the commemorative and educational programming at the Memorial remains robust and substantial. The Greatest Generation Memorial Act S. 1596, a Senate companion bill, was introduced by Senators Mike Rounds (R-S.D.) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.). I call on my Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner to co-sponsor the important bill and support the World War II Memorial.

While my generation might not have much time left to visit the Memorial, we must teach the lessons of yesterday to unite the generations of tomorrow and understand that above all, it serves as an important symbol of American national unity, a timeless reminder of the moral strength and awesome power that can flow when a free people are at once united and bonded together in a common and just cause.

Colonel Frank Cohn, USA (Ret.)  
Fort Belvoir A Coin to

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## On My Late Father's Birthday No Less



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

To say I'm looking forward to my next round of scans (CT and bone) on Sept. 23 would be "Geminological!" I am, and I'm not. I am not looking forward to the scans because the results, likely emailed to me within day or two - or three if late, will indicate whether my life hangs in the balance or, whether what happened to me in the Houston airport on July 20th was in fact a healing miracle - for which I'm quite eager to find out, or merely the act of a kind-hearted, well-intended soul spreading the gospel that Jesus saves.

As I mentioned in one of the "arc" columns recounting the second degree burns I accidentally inflicted on the soles of both my feet on Crystal Beach (actually it was the pavement I walked across from Crystal Beach to our accommodations) near Galveston, Tx. There, on the way home, I met a woman in the airport named Solange who offered to change my life through the power of healing prayer as practiced/performed at the Dwelling Place Church located in Houston where she is a congregant and devotee. Even though the gate in the airport where I was sitting was extremely crowded, she navigated her way through all the commotion and managed to end up near where I was sitting. It's almost as if she sought us out, somehow. Anyway,

She made her way over to the row of chairs at the departure gate where I was sitting, stretched across two chairs in a meager attempt to lessen the pain in my feet. My wife, Dina, looked at Solange as she sort of looked around for somewhere to sit and apologized for my taking up multiple seats, explaining briefly that I was in pain due to the burns on my feet. Without hesitation, Solange immediately offered up some healing prayers if I were amenable. Looking over at Dina, while sort of snickering, we said "Sure, thank you." And after motioning for a nearby male friend/fellow church member to join her, the two of them soon began praying on my behalf, not in unison, but similar.

I can't remember if she - or they touched my feet but soon enough they were invoking God, Jesus Christ, God's children, relieve my suffering and one or two other healing-type prayers. When they finished, after 10 seconds or so, we thanked them again. Then thinking to myself, I got greedy. I said aloud to Solange something like "Actually, the burns on my feet aren't my most serious problem: I have cancer." To which she instinctively offered up another round of prayers, with our blessing of course, for good health and future well-being. When she finished she walked away and re-joined her friends. In taking it all in, I felt quite fortunate for the experience and extremely grateful she reached out to someone she didn't even know.

It's been nearly eight weeks since our meeting at the airport. Given the excruciating pain I experienced for weeks upon my return home to Maryland, I can't say with too much conviction that my feet healed any quicker than the "weeks, not months" advisory we got from the Urgent Care doctor I visited back home later that evening. But that was then. This is now.

I have quarterly scans ahead which given the "terminal" nature of my papillary thyroid cancer, I could really use a miracle. So as naive as it may sound, I'm kind of looking forward to these upcoming scans. Certainly it would be a great story/unbelievable turn of events if my oncologist emailed me a "What happened? The tumors are gone." Although, for this kind of totally unexpected result, I imagine he'd probably call. I'm not holding my breath though, but with the combined efforts of Solange, modern medicine, and perhaps my late father pulling a few strings for me on his birthday, maybe, just maybe, I'll have a Paul Harvey-type "rest of the story" to share with you. If not, I'll continue to manage as I always have since I first was diagnosed in late Feb., 2009: I'll remain positive about the negative.

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

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## Helping Children Develop Healthy Friendships

Positive relationships with peers offer happiness and security.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL  
GAZETTE PACKET

After a call from the guidance counselor at her son's school, Amy Lucas, a Chantilly, Va. mother of four, learned that her sixth-grade son sat alone in the school cafeteria and was often afraid to eat in front of other students.

"He's overweight and was being teased mercilessly because of it," said Lucas. "We started seeing a therapist because he was so depressed and had very few, if any friends."

From playdates for elementary school students to trips to the mall for middle and high school students, friendships can be a source of happiness, security and comfort. Some children have difficulty acquiring companions and need help developing the social skills necessary to overcome this challenge.

"Making friends and maintaining healthy relationships is a critical part of a child's social and emotional development," says Marta Cohen, an Alexandria-based therapist who specializes in teens with anxiety disorders. "Not only do they help build self-esteem, and self-confidence, they also help a child establish their identity. This is especially true for children in middle school and high school. Knowing that a group of your peers has your back a critical part of their growth."

Recognizing unhealthy relationships is just as important as nurturing those that are positive, says Cohen. "For example, if your child's so-called friend teases or belittles your child, especially at school or in other public settings, you can guarantee yourself that the relationship is toxic. The same is true for a friend who encourages your child to break rules at school or be disrespectful to teachers or other adults."

"Help your child identify the way that they feel after spending time with that friend, continued Cohen. "One thing that you don't want to do is forbid your child to see their toxic friend or criticize that friend. Doing so could cause your child to rebel. Try not to nag. Instead have a conversation about the



FILE PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Children playing with friends on an Arlington playground in June 2020.

**"Making friends and maintaining healthy relationships is a critical part of a child's social and emotional development."**

— Marta Cohen

consequences of the undesirable behaviors."

Developing and maintaining healthy friendships requires skills that not all children possess, says Laura Maxwell of Bethesda, a former school guidance counselor.

"Modeling healthy friendships by allowing your child to see you interact with your friends is one of the most effective ways to teach a child how to develop those skills," she said. "You can even discuss the characteristics that make your friendship a positive one. It's also important to make sure your child is treating others well and isn't bullying or teasing other children."

Put your children in environments where they are likely to meet children with whom they are compatible, says Maxwell. "If your daughter loves to dance, for example, try enrolling her in a ballet class and she'll meet other children who share her interests," she said. "Encourage your child to make a wide variety of friends, which will also help strengthen their social skills."

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