



Supervisor Rodney Lusk addresses the residents in the Lee District part of Mount Vernon near Hybla Valley.



Removing this fence was an early goal for Supervisor Lusk.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Fence Removed In Mount Vernon, Opening Opportunities

Residents now have a shorter walk to stores and future county training facility.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

A fence came down in an area of Hybla Valley recently that was a barrier for people in the Audubon mobile home community area to shop for their families.

The fence was put in place years ago by the police to separate the trailer community, Colchester Town Condominiums, Creekside Apartments and the Mount Vernon Tennis Club. It divided people and it created a long walk to get to the store.

The fence went up around 2007 and police put in the fence allegedly to prevent crime.

Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D-Lee) has made it a point to concentrate on removing barriers and creating equity for all, he said on an Instagram post. "The removal of a fence dividing many communities and depriving residents of access to resources for almost 15 years was taken down. We have literally created a new pathway leading to an innovative new community center, where all residents will have an opportunity to benefit from unique pro-

grams, recreational activities, and workforce development," he said.

The workforce development Lusk spoke of will be at the former tennis club that was taken over by the county last spring, and is now in the process of being converted to a workforce development and training center that is needed in this part of southern Fairfax County.

"It became this symbolic barrier," added Deborah Claire, the Director of Equity and Outreach in the Lee District office. It became a barrier to a lot of things, including a shorter walk to some of the nearby retail areas.

"We have literally created a new pathway leading to an innovative new community center, where all residents will have an opportunity to benefit from unique programs, recreational activities, and workforce development."

Supervisor Rodney Lusk

"We don't really think it deterred crime," Claire added.

There were a string of complaints from area residents about the fence and the long



Clipping the wire to bring down a fence that deprived residents of access to resources for almost 15 years.

walk around it, so Lusk put its removal on the top of his list. "It was one of the first things he wanted to do," Claire said. "[Po-

lice] are aware of it."

Carla Claire lives in Audubon mobile home park, and saw people jumping the fence to save time. "Now it's easy," she said,

but also noted some incidents in the past involving that she hopes will not happen again. With the fence gone, Claire hopes the police will patrol more frequently.

According to Anthony Guglielmi the Director of the Public Affairs Bureau at the Fairfax County Police Department, the staffing at the Mount Vernon station may have changed from 2007 so what was working back then should always be enhanced based on what the FCPS learns from the current crime data and community engagement.

"We constantly look at our practice and operational patterns to ensure that we are safeguarding neighborhoods while at the same time building upon community trust," Guglielmi said.

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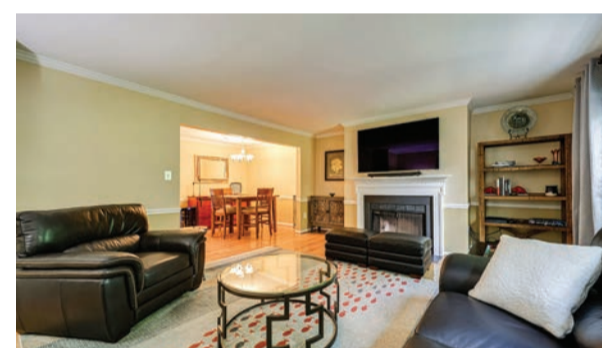
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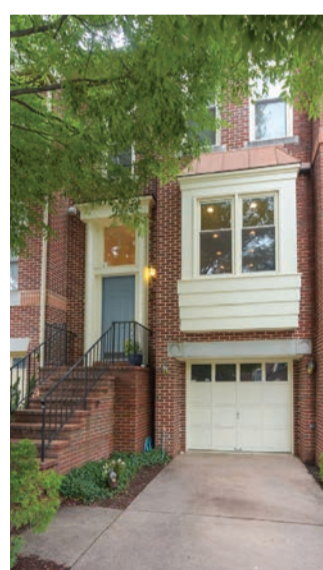
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PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

A biker on the Mount Vernon trail in the fall.

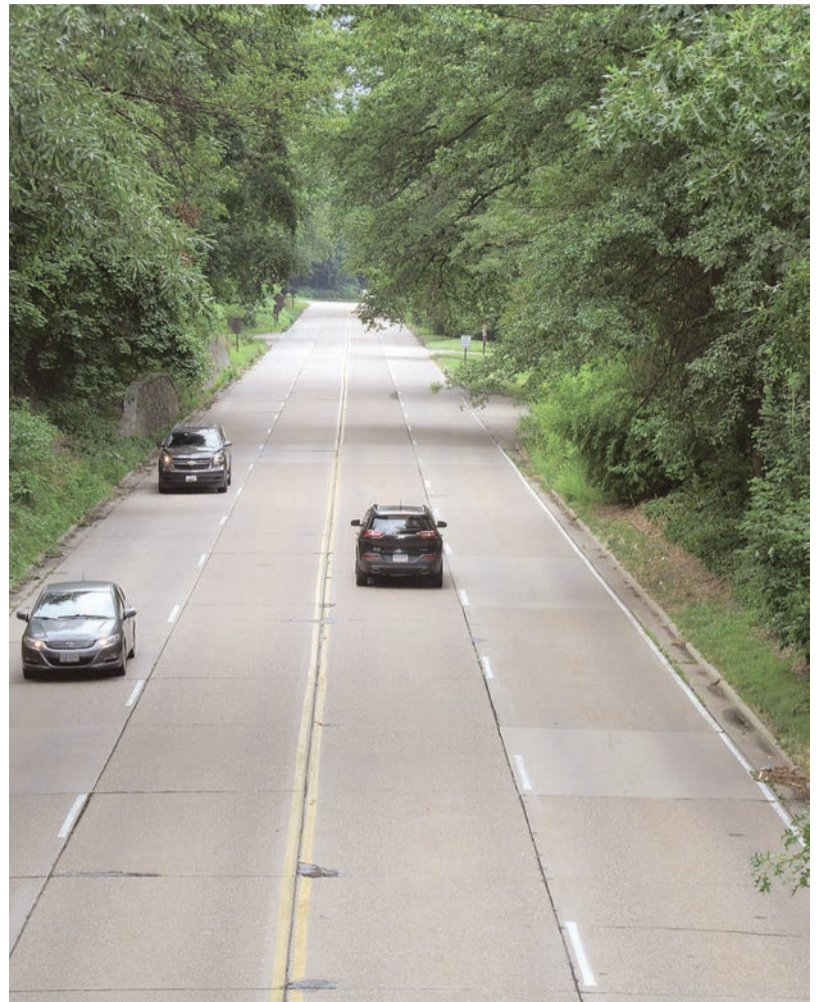


PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

A view of the south parkway from the Alexandria Avenue stone bridge.

Much More Than a Highway

George Washington Memorial Parkway is a national park.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Around 17,000 vehicles whiz up and down the Mount Vernon stretch of the George Washington Memorial Parkway every day, the southern end of the 40-mile historic roadway that goes from Mount Vernon Estate to I-495 in McLean. A popular commuter route, the parkway has over 34 million non-recreational users a year. Over 1.5 million people walk, jog and bike on the Mount Vernon Trail between Mount Vernon Estate and Theodore Roosevelt Island every year. It's a super-busy thoroughfare splicing through the

Washington metropolitan area.

But it is much more. It's a national park with many natural riches.

Nature Abounds

Nature is front and center, by design. Unlike many of today's multi-laned, gray slabs of road, the parkway is a series of constantly changing "rooms" that emphasize vistas and special places.

It is a slow-speed parkway and trail of natural, historic and recreational sites in over 7,000 acres of parkland, a ribbon of green, mostly paralleling the Potomac River shoreline. There are 25 possible stops in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D. C. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which means it is designated by law as worthy of preservation.

Charles Jackson has lived next to the parkway's south section for four years. "I love its beauty, especially in the fall when leaves change color. Whenever I drive south

toward Mount Vernon, I always go slow so that I can enjoy the views of Dyke Marsh and the Potomac River," he said.

River Towers resident Jennifer Smith concurs: "I live near the parkway because it is one of the prettiest roads around. It's the lifeblood of the D.C. area and it provides lots of places to view birds."

What's There?

In the past 17 years, National Park Service biologist Brent Steury and others, including the Friends of Dyke Marsh, have documented over 6,500 species of plants and wildlife on the parkway. Steury, a Mount Vernon-area resident, is the Natural Resources Program Manager for the George Washington Memorial Parkway. The fall issue of National Parks, the magazine of the National Parks Conservation Association, features Steury and his work in an article by Nicholas Brulliard.

Brulliard wrote: "So far, Steury and his collaborators have discovered dozens of species

previously unknown to the world, including 37 springtails (tiny six-legged arthropods), perhaps 30 roundworms, 13 mites, eight moths, eight flies, seven beetles, one sawfly, one small crustacean and one millipede."

New Records on the South Parkway

In recent months, two bird sightings set records. On Aug. 28, Todd Kiraly, Steve Bielamowicz and Sherman Suter reported a buff-breasted sandpiper in the Hunting Creek mudflats, bird number 294 for the parkway. These shorebirds with dove-like heads nest in the Arctic tundra in the summer and winter in Paraguay, Uruguay and northern Argentina, according to the Audubon Society's Master Guide to Birding.

Many observers were wowed by the first ever sightings of long-legged, pink roseate spoonbills in Dyke Marsh in July and August, bird species number 293 for the parkway.

SEE GW MEMORIAL PARKWAY, PAGE 6



PHOTO BY KEVIN MUNROE

Ruby meadowhawk dragonfly.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

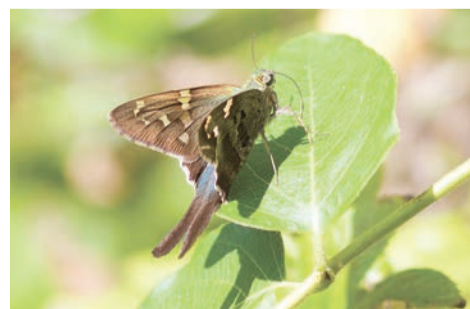


PHOTO BY ED EDER

The long-tailed skipper butterfly, butterfly 81 for the parkway.



PHOTO BY ED EDER

The sunflower maggot fly, fly species number 282 for the parkway.

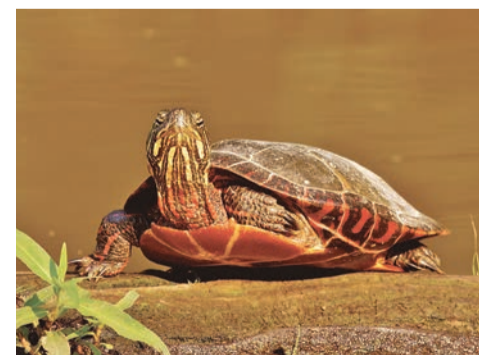


PHOTO BY ED EDER

Eastern painted turtle.

Fairfax County Passes Plastic Bag Tax

BY HOLLY DOUGHERTY
MOUNT VERNON
LEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors recently passed a five-cent tax on plastic bags used in grocery, convenience and drug stores that goes into effect Jan. 1, 2022.

Let's take a closer look at this new ordinance and see how it will affect businesses and consumers in Fairfax County. The General Assembly authorized the tax during the last session so it will be collected by the state in the same manner as the Retail Sales and Use Tax and then dispersed back to Fairfax County.

The tax is levied "for each disposable plastic bag provided to a consumer of tangible personal property by retailers in grocery stores, convenience stores, or drugstores." This tax will apply to small retailers and big box stores that sell groceries or have a pharmacy. It applies to gasoline stations that have convenience stores. The tax will apply to groceries purchased through an online delivery service based in Fairfax County.

Exemptions to the five-cent tax include restaurants, like putting a carry-out meal in a plastic bag. Other retailers such as clothing, office supply or hardware stores are also exempt.



Plastic bags used in grocery, convenience and drug stores will be taxed five cents beginning January 1, 2022.

For grocery stores, convenience stores and drugstores there are some additional exemptions from the tax. These plastic bags will not be taxed:

- 1) Durable plastic bags with handles that are specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse and that are at least four mils thick;
- 2) Plastic bags that are solely used to

wrap, contain, or package ice cream, meat, fish, poultry, produce, unwrapped bulk food items, or perishable food items in order to avoid damage or contamination;

- 3) Plastic bags used to carry dry cleaning or prescription drugs; and
- 4) Plastic bags sold in packages and intended for use as garbage, pet waste, or leaf removal bags. These bags are all exempt

from the tax.

To help retailers implement this new tax they will be able to retain a percentage of the tax revenue for their use. That amount will be two cents per bag for 2022 and then one cent per bag beginning Jan. 1, 2023.

It is unclear how much revenue Fairfax County will get from this new tax. State-wide estimates of revenue collection are between \$20 – 25 million. In 2012, Montgomery County implemented a similar tax and a 2018 news story reported \$2.41 million in revenue. This revenue declined over time as consumers became more accustomed to bringing their own reusable bags when shopping.

How will Fairfax County use the revenue from this new tax? The General Assembly says revenue from this tax may be used for environmental cleanup programs, pollution and litter mitigation programs, educational programs on environmental waste reduction, and providing reusable bags to recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) benefits.

For more information on the plastic bag tax visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/disposable-plastic-bag-tax-fairfax-county

Holly Dougherty is Executive Director of the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber.



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★ CHILD SAFETY MATTERS

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★ EDUCATION MATTERS

DEMOCRATS blocked opening schools ASAP, resulting in massive learning loss per SOL scores, failing our children while bowing to teacher unions. FCPS completely failed our young students during the pandemic. I support school choice and money following the student.

★ LAW ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

We must fully support our men and women in uniform who risk their lives daily to protect and serve us. I will vote for qualified immunity and increased funding for pay hikes while my opponent caters to the "Defund the Police" mob.



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Fairfax Approves Collective Bargaining Ordinance

Forty-four years in the waiting.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Many people employed by Fairfax County gained new rights the evening of Oct. 20. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors passed a collective bargaining ordinance on a 9-1 vote. The action does not include Fairfax County Public Schools. Supervisor Pat Herry (R-Springfield) voted against the ordinance.

“Our county employees are hardworking individuals,” said Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay (D), Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. “They are why our county services are outstanding, why people want to live here, and why our economy is thriving.”

Referencing the Board’s pending decision Tuesday evening on the Ordinance to Amend Chapter 3 of the Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia, County Employees, by Adding Article 10, Collective Bargaining, Sections 3-10-1 through 3-10-18, McKay said he knew that some people had been concerned about unions involvement in the process. All of the unions were involved, McKay said. “Twenty groups...had an opportunity every minute of every day to contact any one of us and talk about the issue.”

McKay said that the ordinance before them was “a compromise” that would help the County retain, attract and recruit the best employees. Concerns raised about keeping management rights were unfounded. “Frankly, most of the things that are in here are things we would do anyway; that this Board has done anyway ... So the idea that the sky is falling, and the world is changing, and the County will never be the same; it’s nonsense.”

SEE FAIRFAX, PAGE 11

Supervisor **Dalia A. Palchik (D-Providence)** “This ... a continuation of the One Fairfax policy to support all, especially the most vulnerable employees or staff and residents in our County ... This is not a radical change or shift. It’s codifying much of what we do today... This is an incredible moment and a very historic one for our County.”



Supervisor **Rodney L. Lusk (D-Lee)** “We have to trust the people ... at the front lines, and we have to also show our commitment to them in our faith in them. I think this ordinance does that ... [Binding arbitration] ... that’s a pretty important positive part about this ordinance. It’s an important way for us to ensure that the parties actually reach an agreement.”



Chairman, At-Large - **Jeffrey C. McKay (D)** Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. “This is a historic day in the County ... We’re going to have conversations with our employees to improve the County. And it’s a day that our County employees should rest assured that board members don’t have to say they support county employees. They can actually show it.”

SCREENSHOT PHOTOS



Supervisor **Kathy L. Smith (D-Sully)** “I’m happy to vote for this ordinance. It’s the beginning of the journey ... I think it’s really important as we move forward that we are sure that our employees have the information; they know where things are in the process.”



Supervisor **Pat Herry (R-Springfield)** “I’m going to remind you when this goes to arbitration and costs our residents dearly. I’m going to remind you when we have issues with bad employees. Trust me, I’m going to remind you. I’m not going to be supporting this.”



Supervisor **James R. Walkinshaw (D-Braddock)** “This collective bargaining ordinance is an opportunity for us to ensure that [residents] continue to get that high-quality service, and we explore every opportunity to make it even better. When they have a health emergency, they have the best trained, best-equipped fire and EMS first responders to help them. That when there’s a public safety issue in their neighborhoods, that they have the best trained and best equipped public safety professionals and police officers responding to that. When they have a mental health crisis or substance abuse issue, that they have the best trained, best equipped, highly professional counselors.”



Supervisor **John W. Foust (D-Dranesville)** “In my opinion, having been a member, having benefited from collective bargaining, and knowing what it’s like inside a steel mill. Watching my dad, a member of a union, the dignity that comes with knowing that you have a collective bargaining agreement in place. You’re not subject to arbitrary and capricious conduct. I’m not suggesting that happens here, but there’s no reason not to ensure that it doesn’t happen.”



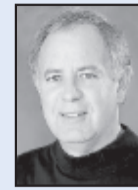
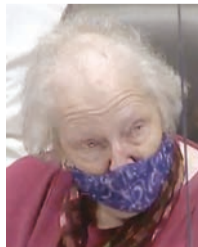
Supervisor **Walter L. Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill)** “I was asked recently what’s in this for Hunter Mill constituents that are not county employees ... What this does is it creates a process for collaborating with our county employees to make service delivery better, improve working conditions, and help ensure we recruit and retain the best local government workforce ... I think there is a public value moving forward with that.”



Supervisor **Daniel G. Storck (D-Mount Vernon)** “This new day is, I think, an opportunity. It’s not without challenges; absolutely not. I have some concerns about what this means, but I also recognize that we put on the table all the possibilities.”



Vice Chairman **Penelope A. Gross (D-Mason)** “Our employees can bring to us their concerns about how they are, what’s going on, and also their solutions ... Now we’re going to be able to do that in a formal agreement.”



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PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Stonework along the parkway.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Walkers and bikers enjoy the trail that goes through Dyke Marsh.

George Washington Memorial Parkway

FROM PAGE 3

Historic Designation

In 1928, Congress authorized the construction of the Mount Vernon Memorial Parkway to honor the bicentennial of George Washington's birth. Lt. Col. Peter Hains, who conducted the first land survey told Congress that the parkway should "have the character of a monumental structure, such as would comport with the dignity of this great nation ... and the grandeur of character of the man to whom it is dedicated ... It should be such a work as no American need feel ashamed of."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture started construction in 1929 and completed the first segment, the southern part, in 1932.

Planners envisioned a roadway to preserve and enhance the Potomac River valley, keep both shorelines in public ownership and create a grand gateway to Mount Vernon Estate, the first president's plantation.

They sought to integrate the road with the undulating terrain following natural contours and winding in gentle curves and to highlight natural areas and scenic vistas of the river. They included forested and grassy areas, minimized signs and lights and barred billboards. They preserved open sections between the 14th

Street and Memorial bridges to provide sweeping views of the city across the river.

Builders used then-modern highway design approaches like overpasses, limited access, widely-spaced exits and entrances, tree-lined rights-of-way and bridges made of reinforced concrete faced with hand-laid, rough-cut stone for a natural look.

Christine Lederman, who has lived next to the south parkway for 43 years, sees its many assets firsthand. "It is both tranquil and full of life with joggers, bicyclists and occasionally, a lemonade stand. Deer, foxes and birds provide a great source of natural entertainment, even just looking through our windows. Walking along the bike path and along the river is a daily treat year round."

And while the parkway does not have eye-poppers like Yellowstone's geysers, Yosemite's Half Dome or Grand Canyon's gorges, it is our national park, rich in natural and historic wonders.

More information:

NPS: www.nps.gov/gwmp.

The Wild Road: <https://www.npca.org/articles/2997-the-wild-road>.

This year, former Friends of Dyke Marsh president and Mount Vernon resident Ed Eder documented three new insect species in Dyke Marsh between June and October, one new to the preserve and two also new to the parkway.

The long-tailed skipper butterfly on September 29, species number 6552, Lepidoptera number 865 and butterfly number 81 for the parkway. This butterfly has a long, broad, blue-green iridescent 'tail'.

The sunflower maggot fly on June 9, fly species number 282 for the parkway and a new family, Tephritidae, the peacock flies.

A northern pearly-eye butterfly on June 21, the first documentation of this species in Dyke Marsh since Friends of Dyke Marsh started a butterfly survey in 2016.

These discoveries are good news, but there's troubling news too.

The parkway has 50 threatened or endangered plants and 59 threatened or endangered animals.

Non-native and invasive plants, like English ivy and porcelainberry are rampant, threatening many valuable native species.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Nature lovers look for birds, butterflies, beavers and other critters along the trail.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

The Friends of Dyke Marsh conducted a herpetology survey in Dyke Marsh near the trail.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Off the Menu: Restaurant News and Notes

By HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

A new Indian restaurant comes to town, oysters take the main stage and a beloved restaurant owner asks for some assistance – there's no shortage of goings-on in Alexandria's dining circles.

Kismet Modern Indian Nears Opening Day

Indian-cuisine fans, unite: The grand opening for Kismet Modern Indian isn't too far away. The restaurant, which will open in the former BurgerFi (and, before that, Pat Troy's) location at 111 North Pitt St., is ramping up the excitement on its social media channels. Just this week, the restaurant posted, "It won't be long now! The finishing touches are coming together and the team is getting ready for opening day." Stay tuned for when Chef Ajay Kumar and team will open the eatery's doors to a hungry public.

Lori's Table Asks for Help

It's no surprise that the covid-19 pandemic has done a number on local businesses, and restaurants have certainly felt the blow, time and time again. Lori Feeley-Leetz, the owner of Lori's Table, has reached out to the community for a hand amid a need for repairs and improvements at her restaurant, known for its breakfast and lunch specialties.

Via her GoFundMe page, Feeley-Leetz writes, in part, "Small businesses like mine are very tenuous.

I don't have a lot of cash reserves to cover expenses for repairs and upkeep for the shop. Many small businesses will go and some have already closed their doors forever. I cannot let Lori's Table be one of these places. It's getting tougher and tougher to keep up with all those expenses." To contribute,



PHOTOS KISMET FACEBOOK

Kismet Modern Indian, opening soon.

visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/loris-table-needs-a-hand>.

The Old Town Oyster Festival Rolls On

Adjacent to the Chesapeake Bay as Alexandria is, it's only right that the city celebrate Oyster Week. More than a dozen local restaurants, ranging from Chadwicks to the Wharf to Union Street Public House to Landini Brothers and more, are taking part in the festivities, which run through Oct. 24. Expect oyster and Guinness pairings throughout the week, with the proceeds going to the Oyster Recovery Partnership.

Hope Nelson is the author of "Classic Restaurants of Alexandria" and owns the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.

CALENDAR

NOW THRU OCT. 30

In the "Expanding the Common Ground: Voices of the Global Majority" art exhibit, themes of people of the global majority reflecting, celebrating, and claiming power over oppression are explored, as well as finding common ground and healing divides. View exhibit at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays 12-6 p.m., and Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits.

NOW THRU OCT. 31

Ghost & Graveyard Tour. 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays additional tours at 8:30 and 9 p.m. Admission: \$15 per adult; \$14 for seniors, military and law enforcement; \$10 per child. Tour departs from Alexandria Visitor Center, 221 King St., Alexandria. Follow an 18th-century costumed guide by lantern light through the charming streets of Alexandria's historic district known as Old Town. On this entertaining tour, you'll hear ghost stories, legends and folklore. You will also hear about unsolved mysteries, tales of romance and angry ghosts looking for revenge. Appropriate for ages 9 and up. Visit alexcolonialtours.com

NOW THRU OCT. 31

St. Luke's Pumpkin Patch. 12 to 5 p.m. At St. Luke's Episcopal, 8009 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Pick up pumpkin bread, soup and pumpkins, and gourds galore. Proceeds



Jane Franklin Dance presents Climate on Sunday, Oct. 24, 2021 at The Athenaeum.

support the Navajo Nation who grow our pumpkins and youth and outreach programs. Pumpkins priced by size. Pumpkin bread and soup \$5. Great prices on decorative pumpkins and gourds of all types. Saturdays 10 a.m. - 7 p.m., Sundays Noon - 7 p.m. Mon - Thurs 3 - 7 p.m., Fri 1 - 7 p.m. through Halloween or until they sell out.

THURSDAY/OCT. 21

Halloween Ball and Anniversary Celebration at Barkhaus. 7:30 to 10 p.m. At Barkhaus, 529 E Howell Ave, Alexandria. Celebrate Barkhaus's first birthday with a Halloween ball. Guests will dress formally and add their own Hal-

loween twists to their costumes. Dogs are encouraged to dress up as well. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres, drinks, puppuccinos for dogs, a limited-edition Barkhaus anniversary shirt and more. Admission: \$75 per person. Visit the website: brewskisbarkhaus.com

NOW THRU NOV. 6

"Wait Until Dark." 8 p.m. At The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St., Alexandria. Set against the socially turbulent 1960s, "Wait Until Dark" follows the story of Suzy, a blind woman who, while left alone in her apartment, becomes embroiled with a group of con men

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

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FROM PAGE 8

hatching an elaborate scam. As the tension mounts, Suzy must fend for herself, but the phone line is cut, and the house is plunged into darkness. Can Suzy outwit her murderous visitors? Note: All patrons are required to wear a mask (even if vaccinated) for the duration of the performance. Admission: \$21 to \$24 per person. Visit the website: thelittletheatre.com

FRIDAYS IN OCTOBER 22, 29

Spirits of Carlyle House. 6-8:30 p.m. At Carlyle House, Alexandria. Carlyle House's long and diverse history is full of truths, myths, and rumours that makes it one of the most visited places on Alexandria's ghost tours. Come and experience a haunting tour of the house and grounds by candlelight, perhaps encounter the departed spirits of notable residents and neighbors, and hear their tales of sadness and triumph. This program is being put on in partnership with the Little Theater of Alexandria. Reservations required due to limited space. Tours are on the half hour.

OCT. 22, 23, 29, 30

Grief & Ghost Tour at Lee-Fendall House. At 7, 7:30, 8:30 and 9 p.m. At Lee-Fendall House, 614 Oronoco St., Alexandria. Celebrate Halloween with a look at Victorian mourning traditions coupled with stories of tragic deaths and mysterious occurrences at the Lee-Fendall House. Customs such as draping the mirrors after a death, funeral practices, hair mementos, mourning clothing and séances will be explored. These tours offer a rare opportunity to see the house after dark. Tour groups will be limited to 10 participants and tickets must be purchased in advance. Face masks are required. Admission: \$15 per person. Visit leefendallhouse.org

FRIDAY/OCT. 22

Tell Me Your Name. 5 p.m. At Carlyle House, Alexandria. Join Carlyle House Historic Park staff for a tour focusing on the experiences of the enslaved community at Carlyle House and his plantations. The guided tour will explore the historical context of slavery in 18th century Alexandria and the importance of ongoing research efforts to connect with descendants. Reservations are required as space is limited. Call 703-549-2997 or email carlyle@nvrpa.org Tickets https://apm.activecommunities.com/novaparks/Activity_Search/4694

Japanese Garden Concert. 5-6 p.m. Friday/Oct. 22. At The Rectory on Princess Street, 711 Princess Street, Alexandria. Don your silks and pearls for a benefit concert in support of concerts and artists in the transformed Secret Garden. Cost is \$55. The Japanese Garden Gala follows from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Visit the website: <https://www.classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts/>

The Thirteen Concert. 7:30 p.m. At Episcopal High School, Alexandria. Friday/Oct. 22 Following performances of Monteverdi's The Lost Vespers I and The Lost Mass, join The Thirteen's peerless singers and period instrumentalists for Monteverdi: The Lost Vespers II in a concert replete with artistry, elegance, and exploration.

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HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS

NOW THRU NOV. 6

Workhouse Haunt. 7-11 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. This year's Workhouse Haunt immerses guests through a highly-themed walk-through experience, as creepy characters deliver contactless scares in multiple scenes. Guests will travel in small groups for a frightening 30-minute experience that brings them next to the site's abandoned, historic buildings and into the dark woods where they will encounter terrifying characters and sights that are not for the faint of heart. Cost is \$25. Occurs Friday, Saturday, and Sunday each weekend from Oct. 3 through Nov. 6. Visit the website:

<https://www.workhousearts.org/workhouse-events/2021-workhouse-haunt-the-collection-2/>

OCT. 1-31

Ghost & Graveyard Tour. 7:30 p.m.;

Fridays and Saturdays additional tours at 8:30 and 9 p.m. Admission: \$15 per adult; \$14 for seniors, military and law enforcement; \$10 per child. Tour departs from Alexandria Visitor Center, 221 King St., Alexandria. Follow an 18th-century costumed guide by lantern light through the charming streets of Alexandria's historic district known as Old Town. On this entertaining tour, you'll hear ghost stories, legends and folklore. You will also hear about unsolved mysteries, tales of romance and angry ghosts looking for revenge. Appropriate for ages 9 and up. Visit alexcolonialtours.com

THROUGH OCT. 31

"The Madness of Poe." At Synetic Theater, 1800 South Bell Street in Arlington. "We watch how Poe, the inventor of American horror, cre-

SEE HALLOWEEN, PAGE 13

Forty-Four Years in The Waiting

FROM PAGE 5

McKay urged individuals to read "the actual words" [in the document]. "We're merely putting them in writing and having a contract with our employees so that they know what the fair rules of engagement are and how they can make sure that they continue to work for one of the best employers in the region."

McKay stressed this was "a collective bargaining ordinance," not a "collective bargaining agreement." Many things still need to be worked out. Approving the ordinance allows Fairfax County to go to the next step and work on establishing the agreement, something county employees had been asking for a very long time, McKay said. The General Assembly enabled this action in 2020.

"I am happy with this compromise," McKay said. I think it puts our employees in a good place, but I think it also allows the county board to have authority over so many of the things ... others elected us to do in running the county government."

Vice Chairman Penelope A. Gross asked the Board if they had any additional questions about the drafted ordinance before the vote, given there were "a number of red lines in here that indicate what the changes were." She said some things got removed, others added, and "it certainly was not for lack of lots and lots of discussion" in the work and employee groups. "I am satisfied that we have done as good a job as we possibly could do, especially for this first time out."

Herrity said that issues with collective bargaining agreements transcend public entities, whether the police, fire department, or general county employees. "I think it will be bad for Fairfax County residents and employees."

Herrity said in his private and public sector work as a chief fi-

nance officer, they "live and die off recruiting and retention."

"We are in a period of the 'Great Resignation,'" Herrity said. "This ... is going to hurt our ability to be flexible and offer things like signing bonuses ... The final turn of the document did eliminate the County's sole authority to hire, promote, fire, transfer, discipline our employees. ... I'm really concerned about binding arbitration."

Tammie Wondong is a 32-year county employee and President of the Fairfax Chapter of SEIU [Service Employees International Union] Virginia 512. It is a diverse union of more than 2,000 general county employees. Its members are nurses, social workers, mental health professionals, librarians, parks staff, sanitation workers, maintenance workers, engineers, and more who pushed for meaningful collective bargaining.

"Tonight's extraordinary victory is the direct result of working people joining together in our union and pushing for transformative change. This ordinance protects workers, strengthens public services, and benefits every single member of the Fairfax community. Our union is thrilled and looks forward to working in collaboration with the County to make Fairfax an even better place to live, work, and play," said Wondong.

Only as of May 1, 2021, when the Virginia General Assembly granted local government employers the right to decide their course of action regarding collective bargaining could Virginia cities, towns, counties and school boards including Fairfax County pass such an ordinance or resolution. After a forty-four-year ban, Virginia's collective bargaining law allows for recognizing unions or employee associations as the exclusive bargaining representatives for specific segments of their workforces.

CALENDAR

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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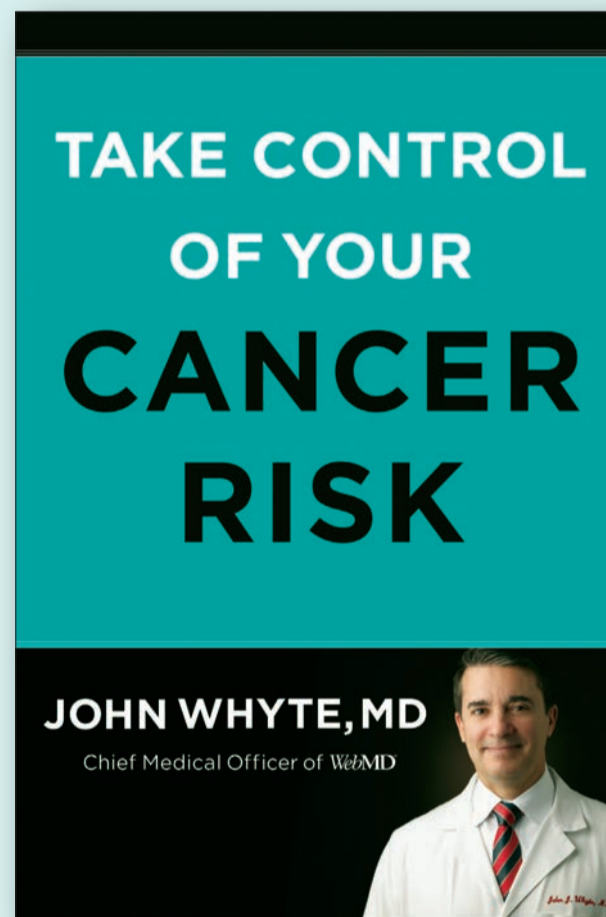
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HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS

Creepy Characters

Abandoned, historic buildings and into the night-time woods at the Workhouse Arts Center.

By DAVID SIEGEL
GAZETTE PACKET

Northern Virginia's outdoor, walk-thru haunting tradition returns at the Workhouse's annual "Haunt." This year's all new version is "The Collection."

This year's Haunt immerses guests in a highly-themed walk-through experience with creepy characters delivering contactless scares in multiple scenes. Guests will travel about the Workhouse campus to rarely visited areas in small groups for a 30-minute experience of abandoned, historic buildings and into the night-time woods.

ENCORE REVIEW

"It was important for us to create an experience that was both highly entertaining and safe for all attendees and participants," said Leon Scioscia, president/CEO, Workhouse Arts Center.

"All staff, actors, stage technicians, other contractors, and volunteers will be required to ei-

ther be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or provide a negative COVID-19 test prior to the start of each weekend's performances," Scioscia said. Guests are asked to wear a mask while on campus.

The Workhouse live, in-person, "Haunt: The Collection" is not only for patrons' entertainment, but as an extension of the Workhouse Performing Arts Program. The "Haunt" is providing opportunities for local youth to practice their acting skills, set production and overall theatrical skills.

"We are truly pleased to provide an artistic outlet for our young actors, set designers, stage technicians, and volunteers alike to participate safely in creating this incredible production," said Joseph Wallen, director, Workhouse Performing Arts.

Even with the many challenges presented by the pandemic, "the outdoor, walk-thru design of 'The Collection' will allow visitors to enjoy the Halloween season despite COVID-19," said Caroline Blanco, chair, Workhouse Board of Directors and co-chair of the Workhouse



David Blanco in character for Workhouse Arts Center outdoor immersive "Haunt: The Collection." Weekend nights Oct. 3 to Nov. 6, 2021.



Morgan Prescott in character for Workhouse Arts Center outdoor immersive "Haunt: The Collection." Weekend nights Oct. 3 to Nov. 6, 2021.

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Haunt design team.

"People should definitely come check us out. I personally think we are one of the scariest haunted attractions in the state of Virginia," said Alex Hansohn, one of the volunteers involved in "The Collection."

For participant David Blanco, "the Workhouse enables my creativity by allowing me to bring out some ideas I have for how to design a haunted house. I am most excited to be back."

"This year's story is better than ever and you will get to see stuff you have never

imagined before." added Morgan Prescott who helped design the event and plays one of the unscripted creative characters on the haunted trail.

"People should definitely come check us out. I personally think we are one of the scariest haunted attractions in the state of Virginia."

— Alex Hansohn

Note: There will be premium nights with additional live entertainment on Oct. 16, 23, 30 and 31.

This is an outdoor event. The route includes paved and unpaved surfaces. Guests are cautioned to wear appropriate footwear. Snacks and beverages will be available for purchase at the

Haunt Bar, located near the check-in area in the campus quad.

Where and When: Workhouse Arts Center presents

"Haunt: The Collection" at 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton, VA 22079. weekend nights through Saturday, Nov. 6, 2021. Fridays and Saturdays, 7-11 p.m. and Sundays, 7-10 p.m. Recommended for guests 13 years of age and older. Timed-entry tickets available and must be purchased online. Tickets priced from \$25 per person on most nights and \$30 per person on Premium Nights. Ticket pricing varies upon the night. For details, tickets, and health and safety information go to www.workhousearts.org.

HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS

FROM PAGE 11

ated some of the most frightening and disturbing stories the world has ever known," said Synetic Theater founder Paata Tsikurshvili. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Industry Night is Monday, Oct. 25, at 8 p.m. Tickets \$10-\$60, www.synetictheater.org, or in-person at the box office located in the underground Crystal City Shops, or via phone at 703-824-8060 x117.

THROUGH OCT. 31

Ongoing Halloween Display. At 2508 Halterbreak Court, Herndon. Come see the punny skeletons, which are cooking up fun and ghostly apparitions appear in the windows and yard. Animated skeletons (Queen, Bruno Mars 24 karat magic, and Rick James Superfreak), talking witches and jumping spiders come out on Oct 31.

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THROUGH NOV. 7

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Fields of Fear. Not recommended for children under 12 years old. When night falls on the farm, it's time for Fields of Fear. Friday and Saturday nights until Nov. 3. Fields of Fear, the Dark Side Hayride and the Cornnightmare. The Firegrounds feature several bonfires, a six-lane slide, music, karaoke, entertainment, tasty treats, Foamhenge, and more. All under age 14 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian (18+). Tickets required. Last admission at 10pm Come alone or in a group. Buy your tickets online or same-day at the door. Proof of age required. See <https://fieldsoffear.coxfarms.com/> for more details on timed entry assignments, rain policy, food options, and complete list of attractions.

OCT. 16 TO NOV. 6

"Wait Until Dark." 8 p.m. At The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St., Alexandria. Set against the socially turbulent 1960s, "Wait Until Dark" follows the story of Suzy, a blind woman who, while left alone in her apartment, becomes embroiled with a group of con men hatching an elaborate scam. As the tension mounts, Suzy must fend for herself, but the phone line is cut, and the house is plunged into darkness. Can Suzy outwit her murderous visitors? Note: All patrons are required to wear a mask (even if vaccinated) for the duration of the performance. Admission: \$21 to \$24 per person. Visit the website: thelittletheatre.com.

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Hardly the Same Thing



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

It may not have been the miracle I was hoping for: shrinkage or tumor disappearance, from my most recent diagnostic scans but no growth and/or new metastases is nothing to be taken for granted. However, I did experience a miracle of sorts when the envelope I received at home from the "State of Maryland, Maryland SafeZones Automated Speed Enforcement" authority specifying and picturing yours truly exceeding the speed limit by 12 mph was for information purposes only. It was not an invoice. It was a warning. And the \$40 fine associated with this kind of infraction was left on the cutting room floor. Perhaps this is the extent of the miracle that Solange was able to perform when she prayed for me and my burned feet - and thyroid cancer, on July 20 in the Houston airport. Though this outcome was not exactly the delusional outcome I was hoping for, when we consented to her extremely kind offer to pray for me. Nevertheless, a win is a win. And though a shrinking/disappearing cancer tumor would have been an amazing - albeit unlikely outcome, the tumors remained "stable" and I saved a \$40 outlay. On balance, not a bad day's work.

For which I am extremely grateful. Soon after I entered the cancer-patient world, I learned that any not-automatically-bad news - whether internally or externally to that world, should be acknowledged and appreciated. Any port in a storm you might say. Moreover, I always sought to find the positive in this sea of negativity. Whatever I could see - through any rose-colored glasses I could find, served its purpose to emotionally support me for the many long and lonely nights that followed. Certainly, there's family and friends to help share the burden brought on by a "terminal" diagnosis, but at the end of the day, literally, it's sort of you and your thoughts. Finding a way to navigate this minefield of unpredictable results and anxiety is paramount. On the one hand, you can't take what the doctors and radiologists say as seriously as a cancer diagnosis obviously is, but neither can you pretend that you're not in the fight of your life. That being said, one must be open to new ideas and unexpected offers. Filtering and interpreting whether any of the suggestions made by your doctors and/or your well-meaning friends and family becomes your lot in life. And it's an awful lot at that.

Still, a cancer diagnosis is not nearly the death sentence as it used to be for the previous generation. Though it would be naive to characterize a cancer diagnosis as an opportunity, nevertheless unceasing research in a variety of hospital/cancer centers, medical schools, clinical trials, pharmaceutical companies and the like have led to an evolution in the treatment in cancer, particularly non small cell lung cancer which is the type of cancer I was originally diagnosed with in late Feb., 2009. (Though I am now being treated for papillary thyroid cancer as you regular readers know. As to whether I ever had lung cancer, the jury is still out, not literally.)

And since I have an incurable form of thyroid cancer, as written about numerous times in this space, I am forever open to new experiences that might create a path forward for me. The underlying problem in my situation is the odd circumstances that ultimately led to my more recent diagnosis. Since I had years of heavy-duty chemotherapy while treating my presumptive lung cancer, I have suffered kidney damage which only manifests itself in lab work and in what medications/treatment I can be given. As such when I went to the hospital after my thyroidectomy for post-surgical eradication of the remaining thyroid cancer that the surgeon was unable to remove, the dose of nuclear isotopes I was given was only one-third the dose it should have been had I not been so previously chemotherapy-damaged. As a result, I'm sort of stuck. I have a usually curable type of thyroid cancer which is now considered incurable. The solution? I need to find a clinical trial for patients who have been treated for lung cancer for nine years, perhaps mistakenly, suffered irreparable kidney damage from those years of toxicity, who now has been diagnosed with thyroid cancer and who is now unable to process the medicine likely to cure him and thus is: incurable.

You bet I need a miracle, and sooner rather than later. Maybe I should fly back to Houston.

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

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Adolescence can be challenging, but living with constant discord is not the only option.

SURVIVING THE TEEN YEARS

1. Avoid trying to control
2. Spend time together without electronics
3. Withhold judgement
4. Offer sincere praise
5. Maintain open communication
6. Allow independence, but set boundaries
7. Give teens personal space

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
GAZETTE PACKET

“Why do you hate me?”
“You’re the worst mother in the world!”
These are some of what Kate Hoyle hears from her 14-year-old daughter.

“It’s like she went from being a sweet girl to a raging teen overnight,” said the Woodbridge-based parenting coach and mother of two. “It was like getting slapped in the face.”

As children become adolescents, they often begin to push away parents and crave independence. Topics of conversation that were once pleasant now can be volatile. Some parents may question their parenting abilities.

“Adolescents naturally become more autonomous and shift somewhat to peer influence after looking exclusively to parents for the answer. But a smart parent learns to shift their approach and skills with the onset of this stage of development,” said Hoyle. “This change can be gradual or it can be sudden and is sometimes the result of a major life change. It is important to get to know the parents of your child’s friends.”

Recognizing and understanding the change in behavior that is associated with this developmental stage can help parents to navigate it, says Bethesda-based therapist Carol Barnaby, LCSW. “Tweens and teens begin to develop their autonomy by questioning, testing, and for some violating the rules parents set for them,” she said. “They express strong opinions about politics, clothing, music, and social relationships. They begin to yearn for their freedom to do adult-like things. They may lose interest in previous hobbies, be easily embarrassed, and have emotional ups and downs.”

It is not uncommon for teens to act like they know best and to dismiss a parent’s guidance. “It can be annoying, but it shows confidence,” said Hoyle. “Enjoy debates and discussion with them. They need to develop independent analysis and thought.”

However frustrating for a parent, this stage is necessary for a child’s transition from adolescence to adulthood. “It’s when they’re entering the final phase of childhood, where they are working on being able to self-govern and grow into an independent functioning adult,” said Barnaby. “Kids begin to enter this phase around the age of 12 to 14 and want more and more independence and less need for parent connection. Instead, they might see who they are in the eyes of their peers.”

Though they might appear to push away parents, teens still need to feel connected to them. Simple conversations can help recreate that bond. At times, parents must create opportunities to spend time without phones or electronics with their child, advises Ameila Muench, Psy. D., a child psychologist in Alexandria. “Do something together that they enjoy and try to keep the time consistent,” she said. “This can quickly become your special time away from other family members, and it allows them to open up.”

“Routine and ritual help maintain open communication,” added Hoyle. “Your child gets to know when you are available and you get to understand when they are most likely to be open to talk. Car rides work well because it removes the intensity of a sit-down conversation requiring eye contact.”

Listen without judgment or criticism and resist the urge to offer unsolicited advice, advises Muench. “Use active listening, which means being able to repeat back to them what they have just said,” she said. “Take note of the language they are using. What are they really trying to tell you? Ask questions to find out rather than instantly responding with your view. Listen rather than instruct.”

While establishing rules and setting boundaries are necessary, trying to control a teen might lead to rebellion, says Hoyle. “Get curious, not furious,” she said. “When your teen makes an unhealthy choice or does something you don’t agree with, getting mad or telling them you’re disappointed will further your disconnection. Their behavior is trying to get one of six core emotional needs met: acceptance, affection, appreciation, attention, autonomy, or connection. Which one is it? Look beneath the surface.”

Allowing teens to have a certain amount of personal space and feel that they are trusted can strengthen the relationship between a parent and an adolescent. “Continuous tracking and distrust can affect their mental health that can lead to depression,” said Hoyle.

Self-doubt is common among teens, so praise helps build confidence if offered sincerely. “They’re trying to find their place in the world, so focus on attributes not attainment,” said Muench. “If teens and tweens learn that they only get praise when they look a certain way or achieve through academic endeavors or sports, they can become people pleasers or unhappy perfectionists.”

Remember that this stage in a child’s life is only temporary. “One of the biggest things we can encourage in a child is curiosity. Talk to them as the person you want them to be,” said Hoyle.

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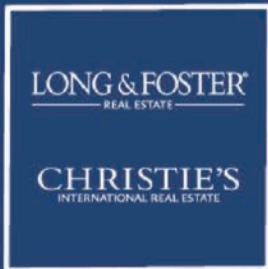
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