

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

DECEMBER 16, 2021



Jordan Sturge-Cordner,
Self-Portrait,
2nd grade, Fort Hunt
Elementary School.

Children's & Teens'
Gazette 2021

Your style is unique, I've got you covered.



6115 Belle View Terrace

Represented Seller



6022 Fort Hunt Road

Represented Seller



909 Cameron Street

Represented Seller



1800 Edgehill Drive

Represented Seller



1788 Duffield Lane

Represented Seller



2101 Belle Haven Road

Represented Seller



6108 Woodmont Road

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1721 N Taylor Street

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6014 Grove Drive

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2100 Shenandoah Road

Represented Buyer



1927 Summit Terrace

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BEST
WASHINGTONIAN
2021

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2021 CHILDREN'S AND TEENS' GAZETTE

Welcome to our 2021 Children's Gazette sections. While submissions were still short of the pre-pandemic avalanche of children's and teens' art and writing, in 2021 students have delivered a delightful, sometimes unusual, panoply of expression. I've enjoyed the art and writing as we've downloaded it over many many hours in the last two weeks. And I hope you will also.

You can find digital copies of the papers, including the Children's and Teens' Connection at <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/>. The papers should be posted by Thursday, Dec. 16. We deliver tens of thousands of papers to homes, businesses, public libraries and community centers, plus thousands more in email and digital. We will print extra copies, and restock at libraries and community centers. But also feel free to

print out pages from the PDFs or take a digital copy to a photo center to print out larger, high resolution copies of your child's art if you desire many copies.

It feels like a small, or not so small, miracle to have made it to the end of 2021 and be looking forward into the New Year. The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. More recently we have seen the return of advertising for events and Grand Openings. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. Revenue is still short of our greatly curtailed costs.

At the end of 2020, we didn't have any idea how we would keep going. But our readers responded overwhelmingly to our Go Fund Me, bringing us within reach of our

goal of \$50,000. PPP funding, "forgivable loans," made our survival possible. Now we are still hoping for a grant from Rebuild Virginia to help get us into 2022. We applied almost a year ago, but it seems possible that our application might be reviewed while there is still money in the fund.

I think we can be characterized as pathological optimists. While there are forces out there that could make it impossible for us to keep going, we continue to push forward. While I have said this a few times without yet making it happen, keep your eyes open for our membership drive, which would hope for readers, sources and community members who would be interested in supporting us on a monthly basis.

One of the magical elements that helped us get this far was the presence on our staff

of an international journalism legend, Kemal Kurspahic, who served as managing editor and guiding light for decades. Kemal died tragically and unexpectedly this fall, having a stroke after minor surgery. We miss him daily. Keeping everything going has been harder since. You can read Kemal's obituary here: <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2021/sep/22/courage-journalism/>

We haven't done everything we aspire to do, we always aspire to greater community service. But we do know that the community is better off for Local Media Connection continuing to publish.

Now that we've told you how we're doing (ha!), let us know how you are doing, what you think about the state of our communities.

Thank you.

— Mary Kimm, kimm.mary@gmail.com



Ava McCarley 11, 6th grade, Endangered Species, Oil Pastel, Browne Academy



Charlotte Burkholder, 5th grade, Alexandria Country Day School.



Owen Wiser 11 6th, grade, Endangered Species Oil Pastel, Browne Academy

Mae Sanchious, 1st Grade, Alexandria Country Day School.



RIVERSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Teacher: Ms. Land



Nora Barry, 2nd Grade, Drawing, Community Member Portrait



Marielle Lacayo, 2nd Grade, Drawing, Community Member Portrait



Amelia_Petro, 2nd Grade, Painting, My Ideal Community



Isma'il Yusuf, 1st Grade, My Dream Home, Painting



Maiah Moreno, 1st Grade, My Dream Home, Painting



Dilia Medrano Hernandez, 1st Grade, Collage, My Space Vehicle



Daniel Gonzalez, 3rd Grade, Birthday Collage



Addisyn Thompson, 3rd Grade, Collage_Christmas Collage



Alina Lu, 6th Grade, My Future Self Drawing



Mary McAdam, 6th Grade, Collage, Super You

OBITUARY

Douglas Freeman Jones, 68

Douglas Freeman Jones, 68, of Alexandria, Virginia, died on Nov. 27, while visiting his children and grandson in Texas for Thanksgiving.

Visitation will be held Dec. 19, 5 - 7 p.m. at Demaine Funeral Home, 520 S Washington Street, Alexandria.

Funeral services will be held Dec. 20, 10 am, at Pillar Church of Woodlawn, 9001 Richmond Hwy. Burial will follow at Ivy Hill Cemetery in Alexandria, VA.

Details on his funeral arrangements and a complete obituary may be found at www.rememberingdoug.org.

Jones was chairman of the Mount Vernon Lee Chamber three times. During his first term of service Doug was instrumental in establishing new Bylaws and setting up committees to involve members in the Chamber. One of these committees was a legislative affairs committee. Under his direction the Chamber became a true advocate for the business community on all levels of government.

Jones was the managing partner at Rent-all Center on Richmond Highway since 1975 to retirement in 2017. His father began the business in 1970 and Doug took over management of the business when his father passed away. Over the years this remarkable business employed local residents and provided part time jobs for teenagers while offering highly-ranked professional services, said the Mount Vernon Chamber.

Jones served on the Area I FCPS Superintendent's Community Advisory Council and was appointed by Gov. Jim Gilmore to serve as a member of the State Executive Council for At-Risk Youth and Families in 1999. In 2011, he was appointed by Gov. Bob McDonnell to serve as a member of the Board of Visitors at Mount Vernon Estate. In 2017, Jones was recognized as the Chamber Citizen of the Year by the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce. Jones held numerous other community and business leadership positions including President of the Virginia Equipment Rental Association and Vice President of the Woodley Hills Elementary School Parent Teacher Association.

Doug Jones was born in Dayton, Ohio, on May 26, 1953, to Lois and Freeman Jones. From an early age he was a talented athlete and leader, lettering in Varsity Football and Baseball at Mount Vernon High School. Doug served as the football team captain, was selected as the team's Most Valuable Player, and maintained active membership in the Key Club. Amidst his plethora of extra-curricular activities, Doug also performed exceptionally well in his academics. He graduated in 1971 with opportunities to play football at the United States Naval Academy, Yale, and the University of Virginia. He accepted a football scholarship at the University of Virginia where he took the field as a Wahoo wearing number 41. He led the team in interceptions during his sophomore year as a starting defensive back. Continuing his legacy of success both on and off the field, Doug became a member of the Phi Delta Theta Fraternity and graduated in 1976 often making the Dean's List.

When his father, Freeman, died in 1979, Doug joined his mother, Lois, in the management of the fam-



ily business, Rent-All Center. The business was a staple of the Mount Vernon community for over 40 years. Lois retired in 1999 and Doug co-owned the business with his sister, Judy, until they retired in 2017. While managing his responsibilities at Rent-All, Doug continued to remain involved in sports well beyond his college years. He coached his sons Matt and Charlie in baseball, basketball, and football. In 2002 he coached the

Woodlawn Little League 9 & 10 Year-Old All-Stars all the way to the State Championship tournament. Doug served as the membership director for Woodlawn Little League and a local announcer for Mount Vernon High School baseball (aka the "Voice of the Majors").

Jones was actively involved in the local business community, serving as a member of the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce since 1981 and the Chairman of the Board from 1997-1999. Under his leadership, membership doubled and the Chamber was recognized as one of the fastest growing chambers in the Washington metropolitan area. He represented the Chamber on the Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation and the Area I Superintendent's Community Advisory Council.

Jones held numerous community and business leadership positions including president of the Virginia Equipment Rental Association and vice president of the Woodley Hills Elementary School Parent Teacher Association.

Jones's community involvement did not stop with local business or youth athletics, as some of his most prominent service was his involvement in the local Republican Party. Doug served as the vice-chairman of the Mount Vernon District of the Fairfax County Republican Committee from 1998-2000, chairman from 2000-2015, and the Woodley Hills precinct captain from 1993-2021. A passionate grassroots campaigner, he could be found regularly knocking on doors during election season or working polling sites on Election Day. In 1971, when the 26th Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified, allowing citizens to vote at age 18, Doug had his first opportunity to exercise his civic duty. His first significant political experience occurred later when he volunteered for the 1972 Richard Nixon campaign. His political service spanned close to 40 years and included involvement in nearly every Republican campaign in Northern Virginia.

Some of his notable campaign involvement includes serving as the Fairfax County Co-Chair for Bob McDonnell's Gubernatorial campaign in 2005 as well as George Allen's Senate campaign in 2006. Doug had a passion for his community and carried himself as a true gentleman in his political work. Doug always enjoyed the opportunity election day gave him to visit with friends, neighbors, and acquaintances – regardless of political affiliation or voting preference.

Doug is preceded in death by his parents Lois and Freeman Jones.

Doug is survived by his sons Charles and Matthew Jones, his daughter-in-law Morgan Jones, sisters Judith Jones Beyer and Kathryn Jones Campbell, and grandson Thomas "Brody" Jones

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

NOW THRU JAN. 2

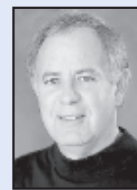
Ice & Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run, 4001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Open nightly 5 to 10 p.m.; January 8 to February 27, 2022 (ice skating only), open Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Featuring an ice rink, multiple new holiday light displays perfect for Insta-

gramming, a retail area, food, music and more. Admission: \$9 for general admission to Village; \$22 for village admission and skating; beginning January 8, \$14 for ice skating; free ages 2 and under. Visit novaparks.com/events/ice-lights

SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS Waterfront Art Market. 11 a.m. to

5 p.m. At Torpedo Factory Art Center's waterfront entrance, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Visit the Waterfront entrance at Torpedo Factory Art Center to discover new artwork from a rotating lineup of the Art Center's studio artists. Find paintings and photographs to jewelry and wearables, then step

SEE HOLIDAY CALENDAR, PAGE 7



Rex Reiley
RE/MAX Allegiance
703-768-7730
rex.reiley@rmxtalk.com



Alex/Mt. Zephyr \$679,900
8521 Richmond Avenue

Tired of dealing with the stairs in a 3-level Colonial? Come see this stunning 2 level Rambler w/walkout lower level to a large stone patio & beautiful backyard. The main level offers 3BRs, & 2BAs, large open kitchen remodeled in 2007, sparkling finished hwd floors, a living room w/wood burning FPL, & finally a stunning 3 season screened porch off the dining room, a perfect place to unwind after a hard day at the office. The lower level has 4th, & 5th BRs, a third bath & a huge family room w/2nd FPL, & lovely bar/kitchenette. This is a perfect area for entertaining. Storage a concern, check out the 26 x 13 storage room & the added storage in the attic over the screened porch, accessed by pull down stairs. Throw in a large beautiful backyard & you have a total winner! Some additional updates: New Shed 2010-New Well McLain Boiler 2006 w/20-year warranty-New Roof 2012 w/25-year warranty- A/C 2015- Countertop lower-level kitchenette 2016- Washer & Dryer 2016. 5 minutes to Ft. Belvoir (S), 15 minutes (N) to Old Town Alex, 27 minutes (N) to National Airport, all along the George Washington Parkway.



Alex/Riverside Estates \$699,500
8342 Wagon Wheel Road

This stunning, meticulously updated & maintained Split in popular Riverside Estates is NOW Available! 4BRs, 2.5BAs, carport, screened porch--loads of upgrades. The main level offers 3BRs, 2BAs, beautiful hwd floors, double pane windows, kitchen, living & dining rooms & screened porch. The updated kitchen will take your breath away w/its granite counters, dazzling white cabinets & marble tiled floor. The living rm has a large, brilliant bay window and opens to the dining rm that provides access to a spectacular screened porch, perfect for chilling or entertaining. The lower level offers a charming family rm w/a gorgeous FPL, 4th BR, remodeled half bath, & approximately 600sf of storage/utility/workshop space. The backyard is a perfect blend of hardscaping, (stone patios, & walls) & beautiful landscaping. Ideal for entertaining. If you desire a fabulous, turn-key home...Here it is!! Great location: 1 mile (S) to Mt. Vernon Plantation, 5 mins (S) to Ft. Belvoir, 15 mins (N) to Alex, 27 mins (N) to National Airport, 27-35 mins (N) to Pentagon/D.C.



Wellington Estates \$650,000
7968 Bolling Drive

A wonderful opportunity for someone who is looking for a rare one-level Rambler in the coveted community of Wellington Estates which has homes selling in the upper \$600,000s to as high as \$1,600,000! You can move into this charming 3 bedroom, 3 bath home & update to match your specific taste, or... If you are a contractor, you can do a complete remodel & flip. Or...like many contractors have done in this community, you can start over & build a 1.5-million-dollar home like the neighbors across the street which just sold for \$1,625,000. One block to the bike path & GW Pkwy-8 mins to Old Town, Alex, 15-20 mins to National Airport & 25-30 mins to the Pentagon & D.C. Take advantage of this wonderful home, location & endless possibilities! Home being sold AS IS -



For more information: www.RexReiley.com
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get your flu shot today.



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Protect the ones you love,
get vaccinated now.

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

RIVERSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Teacher: Ms. Land



Megan Do, 6th Grade, Collage, Super Self



Nina Jankowski, 6th Grade, Collage, Secret Potions



Ottmar Martinez Diaz, 4th Grade, Collage, Robot of the Future



Paizli Miller, 6th Grade, Collage, Super Self



Andrew Guzman Pisfil, 2nd Grade, Collage My Dream Vehicle



Rohai Hussain, 4th Grade, Collage, Robot of the Future



David Ruiz Torres, 4th Grade, Collage, Driving at Night



Daylan Iraheta Vasquez, 1st Grade, Collage



Rachel Duchaine, 6th Grade, Collage, The Farm



Litzy Perez, 4th Grade, Collage, Robot of the Future



Vince Bridgewater, 6th Grade, Collage, Super Self

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 5

inside to browse the three floors of the Art Center for even more original art for purchase. Visit torpedofactory.org

NOW THRU DEC. 31

Jingle Journey. At various locations in the Del Ray neighborhood, Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. With your little ones, go a magical scavenger hunt through Del Ray and piece together the Jingle Journey story. This event is free but requires online registration. Visit <https://www.artsonthehorizon.org/jingle-journey.html>.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Saturdays and Sundays in December: 8-10 a.m. Invite friends and family to celebrate the holidays with Alexandria Restaurant Partners' Breakfast with Santa. Enjoy a festive breakfast menu, Prosecco Bellinis (for adults), takeaway treats for the kids, and a family photo with Santa Claus. (Saturday, 12/18; Sunday, 12/19) and Christmas Eve, Friday, December 24th at the locations below:

Ada's on the River (\$55 adults/\$35 children) 703-638-1400
Mia's Italian Kitchen (\$49 adults/\$29 children) 703-997-5300
Theismann's Restaurant (\$45 adults/\$25 children) 703-739-0777

NOW THRU DEC. 18

"A Christmas Carol." At The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St., Alexandria. The Little Theatre of Alexandria rings in the holiday

season with a return of the classic by Charles Dickens. Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserable, bitter old miser, travels with ghostly guides through Christmas past, present and future to find the true meaning of the holidays. Visit the website: thelittletheatre.com

FRIDAY/DEC. 17

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra

Presents: Home for the Holidays. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. At The Rachel M. Schlesinger Center for Performing Arts NOVA Alexandria Campus, 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria. This December, the ASO brings back the joy of live holiday music that audiences yearned for in 2020. ASO will accompany dancers from BalletNOVA with selections from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker. Alexandria Choral Society joins the ASO for choruses from Handel's Messiah and will lead the audience in popular holiday carols. Visit the website: alexsym.org

DEC. 17-18

Christmas Illuminations at Mount

Vernon. 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Kick off the holiday season with fireworks overlooking the Potomac River. Tour the Mansion to learn about holiday celebrations during Washington's time with live 18th-century music. See the lantern-lit historic area, the Mansion aglow in beautiful amber light, and the Upper Garden and Greenhouse dazzling in blue

SEE HOLIDAY CALENDAR, PAGE 9



CHRISTMAS EVE
Fri, December 24

4 pm (in Church & Creedon Hall)
6 pm, 8 pm, 10 pm
Midnight (español)

CHRISTMAS DAY
Sat, December 25

9 am
10:30 am
2 pm (español)

Join us for Christmas Mass

8710 Mt. Vernon Hwy Alexandria, VA 22309 www.gs-cc.org

PUBLIC NOTICE

Please be advised that a fireworks display will take place as part of a public evening event, Christmas Illuminations at George Washington's Mount Vernon on the following dates:

Friday, December 17 between 8:00 p.m. and 8:30pm (10 minutes)

Saturday, December 18 between 8:00 p.m. and 8:30pm (10 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

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S
MOUNT VERNON



Where Students Learn to Communicate Effectively.

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START HERE.

acds ALEXANDRIA
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL
www.acdsnet.org

GRADES K-8

Join us for a OPEN HOUSE on January 6



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.

Direction	Structure	Route	Structure Name	Structure	Posted Date
MONTGOMERY	12355	787	DRY VALLEY RD./ROUTE 787	MEADOW CREEK	10/28/2021
DINWIDDIE	6063	631	CLAIRBORNE RD.	HATCHER RUN	10/23/2021
CARROLL	4640	620	FOREST OAK RD./ROUTE 620	CROOKED CREEK	10/22/2021
SCOTT	16924	796	GILLENWATER LOOP	BIG MOCCASIN CREEK	10/20/2021
LUNENBURG	11609	626	DOUBLE BRIDGES RD.	LEDBETTER CREEK	10/12/2021

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 <https://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.

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.

BROWNE ACADEMY



Brooklyn Lindo 8, 2nd grade,
Arpillera



Lauren Apriceno 7, 2nd grade,
Arpillera



Prince Owusu, 2nd grade,
Arpillera



Ephraim McMillan 7, 2nd grade,
Arpillera



Kira Brasfield 7, 2nd grade,
Arpillera



Alix Ares 10, 5th grade,
Mandala



Ian Yared 10,
5th grade, Mandala



William Bader 10,
5th grade, Mandala



Linna Weise 10, 5th grade,
Watercolor Landscape Collage



Kira Younger 10, 5th grade,
Watercolor Landscape Collage



Autumn Ecarma 10, 5th grade,
Northern Lights Pastel Collage



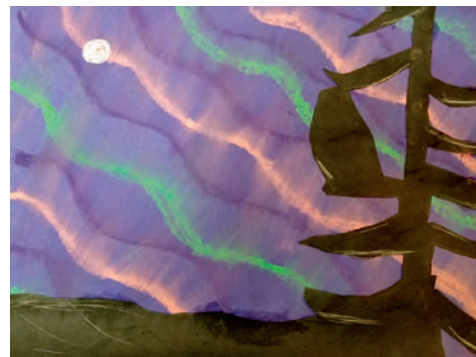
Declan Drewry 10, 5th grade,
Watercolor Landscape Collage



Tatiana Laster 10, 5th grade, Northern
Lights Pastel Collage



Autumn Ecarma 10, 5th grade,
Watercolor Landscape Collage



Ava Nuckols 10, 5th grade,
Northern Lights Pastel Collage



Leila Thompson 10, 5th grade,
Northern Lights Pastel Collage



Ellen Smith 6, 1st grade,
Winter Cardinals



Peyton Nash 6, 1st grade,
Winter Cardinals



Ryan March 7, 1st grade,
Winter Cardinals



Lucas Pellerito 6, 1st grade,
Winter Cardinals



Vivian Seline 6, 1st grade,
Winter Cardinals

HOLIDAYS



Julia Lipner, 4th Grade, Hollin Meadows Elementary

Take a Hike (On New Year's Day)

Enjoy the great outdoors on New Year's Day with a first day hike at any of the 41 Virginia State Parks.

All state parks offer free parking on Jan. 1, 2022 and visitors to each park will receive a commemorative water bottle sticker (while supplies last).

For a list of scheduled hikes and programs, www.virginiastateparks.gov/firstdayhikes

Mason Neck in Lorton is included. <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/mason-neck>

Leesylvania in Woodbridge <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/leesylvania> and Sky Meadows <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/sky-meadows> are in easy driving distance also.

Virginia State Parks has many hikes and opportunities to choose from, or visit a park and create your own special First Day Hike. Here are a few ideas:

Sky Meadows State Park will open at 5:30 a.m. on New Year's Day to support the sunrise celebration of various cultures. At 10 a.m., join a ranger at the Backcountry Trail-

head for a guided hike.

Pocahontas State Park in Chesterfield offers a special New Year's Eve night hike to celebrate the countdown. The park also offers a variety of special hikes for different ages and capabilities throughout New Year's Day.

Guided hikes are available every hour from 9 a.m. – noon at Natural Bridge State Park. The approximately 45-minute hike will lead you to great views of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Join a ranger at Smith Mountain Lake State Park on a mile hike that is rated as easy. The hike includes a scavenger hunt to discover winter's hidden secrets in nature.

At Clinch River State Park, a ranger will lead you on a 4-mile hike along the Clinch and to ruins of a failed French settlement.

The 41 award-winning Virginia State Parks are managed by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. For more information, or to buy an annual pass or gift certificate, visit www.virginiastateparks.gov

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 7

and lavender with moving wintry light patterns. Admission: \$60 adult/\$38 youth with mansion tour; \$58 adult/\$36 youth without mansion tour; for members, \$50 adult/\$28 youth with mansion tour; \$48 adult/\$26 youth without mansion tour. Visit mountvernon.org/illuminations

DEC. 17-18

Civil War Christmas at Carlyle House. 5 to 8 p.m. At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Discover how Christmas was celebrated when the Green family lived at Carlyle House and the Mansion House Hotel was being used as a Civil War hospital. Stay tuned for updates about live music. Tours offered of the first floor with timed entry on the hour and half hour. Space is limited and reservations are required. Visit the website: novaparks.com

DEC. 17-19

Del Ray Artisans' Fine Art & Fine Craft Holiday Market. At 2704 Mount Vernon Ave.,

Alexandria. Fridays, 6 to 9 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Featuring unique handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Choose from wall art, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass and much more from different artisans each weekend. Plus, purchase 2022 wall calendars, cookbooks and tote bags to support Del Ray Artisans. Visit the website: delrayartisans.org

DEC. 17 AND 19

Holiday Concerts. Dec. 17 at 7:30 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, and Sunday, Dec. 19 at 3 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial. Under the direction of Music Director James Ross, the program will include excerpts from Handel's Messiah and familiar holiday carols and melodies. For Friday's performance, dancers from BalletNova take the stage with selections from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker interspersed with music from Ellington's Nutcracker Suite. All children attending will be provided with sleigh bells for a surprise audience participation activity. Visit www.alexsym.org or call (703) 548-0885.

New Year's Eve Festival of Music & More!

Friday, December 31
Old Town Alexandria.
Family friendly. Affordable.
Entertainment for all ages.

Celebrating 27 Years!

SCAN CODE FOR TICKETS & INFO

WWW.FIRSTNIGHTALEXANDRIA.ORG

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Shelter at Beacon Hill

BY DAN STORCK
MOUNT VERNON SUPERVISOR

In 2015, Fairfax County voters approved a Public Safety Bond Referendum for the renovation and expansion of five County fire stations, including the Penn Daw Fire Station. The current station was built in 1967 as a volunteer station and is one of the oldest and busiest in the county. A new, modern, eco-friendly facility will provide improved space and a healthy environment for our Fire and Rescue personnel. Community support for a new fire station has been unequivocal.

In 2016, Fairfax County voters approved funding to renovate or replace four emergency housing facilities through a Human Services and Community Development Bond Referendum. The existing Eleanor Kennedy Shelter was one of these facilities, as it operates from a 103-year-old converted pump house leased from Fort Belvoir with no options for additional supportive housing.

Fairfax County is committed to best practices in all services, including that emergency housing be a part of a crisis response system that provides safety, access to services, and connections to permanent affordable housing. This new facility will serve as part of the crisis response system and a housing continuum that connects individuals experiencing homelessness to

opportunities to chart their course toward housing stability in a new home.

Since these bonds were approved, County staff have been looking for a new location on the Corridor for the replacement Penn Daw Fire Station. Simultaneously, they were also looking for a new location to provide modernized services for our unsheltered residents.

Last year, County staff presented me with their preferred location near the Richmond Highway/Beacon Hill intersection at the Hybla Valley Garden Nursery site, 2801 Beacon Hill Road.

While I challenged them to find additional potential sites, I recognized that the community needed to be brought into the conversation. So, last November, I convened the Penn Daw Fire Station and Supportive Housing Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee is comprised of members from nearby communities, the faith community, affordable/emergency housing providers, public safety representatives, civic and business leaders, Fort Belvoir and county staff. In addition to meeting monthly, members have received in-depth project information, toured other co-located facilities in the DMV, participated in community-wide meetings, and submitted substantive questions for the County to answer. These have been difficult

conversations which have helped us all understand the complexity of these issues and the importance of addressing these needs in our community.

As part of their initial review, county staff identified 12 potential sites. An additional nine sites were identified by the community, and all were considered with the Advisory Committee.

After a year of considerable analysis that included community input, site considerations of size, zoning, parking, and community impacts, and with significant community outreach, county staff recommended the Beacon Hill site for co-location of a new fire station and emergency and supportive housing. Other available sites could not provide the same level of services that Fairfax County residents expect and need.

After very careful consideration, and in consultation with and the support of Fairfax County Chairman Jeff McKay and Lee District Supervisor Rodney Lusk, I have accepted staff's recommendation. County staff will now proceed with planning and design work. I will be asking many members of the current Advisory Committee to continue in their critical role to provide design and community feedback throughout this process.

Chairman Jeff McKay shared, "I appreciate all the work of County staff and the community to get us to this point. It is vital that we

work together to make sure this facility is state of the art, addresses community concerns, and provides help for our vulnerable neighbors. While I know this isn't the outcome some had hoped for, we will work closely with the Fire and Rescue Department and surrounding neighbors to be sure this co-location is carefully designed to meet multiple County and community needs."

Benefits of the Beacon Hill site include:

- ❖ Co-location of the fire station, emergency and affordable housing in alignment with the County's One Fairfax and Diversion First Objectives; and provide considerable cost savings;

- ❖ Easy access to public transportation and job opportunities for housing residents; and

- ❖ Locating affordable housing with emergency and supportive housing provides residents with an opportunity to move through the continuum of housing options.

I am committed to working with the Advisory Committee and surrounding neighborhoods to make this a safe, state-of-the-art facility of which we can all be proud. Formal public hearings will be held by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in 2022.

Visit the project website for more information. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/capital-projects/penn-daw-fire-station-and-supportive-housing>

Out with Old Budget, in with New Governor

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

On this Thursday, Dec. 16, I travel to Richmond to attend the Joint Committee Meeting of House Appropriations, House Finance, and Senate Finance and Appropriations (the Money Committees) to hear Governor Northam present his plans for Virginia's biennial budget (FY 2022-2024).

A unique procedure of Virginia governing concerns the introduction of the biennial budget by an outgoing Governor, which is then to be implemented by the incoming Governor. As you know, a Virginia Governor is constitutionally prohibited from running for a directly successive term of office. While Administrations of the same party will certainly have some different priorities as power is transitioned, it is a much different situation when the outgoing party of power

introduces a budget that will then be given to the opposition party for implementation.

Due to this, it is very likely that the budget revealed by Gov. Northam this week will look very different by the time that the budget comes before me in the Appropriations Committee and before the General Assembly for votes on the House and Senate floors.

Ahead of the Joint Money Committees on Thursday, Governor Northam released some of his priorities that we can expect to be present in his proposed budget. I will highlight some of these items here.

- ❖ Governor Northam proposed an elimination of the 1.5 percent state sales tax on food. Virginia would join the majority of states that do not tax groceries.

- ❖ The Governor proposed making up to 15 percent of the federal earned income tax credit refund-

able for eligible families, giving a tax break to working families who need it the most.

- ❖ He proposed offering one-time tax rebates to Virginians: \$250 for individuals, and \$500 for married couples.

- ❖ He wants to eliminate the accelerated sales tax, which is a budgeting move that requires retailers with sales in excess of \$10 million to pre-pay a portion of their sales tax every year.

The Governor's proposed budget will continue to make historic investments in teachers, families, and public safety — while putting money back into the pockets of Virginians who need it the most. This is possible because of the sound fiscal leadership the Commonwealth has had over the last four years. Northam will leave office proposing more than \$3.8 billion in financial reserves, equaling 16.8% of state revenues, and more

than eight times the amount of funds that Virginia had in the bank when he took office in 2018. Virginia closed Fiscal Year 2021—the COVID-19 pandemic year — with a record surplus of \$2.6 billion. Virginia managed through the pandemic without cutting critical services, laying off workers, or borrowing money to pay the bills. Virginia has preserved a prestigious AAA bond rating since 1938, longer than any other state in the country.

Virginia's economic profile remains strong with the ability to absorb the negative effects of the pandemic and looks to return to a steady pace of growth over time. As a result of this hard work, Governor-elect Youngkin stands to inherit a large budget surplus and a sure financial footing that will benefit all Virginians as we move forward into the next administration.

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A Connection Newspaper



Save the
Torpedo Factory

To the editor:
The Alexandria City Council is once again trying to significantly alter the Torpedo Factory's character. Unlike previous attempts, they might just succeed this time, but in doing so, they will likely inflict inexorable harm to what is possibly the foremost cultural center in the City. The uniqueness is manifested through the interaction of the patrons with the varied and numerous artists in this historic setting.

My wife and I lived in the City of Alexandria for over 25 years; our friends and family (both foreign and domestic) always expressed awe after visiting the Torpedo Factory. ...

However, the City has missed a treasure trove of a teaching opportunity concerning the various art modalities at the Torpedo Factory, especially with the waning of art education in schools and calls for more children friendly activities.

The attempt to alter the nature of Torpedo Factory has been an ongoing event that picked up speed in 2008-2009 after the creation of the Long Term Economic Sustainability Implementation Committee, which pushed ideas that contradicted the committee's very name. In particular, the Committee thought that the Torpedo Factory would make more money by changing it to retail, and that it was serving the wrong artists and wrong art. This caused an outcry when it came out, and retractions were made all around, but that was truly how this Committee felt.

The City then commissioned a study in the hopes of buttressing these arguments, but instead, it demonstrated that the Torpedo Factory's unique cultural characteristic is vitally important to the Alexandria economy. The study process included private interviews at which time the consultant told me that some committee members were the "most tone deaf that they had ever encountered" as to the value of such a cultural center. This lack of cultural appreciation created such deep divides that it all but eliminated the possibility of fruitful dialogues on how to enhance the cultural value, such as a hands-on living class room for the schools and the young. Instead, the focus remains on various short term money making schemes.

Currently, we now find ourselves at the crossroads of Alexandria cultural history, facing the prospects of turning the Torpedo Factory into a Chuck E. Cheese simulacrum. Although this will undoubtedly never happen, it nevertheless is the logical conclusion of this change being pursued to its end.

At the present time, the Torpedo factory is a unique offering; once it is diminished by departing from the cultural path, it will become just another venue with limited potential.

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FORT HUNT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Maria Velez, Set the Table Collage, 3rd grade



Abby Cabell, Dream (As an 8th Grader), Paper Collage, 6th grade



Erika Reistad, Dream (as an 8th grader) Collage, 6th grade



Lucas Linden, Self-Portrait, 2nd grade



Mariana Morales-Barraza, Self-Portrait, 2nd grade



Jordan Sturge-Cordner, Self-Portrait, 2nd grade



Darcy Buchman, Neighborhood Friends Drawing, 2nd grade



Isabella Briede, Super You Drawing, 6th grade



Ollie Schroeder, Ocean Zone Seascapes, 5th grade



Penny Ali, Ocean Zone Seascapes, 5th grade



Genesis Ramos, Alvarado, 2nd grade



Deidre Lambert, Duck Architecture, 2nd Grade



Alexis Powell, Global Issue Paper Collage, 5th grade



Caroline Mcasey, House I Would Build Collage, Kindergarten



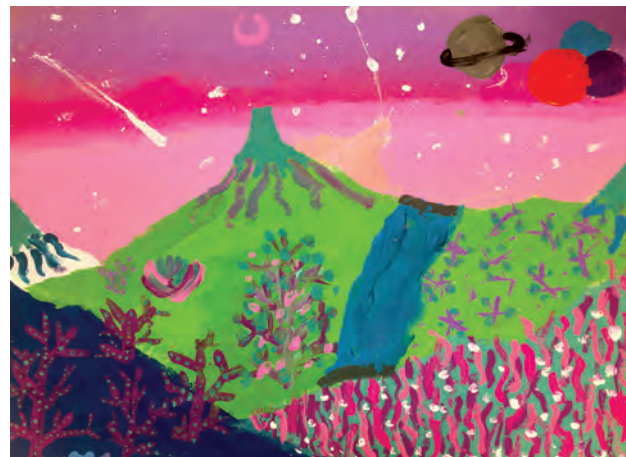
Charlotte Jackson, 4th grade, Design for the Future Collage



Chloe Bingaman, Global Issue Paper Collage, 5th grade



Bethany Sutton, Planet X Painting, 4th grade



Chloe Curran, Planet X Painting, 4th grade



Kennedy Krause, Dream Painting, 3rd grade



Henos Alebachew, Dream (As an 8th Grader) Paper Collage, 6th grade



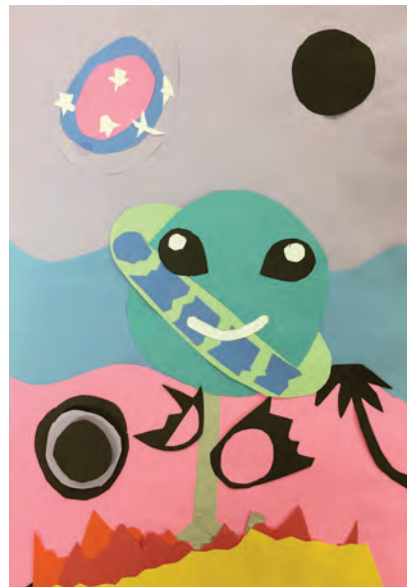
John Rogers, Global Issue Paper Collage, 5th grade



Molly Johnson, Dream Painting, 3rd grade



Ellie Heiges, Family Helper Robot, 1st grade



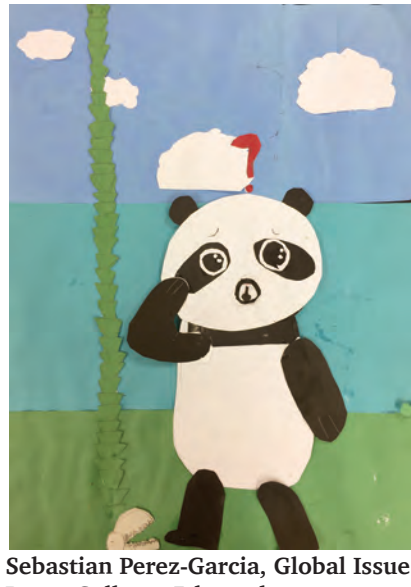
Esther Mugg, Superplant, 4th grade



Odai Zawahra, Family Helper Robot, 1st grade



Quinn Daniel, Duck Architecture, 2nd grade



Sebastian Perez-Garcia, Global Issue Paper Collage, 5th grade



Stellan Kolazas, Superplant, 4th grad



Evie Reynard, House I Would Build Collage, Kindergarten



Leila Espinosa Luna, Design for the Future Collage, 4th grade



Libby Lichte, Family Helper Robot, 1st grade

GRACE EPISCOPAL SCHOOL



Cecilia McCormack, Grade 5
Oaxacan Inspired Folk Art Animals - Llama



Lydia Amanuel, Grade 5
Oaxacan Inspired Folk Art Animals - Deer



Samantha Starzman, Grade 5
Oaxacan Inspired Folk Art Animals - Birds



Andrew Smith, Grade 3
Self Portrait



Henry Cassin, Grade 4
Symmetrical Butterfly Art



Heather Yutzler, Grade 4
Symmetrical Butterfly Art



Ayla Kara, Grade 3
Self Portrait



Maisie Connolly, Grade 2
Clay Pig



Lillian Zurita, Grade 3
Clay Owl



Vivian Fenton, Grade 2
Folk Art Trees



Peter Whelpley, Junior Kindergarten
Clay Bowl

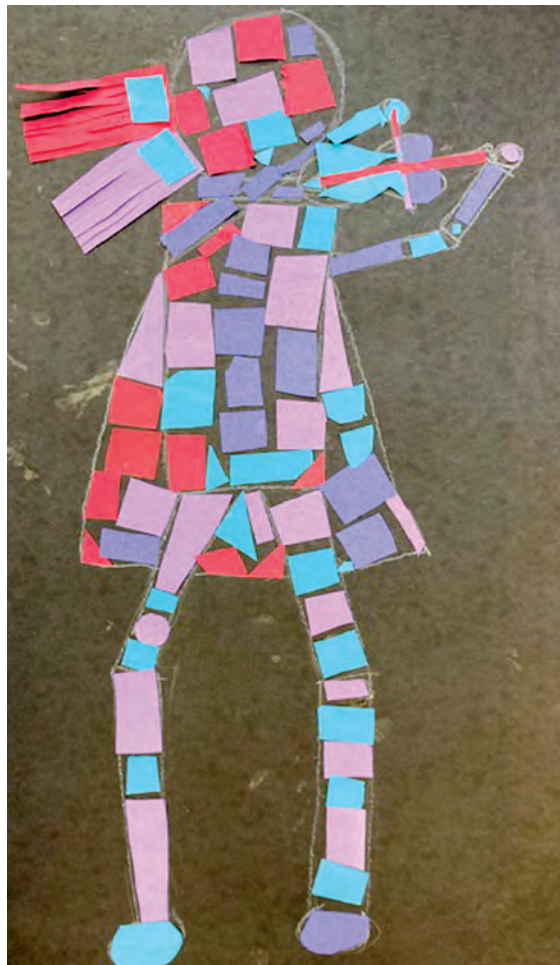


Charlie Wise, Junior Kindergarten
Clay Bowl

RIVERSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Teacher: Nancy Libson, Art and STEAM Specialist



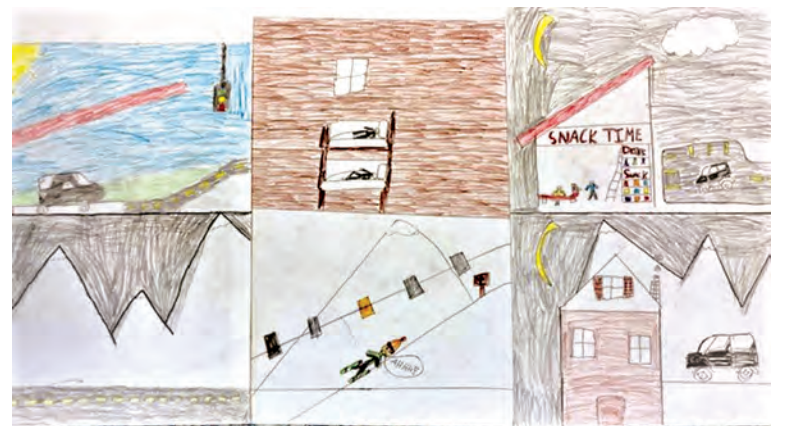
Alex Revelo, 6th Grade, Drawing Mixed Media, Superhero



Caitlin Cabcic, 4th Grade, Memory Collage, Playing the Violin



Cora Dartez, 1st Grade, Fish Collage



William Kolovos, 5th Grade, Journey Drawing

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COLUMBIA ELEMENTARY



Kiara Hsu, 7, 2nd Grade, Alexandria



Arin Ava Collins, 9, 3rd Grade, Annandale



Maddock Desmond Martin, 7, 2nd Grade, Annandale



Declan Chilton, 9,
3rd Grade,
Annandale



Peyton Graham, 8, 3rd Grade, Annandale



Kyoto Yelland, 11, 5th Grade, Annandale



Ayla Watroba, 7, 2nd Grade,
Alexandria



Anna M. Kim, 9, 2nd Grade, Annandale



Sienna Gross, 6, 1st Grade, Annandale



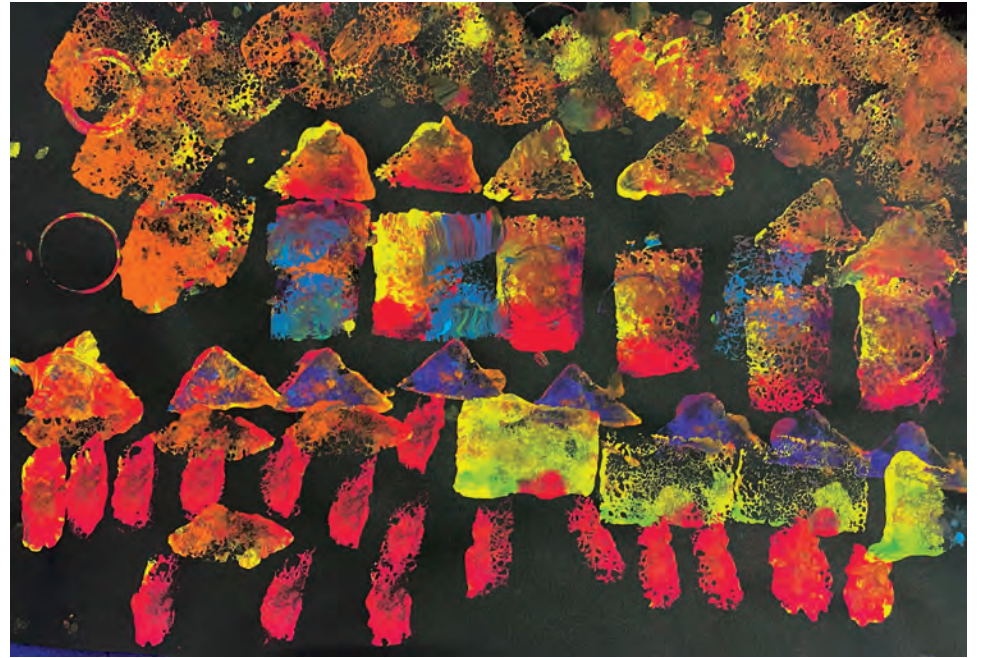
Freya Garber, 6, 1st Grade, Annandale



Yusuf G. Assefa, 7, 2nd Grade, Annandale



2nd Grade - Angely Quintanilla Lezama, 2nd Grade



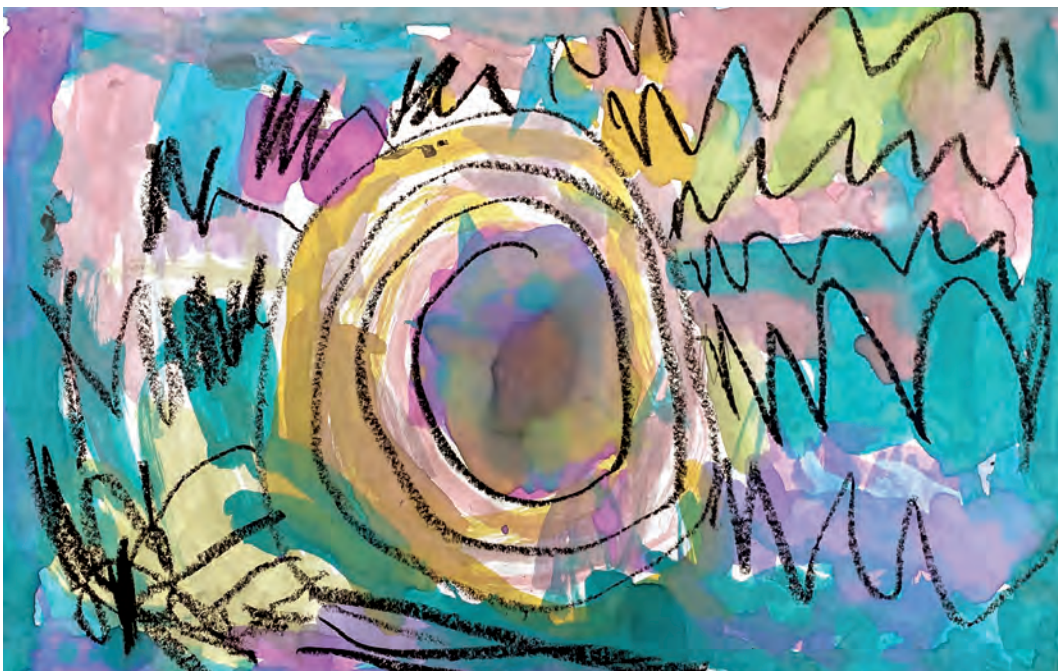
Bradley Romero Ruiz, Kindergarten



Dayry Romero Izara, 1st Grade



Ester Cragun, 1st Grade



Yoseline Martinez Crespo, Kindergarten
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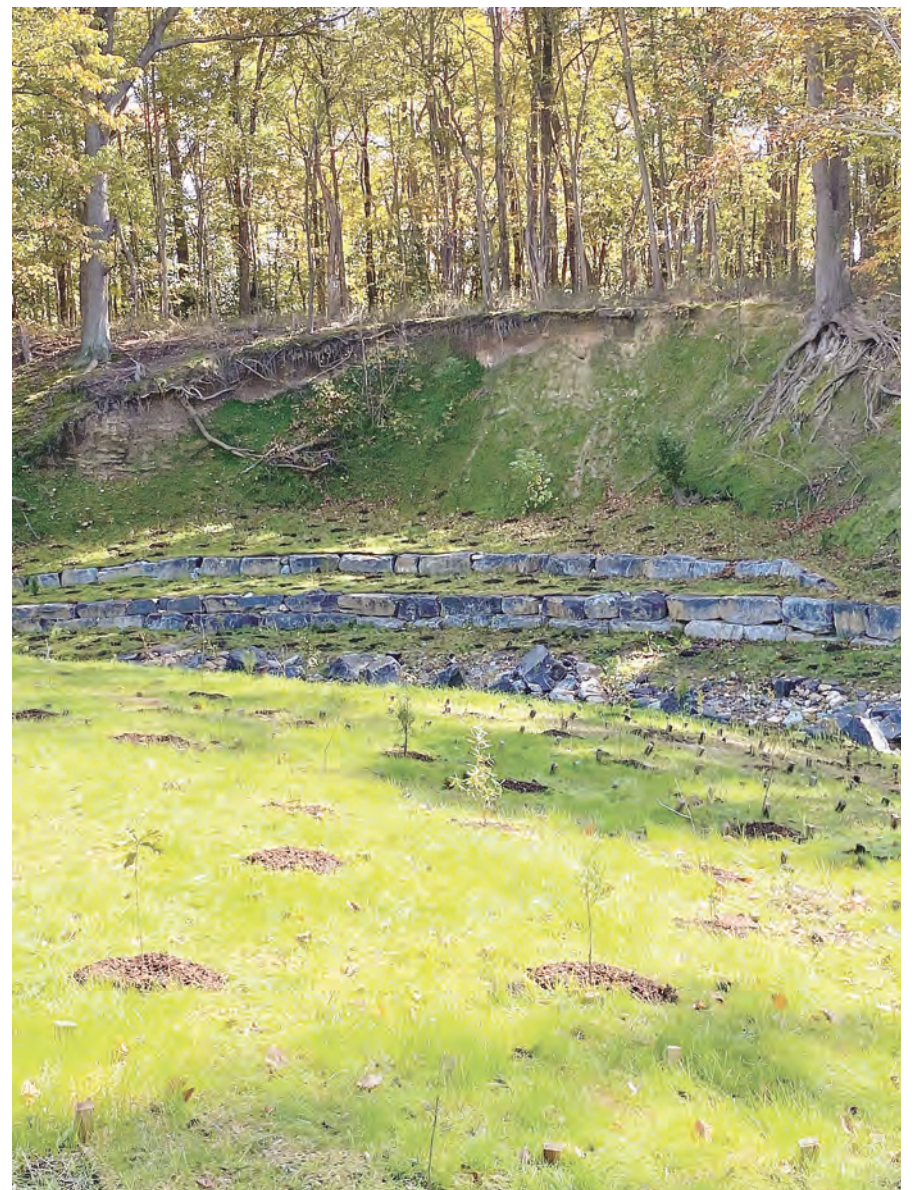


Lucas Frings, 2nd Grade



PHOTOS BY MARTIN TILLET

Streams under restoration, and the after-restoration appearance.



Fairchild Park: Supervisors Approve a New Park near U.S. 1

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

If you peek through the 10-foot-high fence behind Chuck E. Cheese at 6301 Richmond Highway in the Kings Crossing Shopping Center, you can get a glimpse of the future Fairchild Park. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on Dec. 7, conveyed two adjoining properties to the county Park Authority.

An 8.3-acre parcel is bordered by the shopping center and the Penn Daw Mobile Home park on the north side and the Spring Bank community on the south side.

The second piece is a 2.3-acre, connecting parcel with a 6318 Quander Road address.

In 2009, Elizabeth Fairchild dedicated the 8.3-acre parcel to the county for park purposes. In 2017, with Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck's leadership, the county acquired the adjacent Quander Road acreage.

According to the supervisors' briefing materials, some parts of the land are within a resource protection area. This is a designation of environmentally sensitive land along or near water bodies that has certain development restrictions. A conservation easement on part of the property will "preserve undisturbed natural features as well as secure water quality benefits," states the memorandum.

The county conducted stream restoration projects on the Fairchild parcel to reduce streambank erosion by reinforcing banks and planting native tree seedlings and saplings.

Valuable Natural Resources

Most of the land is a mature forest of trees, including yellow poplars, American beeches, maples, oaks, black locusts, American hollies



PHOTO BY MARTIN TILLET

One of the six known springs on Fairchild and Quander land that are water sources for the streams.

and southern magnolias. The stream restoration projects have created new open habitat that will go through ecological succession and thus create more biodiverse habitat.

Around 35 bird species have been observed there, including bald eagles, red-shouldered and red-tail hawks, sharp-shinned hawks, barred owls, black vultures, crows, pileated woodpeckers, yellow-shafted flickers, downy woodpeckers, yellow-bellied sapsuckers, brown creepers, Carolina wrens, various sparrows, dark-eyed juncos, cedar waxwings, Eastern towhees, several varieties of finches and ruby-throated hummingbirds. The property is a stopover habitat for



PHOTO BY MARTIN TILLET

Part of an existing trail on the Fairchild and Quander land.

several migratory bird species and large robin flocks roost in the woods at night.

People have also seen Eastern box turtles, black rat snakes, garter snakes, Northern brown snakes, worm snakes, smooth and keeled green snakes, Eastern hognose snakes, five-lined skinks, Eastern gray tree frogs and spotted and marbled salamanders on the property.

Tom Blackburn, president of the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, in a statement to the Board of Supervisors said, "Not only will the new park provide more passive recreational opportunities for people, it will provide and preserve valuable natural habitat in a densely-developed area of the coun-

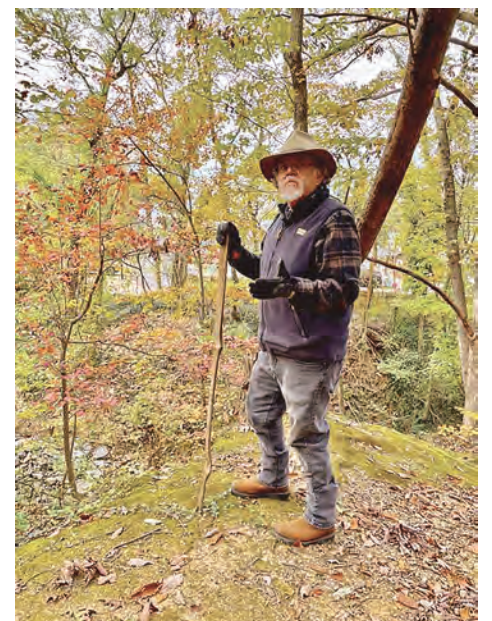


PHOTO BY CASSIE ARNOLD

Martin Tillett in the Fairchild, Quander woods on a steep ridge above one of the stream valleys.

ty with significant commercial development, large parking lots and other impervious surfaces and noise and light pollution."

Rich History

In 1809, Robert Patton built a two-story, federal-style, brick house called Spring Bank Manor on the property, a mansion that once dominated the landscape. An 1848 local advertisement described it as "one of the best and most extensive mansions in this part of Virginia." Patton likely chose the name Spring Bank because the land had springs coming from its steep slopes behind the mansion.

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PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Martin Tillet and others have found Civil War relics all over the area, likely from Camp Vermont.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

A glass breast pump found in the area.

Fairchild Park: Supervisors Approve a New Park near U.S. 1

In 1844, Patton's heirs sold the property to George Mason VI, grandson of Gunston Hall's George Mason, author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights. Fitzhugh Lee, a descendant of Robert E. Lee, rented the home while running for governor. Johnson and Rose Downey eventually owned it and when widowed, Rose sold some of the property to Charles Henry Quander.

Quander, a freed slave from the Hayfield Plantation and a farmer, eventually owned 88 acres. Much of his land eventually was developed as housing subdivisions and West Potomac High School. The Quanders are one of the oldest documented African American families in the U.S. Quander Road is named for them.

During the Civil War, Union soldiers occupied the house and had several camps in the area. In 1862, the Second Vermont Volunteers named their camp Camp Vermont because when they arrived in a snowstorm, it reminded them of Vermont. The soldiers built log structures with canvas tents as roofs, a mess hall, kitchen facilities and an infirmary. Area residents have found evidence of Camp Vermont all over, artifacts like buttons, bullets and even a pointed ferrule for a small flag pole.

By the 1950s the mansion was an apartment building. It was demolished in 1972 to make way for a K-Mart at the shopping center.

Persistence Pays

On the Board's approval, Storck said, "It has been a long-held community vision to turn the Fairchild property's former Civil War encampment stream area into a park. I was very proud to have identified County funds to acquire one of the many Quander family properties essential to creating and accessing this beautiful and recently restored stream valley. This land will create

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PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Martin Tillet recently led walks for locals interested in the future park and land's history.

connections and pathways for our residents to enjoy."

Local resident and retired naturalist Martin Tillet has worked for 40 years to preserve the land. Recalling the stream and springs that sustained the Union soldiers in the 19th century, Tillet said, "When I moved to the Spring Bank community in 1981, that same sloping hillside was now next to a stream brimming with 20th century trash. The polluted and low-quality water was only able to sustain a few species of macroinvertebrate life that was tolerant of the pollution impacting the stream."

He and his neighbors have conducted water quality monitoring and removed tons of trash from the Fairchild property over the

years. With Clean Fairfax, they documented that most of the trash was flowing into the streams from the shopping center parking lot, items like plastic bottles, fast food debris and plastic shopping bags. With Storck's help, his community convinced shopping center managers to install trash traps on their storm drains. While an improvement, the traps do not catch small debris like cigarette butts and straws.

Over the years, Tillet and others opposed efforts to build single-family homes, townhouses, a golf driving range and vehicle storage lots on the Fairchild property. Instead, the community advocated for a park and for stream restoration and storm water runoff controls from the nearby sprawl of commer-



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

The county's restoration projects addressed the erosion of stream banks like this one that has exposed a tree's roots, threatening the tree's survival.

cial developments and U.S. 1.

"Forty years is certainly a long time but by never giving up and with a clear vision that this stream and landscape were deserving of the same evaluation bestowed on it 159 years earlier by Civil War soldier, George G. Benedict, as a 'sloping hillside next to a stream of good water' was true again," Tillet said.

Tillet envisions the park as "a beautiful, natural resource available as a community nature park for neighbors and for the thousands of new residents that will move into this rapidly urbanizing area."

The Park Authority will now undertake a master planning process to determine the type of park and development allowed on the property, a process that can take several years. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/planning-development/planning-process>.

Storck's vision extends even beyond this park: "As our redevelopment continues, it is critical that we further support more trails and natural areas. More of this stream bed area is to be restored to the north of this park using stormwater, park and other county funds to connect this stream ecosystem all the way to Great Hunting Creek."

Obituary

Obituary



Douglas Freeman Jones, 68, of Alexandria, Virginia, passed away on November 27, 2021, in Converse, Texas, while visiting his children and grandson for Thanksgiving.

Visitation will be held at 5 pm on December 19th at Demaine Funeral Home in Alexandria, VA. Funeral services will be held at Pillar Church of Woodlawn on December 20th at 10 am with Pastor Brian Collison officiating. Burial will follow at Ivy Hill Cemetery in Alexandria, VA. Additional details on his funeral arrangements can be found at www.rememberingdoug.org.

Doug was born in Dayton, Ohio, on May 26, 1953, to Lois and Freeman Jones. From an early age he was a talented athlete and leader, lettering in Varsity Football and Baseball at Mount Vernon High School. Doug served as the Football Team Captain, was selected as the team's Most Valuable Player, and maintained active membership in the Key Club. Amidst his plethora of extra-curricular activities, Doug also performed exceptionally well in his academics. He graduated in 1971 with opportunities to play football at the United States Naval Academy, Yale, and the University of Virginia. He accepted a football scholarship at the University of Virginia where he took the field as a Wahoo wearing number 41. He led the team in interceptions during his sophomore year as a starting defensive back. Continuing his legacy of success both on and off the field, Doug became a member of the Phi Delta Theta Fraternity and graduated in 1976 often making the Dean's List.

When his father, Freeman, passed in 1979, Doug joined his mother, Lois, in the management of the family business, Rent-All Center. The business was a staple of the Mount Vernon community for over 40 years. Lois retired in 1999 and Doug co-owned the business with his sister, Judy, until they retired in 2017. While managing his responsibilities at Rent-All, Doug continued to remain involved in sports well beyond his college years. He coached his sons Matt and Charlie in baseball, basketball, and football. In 2002 he coached the Woodlawn Little League 9 & 10 Year-Old All-Stars all the way to the State Championship tournament. Doug served as the Membership Director for Woodlawn Little League and a local announcer for Mount Vernon High School baseball (aka the "Voice of the Majors").

Doug was actively involved in the local business community, serving as a member of the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce since 1981 and the Chairman of the Board from 1997-1999. Under his leadership, membership doubled and the Chamber was recognized as one of the fastest growing chambers in the Washington metropolitan area. He represented the Chamber on the Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation and the Area I Superintendent's Community Advisory Council. Doug was appointed by Governor Jim Gilmore to serve as a member of the State Executive Council for At-Risk Youth and Families in 1999. Then, in 2011, he was appointed by Governor Bob McDonnell to serve as a member of the Board of Visitors at Mount Vernon Estate. Later, in 2017, Doug was recognized as the Citizen of the Year by the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce. Doug held numerous other community and business leadership positions including President of the Virginia Equipment Rental Association and Vice President of the Woodley Hills Elementary School Parent Teacher Association.

Doug's community involvement did not stop with local business or youth athletics, as some of his most prominent service was his involvement in the local Republican Party. Doug served as the Vice-Chairman of the Mount Vernon District of the Fairfax County Republican Committee from 1998-2000, Chairman from 2000-2015, and the Woodley Hills Precinct Captain from 1993-2021. A passionate grassroots campaigner, he could be found regularly knocking on doors during election season or working polling sites on election day. In 1971, when the 26th Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified, Doug had his first opportunity to exercise his civic duty. His first significant political experience occurred later when he volunteered for the 1972 Richard Nixon campaign. His political service spanned close to 40 years and included involvement in nearly every Republican campaign in Northern Virginia. Some of his notable campaign involvement includes serving as the Fairfax County Co-Chair for Bob McDonnell's Gubernatorial campaign in 2005 as well as George Allen's Senate campaign in 2006. Doug had a passion for his community and carried himself as a true gentleman in his political work. Doug always enjoyed the opportunity election day gave him to visit with friends, neighbors, and acquaintances – regardless of political affiliation or voting preference.

Doug is preceded in death by his parents Lois and Freeman Jones.

Doug is survived by his sons Charles and Matthew Jones, his daughter-in-law Morgan Jones, sisters Judith Jones Beyer and Kathryn Jones Campbell, and grandson Thomas "Brody" Jones.

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NEWS



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

Cleanup at Dyke Marsh

On Dec. 11, working with the Friends of Dyke Marsh, the Mount Vernon-area based Girl Scout Troop 2335 tackled English ivy threatening trees along the George Washington Memorial Parkway. In two hours, they clipped, removed and collected 14 bags of this invasive plant.



Free Sober Rides Offered for the Holidays

It is the time of year when, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more than a third of all U.S. traffic deaths involve drunk drivers (38%, Christmas; 36%, New Year's Day – NHTSA, 2019). Free safe rides will be offered to would-be drunk or impaired drivers throughout the area during the winter holidays beginning on Dec. 17.

Washington Regional Alcohol Program's 2021 Holiday SoberRide program will be in operation nightly, 10 p.m. until 4 a.m. from Dec. 17, 2021 to Jan. 1, 2022 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk holiday season.

Each evening, during this six-hour period, area residents ages 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download Lyft to their phones, then enter a SoberRide code in the app's 'Promo' section to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. A new, separate Holiday SoberRide promo code will be posted at 9:00 p.m. on Dec. 17, 24 and 31 on www.SoberRide.com.

During the 2019 winter holidays (COVID-19 prevented Dec. 2020's full-out campaign), over 1,100 (1,121) people in the Washington-metropolitan area used WRAP's Holiday SoberRide program rather than possibly driving home impaired. The charity also officers its SoberRide program on St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day and Halloween.

"More than a third of all U.S. traffic fatalities during the holiday season in 2019 involved drunk drivers according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration," said Kurt Erickson, WRAP's President.

SoberRide is offered throughout Lyft's Washington D.C. coverage area.

Since 1991, WRAP's SoberRide® program has provided 81,184 free safe rides home to would-be-drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

More information about WRAP's SoberRide initiative can be found at www.SoberRide.com

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Indulge Me And/or Indulge Me

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Give me whatever I want and/or let me be however I want. I have cancer and if you don't like it? Raspberries. I remember what a friend told me soon after I was diagnosed with cancer: "It's all about you now, Kenny." And it's friendly advice I've shared/passed on to other newly cancer "diagnosees." And it's always been received with such appreciation as if newly diagnosed cancer patients need a sort of permission to be more concerned about themselves than about others.

For many, it's a bit of an unnatural position: to concern yourself with yourself. But I must tell you, when that hammer is dropped that you've been diagnosed with cancer, your world shrinks. It's almost impossible to think of anything else. You just don't know if something you do or don't do will affect your cancer/life expectancy. And so, cancer becomes the center of your universe. Moreover, you wonder if what you normally do: eat, drink, be happy, be sad, really matters to the outcome of your treatment.

I mean, it's not as if there's a dos and don'ts handbook for newly diagnosed cancer patients with easy-to-follow instructions for who to call/where to go for who knows what. And since you've been diagnosed with an extremely serious disease, you just as soon not get your homecare assignments wrong. When your life is snatched away and/or your world is turned inside out/upside down, you really don't want to be the cause of your own demise. For cancer, there's hardly any guarantees. Survival is a long way from six-hour chemotherapy sessions every three weeks and scans every three months. Being a cancer patient is very hands-on – by you and/or the medical staff, so you must pay attention. To say your life might depend on it might be a bit much but it's not totally wrong. Once you get diagnosed into the cancer world, everything about your health seems to lead to the oncology department.

Having to deal with this unexpected/new centrality in your life, a life which, depending on the type and staging of your cancer, you may be in danger, is scary as hell. And if that's the case, the disease may very well be in control and this ongoing fear/angst is the axis upon which your world now turns. Every action, reaction, "proaction," is taken in the context of your having cancer. What it all means, what it all does, if and when you have to do it again or not, are all definite maybes. Your oncologist becomes your new best friend. You hang on his/her every word. To think that a person you had never previously met is now in charge of your life requires an acceptance of reality, possibly a grim reality, for which there may be no escape and worse, requires total compliance.

You bet I require kid gloves. You bet I require a wide birth. You bet I require anything my heart desires because learning from oncologist that you have a "terminal" diagnosis, is about as unsettling as it gets. Any port in a storm you might say? Heck, how about any port no matter the weather? If Bette Davis were alive today and had been a cancer patient, she might update her famous lament: "Being diagnosed with cancer ain't no place for sissies."

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

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CONCERT

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Victor Solomon, right, a top 5 finalist in The Voice vocal competition, will be the featured musical guest at a benefit concert Dec. 19 at the Falls Church Marriott. He is shown singing a duet with John Legend during The Voice Finale in May.

'I Can Only Imagine'

Benefit concert to feature The Voice finalist Victor Solomon.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

It's been six years since Negleatha Johnson first hosted a benefit concert following her sister's diagnosis of a rare and aggressive cancer. Following a hiatus in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fairfax County resident and international recording artist returns Dec. 19 with special musical guest Victor Solomon, a top 5 finalist in the vocal competition The Voice.

"One of my older sisters had been diagnosed with leiomyosarcoma," said Johnson. "Within months she was gone but I was able to use that first concert to shed light on sarcoma cancers. Today we have expanded to support various local and national organizations."

Known as "DrJ" for using music as medicine, Johnson uses her voice to spread the message of hope, healing and restoration — the three areas of focus for her work with Life Waters Ministries, the ministry she and her husband James co-founded 25 years ago. It was James who encouraged Johnson to reach out to Solomon following the singer's performance with John Legend in the finale of The Voice in May.

"There was something about Victor that drew us in each week," Johnson said of watching the singer during the competition. "Victor attends the same school and belongs to the same fraternity as my husband did in North Carolina so we took a chance and

reached out to him through some mutual friends. We are very excited to have him perform with us this year."

With a theme of "I Can Only Imagine," the concert will be held at the Falls Church Marriott and will feature dinner in addition to the concert. All proceeds will benefit various charities.

"Funds raised through the gala will be contributed to various organizations in the area as well as throughout the nation," Johnson said. "During COVID we partnered with the Navajo Nation since reservations were hit particularly hard during the pandemic. We also support organizations working with homeless women, the Campagna Center and underserved families by providing gift cards through Alexandria City Schools."

Johnson and Life Waters Ministries has also partnered with JSS Missions in support of their work in Haiti.

"We can't do it all but we want to sow a seed and help those who are doing things in places we might never get to," Johnsons said.

Before turning to full time ministry, Johnson worked in higher education helping organizations "be more sensitive to the diversity that is represented in our nation." Despite the challenges, she is excited about the work of Life Waters Ministries.

"Things are different now," Johnson added. "We are much broader than when we started

but are ignited that we are able to partner and support others who are trying to do good things. I could never have imagined the privilege it would be to do this work."

Tickets for the concert will not be sold at the door but are available through Dec. 16 at 703-425-4321 or www.lwministriesonline.org.

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**Singer/songwriter
Negleatha Johnson
will host the "I Can
Only Imagine" benefit
concert Dec. 19 at the
Falls Church Marriott.**

**"We have expanded
to support
various local and
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— Negleatha Johnson on the
Life Waters Ministries Gala



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