

# CONNECTION

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## Wildlife in the Snow

PAGE 9

White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) whose coats turn grey-brown in the winter, eat mostly plant shoots, leaves, grasses, acorns, fruit, and even mushrooms and poison ivy poisonous to humans.

## Back to School: It's Complicated

PAGE 4

## Saving Quincy

PAGE 6

PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

HOMELIFESTYLE, PAGE 7 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10

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## Public Notice

### Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

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

Jurisdiction	Fed Struc Id	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
MONTGOMERY	12333	726	GOLD RUSH ROAD/726 ROUTE	BRUSH CREEK	12/16/2021

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](mailto:haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov).

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

## NEWS

# Special Prosecutor to Handle Open FCPS Coalition Case

## Previous case to recall Elaine Tholen was dismissed.

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

The Open FCPS Coalition, a self-described bipartisan, grassroots, volunteer group of parents and citizens, recently filed its petition with Fairfax Circuit Court for recall of Springfield District School Board member, Laura Jane Cohen. Cohen is one of three board members targeted by the group for recall action, along with Elaine Tholen, Dranesville District, and Abrar Omeish, At-Large. The Coalition says that in their observations, out of 12 school board members, only one member took actions toward reopening schools.

The Coalition selected three members for recall in 2020-21, saying the choice was based on

vote count for each seat, and to include one school board member at-large, for recall petition expediency.

Recall petitions require ten percent of the total number of votes cast at the last election for the office.

The Coalition filed in court against Tholen in August, but the Circuit Court granted the Commonwealth Attorney's motion to dismiss the Tholen case based on the position that "the petition is not based on facts establishing probable cause for removal."

The first hearing in the December petition filing against Cohen was Dec. 22. No petition has been filed to date against Abrar Omeish.

SEE SCHOOL BOARD RECALL, PAGE 11

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## 'The City's a Better Place because of All He's Done'

Dale Lestina receives the prestigious Fairfax Award.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

When it comes to selflessly serving Fairfax City, Dale Lestina's name is at the top of the list. And on Dec. 5, in recognition of his five decades as a community activist, Fairfax Mayor David Meyer and the City Council presented him with the Fairfax Award.

"It's the highest award the City gives for outstanding community service over a lifetime," said Meyer. "We've had remarkable recipients over the last 30 years, but no one is more deserving than Dale Lestina. His leadership in strengthening neighborhoods – in Mosby Woods and across the City – and promoting economic development, improved housing, and arts and culture is unsurpassed."

A physics major in college, Lestina initially became a physics teacher. He then served as chief lobbyist for the National Education Association – and as such, was instrumental in the establishment of the U.S. Department of Education.

He and his family moved to Fairfax in 1971, settling in Mosby Woods, and Lestina's tireless activism improved the quality of life not just for his own community but for all Fairfax residents. Similarly, his late wife Bonita, a talented artist and pianist, founded the Bonita Lestina Old Town Hall Performance Series, which continues bringing free concerts to City residents.

As for Dale Lestina, he served on the city's Economic Development Authority for 17 years, including 12 years as chair; headed the Fairfax 2020 Commission in the early 1990s; and helped create the City's nonprofit Renaissance Housing Corp., which provides affordable home-improvement loans to City residents. Now 85, he still serves as its president.

He was also president of the Mosby Woods Community Assn., led the effort to bring all of Mosby Woods within the City's boundaries and chaired the I-66 Citizens Coalition, fighting for the construction of sound walls to reduce traffic noise for Mosby Woods residents. In addition, he and resident George Snyder created Block Watch to end drug dealing in Mosby Woods Park – which in 1988 was renamed Dale Lestina Park.

The recent ceremony honoring Lestina was held in Fairfax City Hall's Council chambers, which were packed with his friends, colleagues, supporters and his son. Attendees included former City mayor, John Mason, and former City manager, Bob Sisson.

"The Fairfax Award was created in 1992 to recognize people who made exceptional, lifelong commitments to our City life," Meyer told the crowd. "And I express my appreciation to all of you who make a difference to our City."

Mason said there are just a few community leaders who've had such an extended



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Dale Lestina holds his proclamation from Fairfax City. Flanking him are (from left) City Council members Tom Ross and John Stehle, Mayor David Meyer and Council members Janice Miller and Joe Harmon.

and lasting impact on Fairfax. "We became a city in 1961. By the '90s, when I was mayor, we were at a crossroads, and we were concerned about being complacent. We had to look at where we wanted to be in 20 years."

So in 1992, the City created the Fairfax 2020 Commission to determine the City's goals. Lestina chaired it, presiding over its 12 committees, including one dealing with entrepreneurial leadership for a livable city.

"Another committee was called, 'The City as a Community,' which let to today's slogan, 'Live Life Connected,'" said Mason. "The City's motto is 'Speak, Do,' we did the speaking and Dale did the doing." Then, noting Bonita's contributions to music and the arts, Mason added, "That's a family that made a difference in our community."

Next, former councilmember, Allen Griffith, shared some memories. "I moved to Mosby Woods, 42 years ago," he said. "Five

minutes later, I was recruited by Dale to work with him. I learned half of our community was in Fairfax County – and after a 2-foot snowfall, the City snowplows stopped plowing at the line.

"That energized us to do something about it; Dale was president of the community association, and I was on the board, and Dale built consensus. Some 250 homes were affected, and we had to convince City Council to vote to make a change and 'Free Mosby Woods.' The vote passed, and all of Mosby Woods eventually became part of the City."

Years later, when Griffith headed the community association, the residents campaigned for a sound wall to protect them from the noise of an additional lane being built on I-66. "Working behind the scenes, Dale got 25 community associations to form a coalition to fight for it," said Griffith.

"We testified before the CTB [Common-

wealth Transportation Board], Dale had a recording of the I-66 noise played for the CTB, and we got the sound wall," he continued. Praising Lestina's leadership skills, Griffith said, "It's my honor to have known and worked with him."

Likewise, Jim Shipp, secretary of the Renaissance Housing Corp., said, "We're very proud of Dale – he's one of the finest men I've ever known. Through his leadership and guidance, we've been able to set our sights on the future and improve things here, quite a bit.

"Dale spearheaded the creation of the Renaissance Housing Corp. to upgrade and expand the City's housing stock; and after 20 years, he still serves as its president. We make home-improvement loans at no interest, for the first two years. We've now completed 240 projects worth \$21 million. Dale's one of our unsung heroes, and the City's a better place because of all the work he's done. His salary is \$0, but he'll now have a plaque expressing the appreciation of the residents of Fairfax City."

Meyer then read an official proclamation listing Lestina's many achievements and presented it to him. "He always worked with us in a way that was affirming and supportive of everyone – and that's a rare skill," said Meyer. Next, he and the City Council gave Lestina the Fairfax Award, a crystal bowl, after which the crowd gave the recipient a standing ovation.

"I'm full of emotion," said Lestina. "I know the people in this room as good friends and neighbors, and this is a wonderful place to live. You can't stop change, but you can shape it some, so it benefits our quality of life. Many times, it takes some help, and that's where your City organizations and Council come into play. So you owe it to yourself to find out your community's issues and give your input on them."

"Thank you to every one of you for the things we've done together," he continued. "We've still got work to do – and ever will it be such – so let's do it in a positive way. Thank you all for this wonderful honor; I appreciate it."

## 'We Feel this Plan Will Stand the Test of Time'

Fairfax City's multimodal plan for Old Lee Highway rolls along.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Plans for the Old Lee Highway Multimodal Improvements Project are moving forward, now that Fairfax City Council has approved its major design features. The City has already agreed to keep the existing travel and turn lanes, but will add several new elements, including bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

The project area runs between Layton Hall Drive and Ridge Avenue, with commercial

activity centers at each end. The intention is to provide continuous and consistent, multimodal connections along Old Lee Highway from Old Town to Fairfax Circle.

It'll give people a variety of ways to reach Van Dyck Park, Sherwood Center, three schools, places of worship, the library, police department, Historic Blenheim and residential neighborhoods along that corridor. And it'll make Old Lee Highway safer for all users.

The plan's major design features are as follows:

- A typical section consisting of a side-

walk and two-way, separated, bike lanes on the west side of the road; a sidewalk along the east side; and one vehicle travel lane in each direction.

- The existing right and left turn lanes remaining, except at Great Oaks Drive.

- Four new left turns:
  - \*From southbound Old Lee into Daniels Run Elementary;

- \*From northbound Old Lee to Old Post Road;

SEE OLD LEE HIGHWAY, PAGE 8

# FCPS Faces Staff Shortages With the Rise of Omicron

Superintendent pledges to keep students in the classroom, but it will “not be business as usual.”

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Public Schools is immediately switching to a new operational plan as the area is being slammed by the size and speed of the Omicron wave.

“We will follow this operational plan for the next two-to-three weeks,” said Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand, on Friday, Jan. 6. “During this time, we must adjust our expectations about instruction and give our staff the space needed to make adjustments and on-the-spot decisions needed to combat this Covid spike.”

FCPS plans to deploy its central office and management staff to school operations.

“It will not be business as usual,” Brabrand said. “These shortages will impact us in every way, from classroom instruction to operations.” Brabrand outlined the plan and asked for patience. “There will be some things that simply cannot happen as we move central office staff to supporting school operations,” Brabrand said.

Brabrand outlined the division’s five-point plan beginning with classroom coverage.

He reminded teachers to upload materials to Schoology and said that FCPS may not always be able to provide StreamIN/CheckIN, the plan for for students who are paused, quarantined, or isolated due to Covid. FCPS will seek a substitute teacher from the sub pool, another teacher or staff member, and Central Office volunteer subs who have instructional experience when a classroom teacher is absent. FCPS could combine two classes with one teacher and group multiple classes together, to provide supervision.

The shortage of school bus drivers is causing delays in bus routes, double-back runs, and students arriving at school after the bell.

“Schools will adjust instruction to ensure that no child is missing important classroom time,” Brabrand said. Check the Bus Delay App <https://bus-delay.fcps.edu/>.

Food Services continues to provide breakfast and lunch, but bag lunches may be offered instead of the regular meals given more significant staff shortages

Brabrand asked families to help beginning with their health and safety:

- ❖ Keep sick children home;
- ❖ Get students vaccinated;
- ❖ Enroll students in optional screening testing



FCPS is resolved to keep schools open.



FCPS is urging families to get their children vaccinated as the best protection against Covid-19.

❖ Use FCPS’ diagnostic testing if a student has symptoms.

❖ Help students use layered prevention strategies: proper masks, wash hands, and use hand sanitizer; and be sure students bring home their laptops and chargers every night.

❖ Finally, he urged parents to apply to be substitute teachers.

“Please know that while things will not be perfect, we are all doing our best. We are all in this together as a community, and it will take all of us to keep our schools open,” Brabrand said, Read Dr. Brabrand’s January 6 Letter to Families

<https://www.fcps.edu/blog/message-families-navigating-january-2022-covid-surge>

The Fairfax County Health Department explained a more specific approach to vaccination for the coronavirus for children and teens.



“There are now expanded vaccination opportunities for teens and children effective this week. Following recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Virginia Department of Health, the Fairfax County Health Department immediately adopts the following recommendations:

❖ individuals ages 12–17 years should get a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine booster dose five months after finishing their two-dose primary series;

❖ individuals ages 18 years and older should get any COVID-19 Vaccine booster dose five months, rather than six months, after finishing their two-dose primary series of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine; and

❖ 5–11-year-old vaccine recipients who are moderately or severely immunocompromised are eligible to receive a third dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine 28 days after the second dose.



Students return to in person learning in Fairfax County Public Schools.

## Return to School 2022

After a week of weather closures, FCPS opens with Covid-19 surging.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Regardless of where one lives in Fairfax County or the surrounding jurisdictions, the highly infectious Covid-19 variant omicron is setting records.

Fairfax County Public Schools, the nation’s eleventh largest school district, remains committed to in-person learning. But schools were closed the week of Jan. 3-7 because of weather.

What do you think? Send your thoughts to [mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com). You can submit your comments as a letter to the editor at <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/>

Dawn Stuvland Crosson is a teacher in Herndon and resides in Reston. “As a teacher and a parent, I am very happy to be back in person. The idea of going virtual again is a terrible one. I’m glad the superintendent is clear that we’re in it for the long haul. Omicron is not a threat to children; no healthy child has died from Omicron -- and most have probably already had it. In contrast, virtual school was terrible for our kids. I still see such tragic repercussions from last year in my classroom, and with my own children. If parents are uncomfortable with sending their kids because of media hype surrounding a new variant of a virus that is harmless to children, they can keep them home, but life should go on as normal. Kids need to be in school.”

Erin Lobato of Great Falls is a parent of a Langley 10th grader and recent 2021 grad. “Quite frankly, given the shocking drop in academic achievement from 2019 to 2020, the incredibly low risk of Omicron to healthy people - especially children - and FCPS’s tendency to focus on style over substance, I’m more worried about their ability to provide our children with a solid education this year.”

Julia Malakoff, Herndon, children in Oakton High School: “Two of my four kids are currently in the Fairfax County School system. (Oakton High School) They both experienced extreme depression, isolation and difficulties learning online last year. My junior, whose grades were barely passing last year, is now making straight As as an in person student. And my freshman has come out of his depression now that he can socialize, have personal attention and be on the track team.

“We are 100 percent for in person learning no matter what.” One parent said that she was keeping her child home out of concerns about an environment safe from Covid infection, but did not want to use her name because of possible backlash.

# CONNECTION

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Gathered with Quincy to honor the Animal Protection Police Officers who rescued him were Jeff McKay, Chairman Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; Gina Lynch, Virginia Federation of Humane Societies; Maddy White, Congressman Connelly's office; Mike Tatum, Quincy's adopted owner; Jessica McLemore, Master Animal Protection Police Officer; Joe Ankers, Second Lieutenant APPO; Enna Lugo, Master APPO; Michelle Welch, Senior Assistant Attorney General, Commonwealth of Virginia.



Quincy with his rescuers officers Jessica McLemore, Joe Ankers, and Enna Lugo.

# Animal Protection Officers Honored by Humane Societies

## Abused dog receives companion award.

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

**D**ozens gathered on Dec. 13 to recognize the humanitarian actions of three Fairfax County animal protection police officers, although clearly the rock star in the room was the fourth honoree, canine Quincy. Quincy's case touched many in the animal services and shelter communities, within the county and reaching to Richmond. His story is a tale of endurance and resilience; the officers' story one of persistence and caring beyond their normal responsibilities. Severe physical injuries, Covid, and court continuances delayed justice for Quincy but he's now well and in a new home with a family who loves him. But for Quincy, reaching a happy life was not a sure thing.

Sounds of a dog in pain, of beatings, several times over multiple days were reported to animal protection police in August 2018. The exact location of the dog in the residential complex in Herndon was not known, so officers had to conduct a search for the dog. When his location was determined and a search warrant obtained, the dog, then identified as Quincy, was locked in a crate with injuries so severe that he was not able to stand or walk. He was skeletal and bruised. Taken into protective custody, an immediate veterinary examination revealed multiple recent broken bones and several healed fractures. His rear leg injuries were such that the veterinarian was not sure if the legs could be saved; that at least one might have to be amputated; and the care Quincy needed would



Quincy now in loving hands after rescue by Fairfax County Animal Protection Police after years of severe abuse by his previous owner.



Gina Lynch, Fairfax Humane Society, presents Virginia Federation of Humane Society's Humanitarian Award to APPO Jessica McLemore, and to APPOs Joe Ankers and Enna Lugo (not pictured).

require surgery, physical therapy and medical follow-up. Euthanasia was suggested as perhaps the best outcome for Quincy.



Quincy looks to his new owner, Mike Tatum, for a closer view at his Companion Award as his rescuers watch.

But Quincy's wagging tail, friendly nature, and happiness at seeing people despite his pain and abuse touched Jessica McLemore and Enna Lugo, Master Animal Protection Police Officers as they removed him from his crate during the seizure process and in the days to follow. After holding Quincy in her arms as they rushed to the veterinary hospital, McLemore soon learned more of what Quincy had endured since a puppy. She was amazed that he still had a drive for life and still liked people. Although she said she cares for all animals that come under her protection, she described a special drive to see his life turn around and be able to experience love.

Others came to feel the same as they learned of Quincy from the officers pulling for him. Michelle Welch, Senior Assistant Attorney General and Director of Virginia's An-

imal Law Unit, secured pro bono orthopedic surgical treatment from Richmond specialist Dr. Roy Barnes of the James River Veterinary Surgery. Months of rehabilitation followed.

APPO Second Lt. Joe Ankers drove Quincy to his weekly water therapy at Aquatic Paws in Falls Church. Cared for and housed at veterinary hospitals and the Fairfax County Animal Shelter for more than a year, from August 2018 until December 2019, Quincy's circle of human friends grew to include medical and shelter staff as his medical care continued and his case worked its way slowly through the courts.

Justice eventually did come for Quincy. His prior owner was prosecuted and received a felony conviction under Virginia's animal cruelty statutes; he was sentenced to a year

# Veri Peri 2022 Color of the Year

Described blue with red-violet undertones, the hue is expected to be on trend this year.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

Those home accessories or planning a whole-house remodeling project or simply looking to purchase home accessories will have a new color option. Described as a shade of blue with violet-red undertones, Very Peri is Pantone's 2022 Color of the year. The hue, which is expected to be on trend in products that range from home furnishings to runway fashion, is getting mixed reviews from local designers.

"Very Peri isn't a color that I would choose often, or recommend to clients frequently, but I can see why some people would love it," said McLean designer Ashley Hollings,

"I may be in the minority, but I think it's a beautiful color," said North Potomac designer Dana Wiseman of Wiseman Designs. "However, I don't think I'd recommend it to a client. It's a bit too dark for an interior."

"As a purple with a blue edge, Veri Peri is cold and bold," said Annie Elliott of Bossy Color and Annie Elliott Design "It's a strong, impressive color, but it isn't welcoming and that's the number one word my clients use when describing their ideal home."

There are those aren't afraid to embrace it, says Cathy McNamara of Dream Interiors in Alexandria. "I'm seeing an uptick in the number of homeowners and designers who are taking risks. Veri Peri is definitely risky," she said. "This was once a color that was only used as an accent, but more and more of my clients are choosing bold colors for whole rooms."

Those who find the color appealing, but want to use it with caution. Veri Peri can add a burst of vibrancy to a neutral interior.

"As a solid color, it would look great on lamps or a quilt in a crisp white bedroom," said Elliott. "It would be a dramatic accent color in an extremely contemporary home, and the only accent color, possibly. It would be effective as a splash of color on pillows, vases, and art."

Though considered by designers to be a vivid hue, Veri Peri can be paired with colors to increase or subdue its vibrancy. "You can pair it with neutral colors like beige or white to balance the shade and provide a calming, comforting effect," said interior designer



PHOTO BY ANNIE ELLIOTT

Very Peri, color of the year for 2022, is expected to be prevalent in home furnishings such as the sofa in this room which was designed by Annie Elliott of Annie Elliott Design.



PHOTO BY ANNIE ELLIOTT

Annie Elliott of Bossy Color and Annie Elliott Design says Very Peri, color of the year for 2022, can be integrated into a splash of color on pillows, vases, and art.

**"I think Pantone picks wild colors on purpose to spark some conversation. If they picked a boring beige no one would talk about it."**

— Ashley Hollings, interior designer

Michelle Zimmerman of Potomac.

"If you want to make more of a statement, pair it with oranges or yellows, which makes the purple hue pop and appear more vivid," continued Zimmerman. "They're complementary and will create a bold statement."

"To tone down the boldness of Veri Peri, I

would pair it with adjacent colors such as red, burgundy, and navy blue," added Elliott. "The cleverest thing about Veri Peri from an interior design perspective is that it will look great with cool gray."

For the past 23 years, experts from the Pantone Color Institute forecasts global color trends and select a Color of the Year.

"I think Pantone picks wild colors on purpose to spark some conversation," said Hollings. "I mean if they picked a boring beige no one would talk about it."

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Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

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The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Con-

nection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

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# Fairfax City's Multimodal Plan for Old Lee Highway

FROM PAGE 3

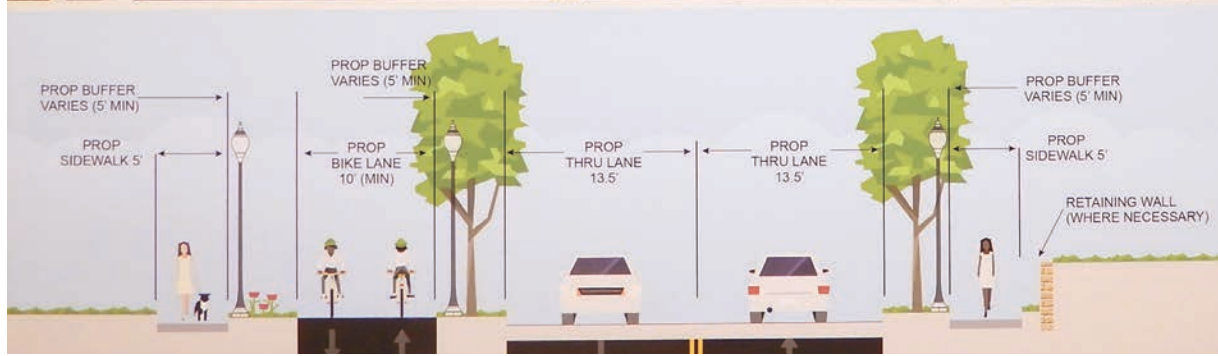
\*From northbound Old Lee to Great Oaks Drive; and

\*From northbound Old Lee to the Sherwood Center/Police Station/Van Dyck Park.

• A roundabout at Ridge Avenue to improve neighborhood ingress/egress. It would also allow vehicles coming from Fairfax Shopping Center to make U-turns and would reduce vehicle speeds and provide a gateway to Old Lee.

Total, estimated, project cost is \$25.2 million. Funding includes \$13 million from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), \$10 million in VDOT revenue sharing money, and \$2 million from the City's commercial and industrial tax – dedicated to increasing transportation capacity.

At a recent Council meeting, Mark Gunn, engineering director with Rinker Design Associates (RDA), answered some questions residents had posed during an earlier community open house at the Sherwood Center. A resident wanted an additional



Design concept of a standard section of the revamped Old Lee Highway.

southbound, left-turn lane into Old Lee Hills – for example, at Embassy Lane or Parklane Road.

“Widening of the roadway to provide a left-turn lane onto Parklane would require an additional

2,000 square feet of encroachment onto the Blenheim property, near the historic gravesite area,” explained Gunn. “And in the vicinity of Embassy Lane, provision of a left-turn lane would require removal of six additional trees and utility relocations.”

Another person wanted to know if it was possible to have separate bike lanes from one end of the project area to the other. Doing so, said Gunn, would require “removing 10 more trees, relocating three additional utility poles and increasing the length of the retaining wall – and would cost some \$200,000 more.”

Fairfax Transportation Director Wendy Sanford said the City is ready to advance this project through final engineering and will continue evaluating other issues brought to light via public comments, such as private-entrance connections, landscaping and bus stops.

She said the next steps are working with property owners directly impacted by the project, holding a public hearing at the 60-percent design stage, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation and City Council awarding the construction contract. “We’ve worked on this with RDA since 2016,” said Sanford. “There are a lot of choices, and we’ve had a lot of public and Council engagement.”

Saying he strongly supports this project, Councilmember Tom Ross asked about the timeline for the 60-percent design phase, and

Gunn said it should be sometime in May.

“Wendy Sanford, [Public Works Director] David Summers and [City] staff have done a fantastic job, and I appreciate all their hard work,” said Councilmember Joe Harmon. “Since this is a resolution to move forward, what happens to the funding if we didn’t?”

“We have deadlines with VDOT and have made commitments to them and to the NVTA to move this project along,” replied Sanford. “And it’s important that, when we have funding, we spend it.” Summers added that every delay makes this project’s cost higher.

Councilwoman Janice Miller asked why the Great Oaks and Old Post left-turn lanes were added, and Sanford said it was because both streets had “high numbers of left turns. Originally, the project didn’t include any additional left-turn lanes, but the public requested them.”

Mayor David Meyer also noted that because of this project, “We’re doing something about the traffic, plus improving the dangerous intersection at Ridge Avenue.” Councilmember Jon Stehle then made a motion to approve the resolution, and Miller seconded it.

Ross said he wanted a separate, dedicated bike path from Great Oaks to Ridge, and Miller agreed. But Harmon wanted further discussion before moving ahead, at all. And Councilmember So Lim said, “I want to make sure this is the best design, so we don’t have to spend more money on construction later on.”

But Gunn said they believe this really is the best design. “We’ve got hundreds of years of engineering experience [among everyone working on the project], plus all the consultants’ time and expertise,” he explained. “We also have six years of time working on this.” And Summer stressed that it doesn’t include all the time staff members spent on it.

Said Sanford: “We feel that this plan reflects the data we have, and community input, and will stand the test of time.”

Councilmember Sang Yi said Old Lee is one of the City’s major roads, so public input should be maximized. However, said Ross, “We have an opportunity to move forward on this project and preserve this scenic byway for the future. I’m prepared to vote in support of it.”

Council then voted to approve the resolution, 4-2, with Harmon and Yi voting no.

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# NATURE

## Wildlife Foraging Closer to Homes

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION



White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) whose coats turn grey-brown in the winter, eat mostly plant shoots, leaves, grasses, acorns, fruit, and even mushrooms and poison ivy poisonous to humans.

PHOTOS BY  
SUSAN LAUME/  
THE CONNECTION

Following back to back snow storms, Fairfax County residents are reporting more wildlife visiting their backyards. Ground snow impacts animals' ability to find food and lessens their natural camouflage, driving them close to homes and increasing their visibility. Birds, like the Pileated Woodpecker, are more likely to visit home feeders as snow and cold make insects and seeds more difficult to find.

Wildlife observation provides a welcome activity at any time, especially while homebound during significant storms.



Red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), known for their bushy tails, primarily eat small rodents and usually pair in family units. They frequently establish dens to raise their young in residential backyards.



Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*), a large bird, 16-10 inches long, mainly eats insects, supplemented with fruit, nuts, and berries, infrequently visiting feeders.



### Telegraph Road at Hayfield Road Fairfax County

Virtual Public Information Meeting

Wednesday, January 26, 2022, 7 p.m.

<https://www.virginiadot.org/TelegraphatHayfield>

Find out about potential improvements in the area of Telegraph Road (Route 611) and Hayfield Road (Route 635) that aim to reduce congestion, improve operations and enhance pedestrian mobility. The improvements include adding a second northbound Telegraph Road lane through the intersection, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) curb ramp upgrades, reconfiguring southbound Telegraph Road just beyond Hayfield Road by converting the existing on-road parking to a second through lane, and converting the eastbound Hayfield Road through lane to a shared left-turn through lane. Additional options to be discussed include the potential widening of the footprint of Telegraph Road to the west or to the east in the area of the intersection, and upgrading and/or adding pedestrian facilities.

The meeting will be held as a **virtual/online meeting**. Information for accessing and participating in the virtual meeting is available at <https://www.virginiadot.org/TelegraphatHayfield>. The project team will make a short presentation beginning at 7 p.m. and answer questions for about an hour after the presentation.

Review project information and meeting details on the webpage above or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-259-2907 or TTY/TDD 711 to make an appointment with appropriate personnel.

In accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement created pursuant to the Code of Virginia §10.1-1188(b), VDOT has determined the potential improvements are in a list of project activities exempt from the State Environmental Review Process due to a minimal effect on the existing natural and historic resources. However, all required environmental clearances and regulatory approvals will be obtained prior to project construction.

Give your comments during the meeting, or by **February 7, 2022** via the comment form on the project website, by mail to Ms. Hong Ha, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or by email to [meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov](mailto:meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov). Please reference "Telegraph Road at Hayfield Road" in the subject line.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775.

State Project: 0611-029-467, P101, R201, C501  
UPC: 116086

*In case an alternate date is needed, the meeting will be held Monday, February 7, 2022 at the same time.*

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**NEWS**

**Animal Protection Officers**

FROM PAGE 6

of incarceration and ten years of probation in October 2019. The felony prosecution was made possible by the earlier suffering of another dog, Tommie. Tommie had been tied to a post and set on fire; receiving care but eventually dying after five days. Prior to Tommie's case abusers could only be charged with a misdemeanor unless the dog died. In July 2019, the penalty for "cruelly or unnecessarily beating, maiming, mutilating, or killing a dog or cat" was increased to a felony by the Virginia legislature.

**ANIMAL ABUSE SHOULD BE REPORTED**

Animal cruelty is a bellwether of more severe behavior. Board of Supervisors chairman Jeff McKay, on hand to congratulate the honorees, urged those in the audience who see (or hear) instances of animal abuse to say something, as did alert neighbors in Quincy's circumstance. The indicator held true here. Quincy's abuser had a record of drug and larceny charges before and after his animal cruelty arrest and would later serve additional jail time on other charges. The abuser's girlfriend, Tyann Martin, was also prosecuted and found guilty of Cruelty to Animals and Obstruction of Justice, receiving a suspended sentence.

On Dec. 13, 2021 officers McLemore, Lugo, and Ankers received Humanitarian awards from the Virginia Federation of Humane Societies, letters of recognition from U.S. Rep. Gerry Connelly, and commemorative coins from the Attorney General's Animal Law Division for their work saving Quincy.

Quincy was awarded the Federation's Companion Award for his on-going love for humans in the face of cruelty. Best of all for Quincy, in December 2019, the dog who for a long time could not walk at all, walked out of the animal shelter and into his new life with a loving family. Quincy Tatum now has adoring owners who followed his case anxiously, waiting for an opportunity to adopt him and shower him with love and attention. Quincy has a toddler human brother to play with and a place on the soft family bed instead of a crate. He has his own Instagram account @MrQuincyTatum, and a lifetime of caring friends who appreciate a dog who emulates dogged resilience and love.

# CALENDAR

## NOW THRU JAN. 23

**"The Mystery of Edwin Drood."** At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, W3 Theater, Lorton. Based on Charles Dickens' final unfinished novel, this hilarious whodunit invites the audience to solve its mystery by choosing the identity of the murderer. The tale is presented as a show-within-a-show, as the Music Hall Royale - a delightfully loony Victorian theatre company - presents Dickens' brooding mystery. Tickets: \$20-\$30. Visit [www.workhousearts.org](http://www.workhousearts.org).

## MONDAY/JAN. 17

**Full Moon Campfire and Hike.** 7 p.m. At Hidden Oaks Nature Center, 7701 Royce Street, Annandale. Winter full moons can be some of the most impressive with cold-clear skies. Your Hidden Oaks naturalist guide will point out signs of creatures that glide, fly and tiptoe through the shadows of the woodland at night. Enjoy a campfire with s'mores after your hike. This program is for participants ages 6 years and older. All participants must register; the fee is \$8 per person. Call 703-941-1065.

## JAN. 22-23

**HO Model Trains Running.** 12-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Potomac Module Crew will display and run HO Scale Model trains at the Fairfax Station Railroad

Museum on Saturday, January 22, 2022 from 12-4 p.m. and on Sunday, January 23 from 1-4 p.m. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5, special events \$6; seniors and military, active and retired, \$4.

## SATURDAY/JAN. 22

**Camille A. Brown & Dancers.** 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. In this performance, the company showcases both her choreography and artistic vision through a unique blend including modern, hip hop, African, ballet, and tap and the company's acclaimed Trilogy on race, culture, and identity including Mr. TOL E. RANCE; "Double This, Juba That!" from BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play; "Turf" from ink; and the rousing tribute to New Orleans, New Second Line. Visit [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

## SUNDAY/JAN. 23

**Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey Siegel.** 7 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Virtuoso pianist Jeffrey Siegel will guide you through the jaunty music of Bach, the improvisatory, unbound music of Mozart, Mendelssohn's "Last Rose of Summer", and Swedish composer Stenhammar's rhapsodic Fantasy, a work of stormy energy and passionate lyricism. Learn the compelling stories behind each piece and then enjoy each work played in its entirety. Visit [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

# School Board Recall

FROM PAGE 2

At the Dec. 22 hearing, Judge Richard E. Gardner heard a motion from the Fairfax County office to recuse itself as the case prosecutor since Commonwealth Attorney Steve Descano "has interacted with Cohen on a number of occasions and they have campaigned together." In granting the motion, Judge Gardner, who has been designated by the Chief Judge to hear all matters related to the recall petition, must assign another available Commonwealth's Attorney from outside the local office as a Special Prosecutor for future hearings. The Tholen case also enlisted a Special Prosecutor. The next hearing, likely in early February, is expected to consider a motion to dismiss from Cohen's attorney or possibly from the appointed special prosecutor, as in the Tholen case.

Virginia is one of the few states which addresses recall through State statute, not Constitutional Law. In bringing a recall before the court under the statute, the petitioners must prove "material adverse effect upon the conduct of

the office." According to statute, recall efforts may be due to neglect of duty; misuse of office; incompetence in performance; conviction of misdemeanor related to drugs or hate crimes; or sexual misconduct. The Open FCPC Coalition filing stated "Laura Jane Cohen voted to keep all Fairfax County Public Schools closed," alleging negative impacts to various groups of children.

Petitions carry a penalty of perjury requiring signers to affirm full reading and understanding of allegations, which the Virginia Supreme Court ruled applies to all signers, not only to petition organizers. Writing for the William and Mary Law School, Cody Brandon advised, "The strict construction of the statute requires caution and increased investigation by voters approached by circulators. Signing one of these petitions that includes false allegations could subject thousands of voters to charges of perjury."

If the court moves the case forward, either the judge or a jury will decide the authenticity of the petition accusations and whether they meet the statute standards for recall.

## BULLETIN BOARD

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

## MONDAY/JAN. 17

**Preschool Open House.** 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. At Spring-Mar Cooperative Preschool, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke. Come take a tour, meet the teachers, ask your questions and register for the 2022-2023 school year. Visit the website: <http://www.spring-mar.org/open-house/>

## JAN. 25-APRIL 14

**ESL Classes.** 7-9 p.m. At Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. In-person and online ESL classes. Classes will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7-9 p.m. Online registration starts on December 15 at

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## So Long Old Memory



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As of Wednesday, Dec. 8, the 2000 Honda Accord, which I inherited from my widowed mother 13 years ago, nearly to the day, was officially "totaled" by an insurance adjuster. After my mother died in 2008 leaving the Honda ownerless, I took possession. As I recall, on Dec. 24, 2008, I went to the Montgomery County administrative offices in Rockville and paid my dues (taxes, actually). And though I've had miscellaneous car repairs over the years - fortunately, nothing which was too drastic or expensive, I've not had to make one monthly car payment in almost 13 years. For a non-car person like me, not having a car payment for that many years trumps all negative considerations.

As written about in the "Oh Deer" column a few weeks back, the end of our association (the Honda and mine) was unexpected and for my money - literally, quite unnecessary. The Honda was our back-up/second car. Maybe it was driven 5,000 miles a year, almost exclusively local and most often, it sat in the driveway minding its own business. Now, I'll have to upgrade and consequently incur a new monthly car payment. A car payment I don't want and an extra expense I certainly don't need. Though I'll be receiving a settlement check from the insurance company, it won't cover the cost of a new car. In fact, it will barely cover the amount of down payment. And as any of you similarly impacted by a car accident where your car is "totaled" know, the math rarely ends up in your favor, especially if the "totaled" car was old and payment free.

But more to the point if this column. The Honda was one of the last remaining physical links to my parents, particularly my father, who died in early December 2006. He was the driver in the family and the Honda was the only car in the family so most images and feelings I have about my father and a car were from this 2000 Honda Accord, the last car he owned/drove. As such, when I sit in the driver's seat, I remember my father. And I also remember the front of one of his birthday cards which said: "When they made you, they broke the mold." Open card: "You should see what they did to the mold maker." We all laughed. I gave him that card on his 65th birthday dinner which we all celebrated at Jimmy's Harborside Restaurant (his favorite) on the wharf in Boston on or about Sept. 23, 1984 (his actual birthday). It was a memorable occasion to be sure, especially when my father opened the card and shook it to see if any money would fall out.

And though I still have lots of enduring memories of my father (I still wear his winter gloves as well as an old collard short-sleeve Polo shirt of his - which amazingly sort of fits), nothing conjures his memory and is so physically enveloping - literally, as the front seat of the car where when driving, he spent the last years of his life. And now that feeling/his presence is gone.

I imagine I'll get reconnected to his memory every month for the next 36 at least, when I make my new car payment. It won't quite be the same as sitting in the Honda payment free. Nevertheless, I'm sure I'll still feel a car connection to my father. After all, I'll be driving a car that he helped me buy.

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



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<p><b>BATTERY SPECIAL</b> <b>FREE</b> BATTERY CHECK-UP INCLUDES: CHECK COLD CRANKING AMPS AND VISUAL INSPECTION OF BATTERY CONDITION. INCLUDES BATTERY CONDITION PRINT OUT. <small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.</small></p>	<p><b>LUBE, OIL &amp; FILTER SPECIAL</b> <b>\$39.95</b> \$44.95 FOR SYNTHETIC OIL CHANGE INCLUDES: CHANGE OIL (UP TO 5 QTS.), INSTALL GENUINE TOYOTA OIL FILTER, INSPECT &amp; ADJUST ALL FLUID LEVELS AND COMPLIMENTARY MULTI-POINT INSPECTION WITH PRINT OUT. <small>NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.</small></p>	<p><b>ALIGNMENT SPECIAL</b> <b>\$89.95</b> 4-WHEEL ALIGNMENT INCLUDES: 4-WHEEL ALIGNMENT, INSPECT SUSPENSION, BALL JOINTS, STRUTS &amp; SHOCKS, TIRE CONDITION AND SET TIRE PRESSURE. <small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.</small></p>	<p><b>BRAKE PAD SPECIAL</b> <b>\$99.95</b> BRAKE PAD REPLACEMENT INCLUDES: INSTALL GENUINE TOYOTA FRONT BRAKE PADS, INSPECT FRONT &amp; REAR ROTORS AND/OR DRUMS, CHECK TIRE CONDITION AND INSPECT ALL HARDWARE. TCHC PADS ONLY. MACHINE ROTORS AN ADDITIONAL \$199.95 <small>NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.</small></p>	<p><b>TOYOTACARE PLUS</b> <b>\$329.00</b> SPECIAL MAINTAIN PEACE OF MIND BY EXTENDING YOUR TOYOTACARE COMPLEMENTARY MAINTENANCE PLAN TO 4 YEARS/45,000 MILES! <small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.</small></p>	<p><b>SERVICE VARIABLE DISCOUNT</b> <b>THE MORE YOU SPEND, THE MORE YOU SAVE!</b> \$10 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$50-\$99 \$15 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$100-\$199 \$20 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$200-\$499 \$50 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$500+ <small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.</small></p>
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