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When Anthony Hyatt plays the violin in the lobby at Inova's Schar Cancer Center in Fairfax, soothing sounds make something as stressful as radiation or chemotherapy a little easier. Hyatt is a founding Artist-in-Residence for the Smith Center for Healing and the Arts at the Inova Schar Cancer Institute.



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NEWS

PHOTO BY FAIRFAX COUNTY



On Feb. 22, 2022, Dr. Gregory Washington, right, George Mason University's president, accepts the proclamation from Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay on behalf of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, recognizing the university's 50th anniversary.

It's Mason Time, GMU Celebrates 50 Years

BY MERCIA HOBSON
 THE CONNECTION

George Mason University's president Dr. Gregory Washington, received a proclamation recognizing the university's 50th anniversary. Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey McKay presented the proclamation to Washington on behalf of the board at its public meeting on Feb. 22, 2022.

"I know I speak on behalf of all our county residents in expressing our appreciation for the university and the partnership. The strong bond that we have in the county with George Mason University, we're so proud of," McKay said.

George Mason University is the Commonwealth's most diverse, fastest-growing, and largest, public, four-year institution, with 39,134 students, 10,895 staff and professors, and more than 215,900 alumni.

McKay said he wished the university 50 more years of tremendous success and growth. He noted how the institution rises above others. "I think it is fair to say that public universities and colleges throughout the country are looking at different ways to respond to an ever-changing population and needs that are out there," he said. Many are looking at GMU as a model

to pivot their academic and professional opportunities.

Supervisor James R. Walkinshaw (D-Braddock District) said, "It is an incredible blessing for us to have George Mason University in the Braddock District."

According to Walkinshaw, sometimes having a university in a community also creates challenges. But what he appreciates most is Washington's commitment and his team's commitment to working collaboratively with the community. "[They] discuss those challenges and overcome them together so we can fully take advantage of the many opportunities that George Mason creates for our community," Walkinshaw said.

Supervisor Patrick Herry (R-Springfield) called attention to GMU's Nobel Prize-winning instructors, NCAA Final Four appearances, new law school, and recognition as a top-tier research institution to help the region's innovation. "For decades, you've been an invaluable partner with our schools, our students, and athletes, mentoring and volunteering with our students, hosting our high school graduations, serving as a mass vaccination site, serving as a partner with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute."

"As we look to the future, the best is yet to come... And as I've heard you say many times, it's Mason time," said Herry.

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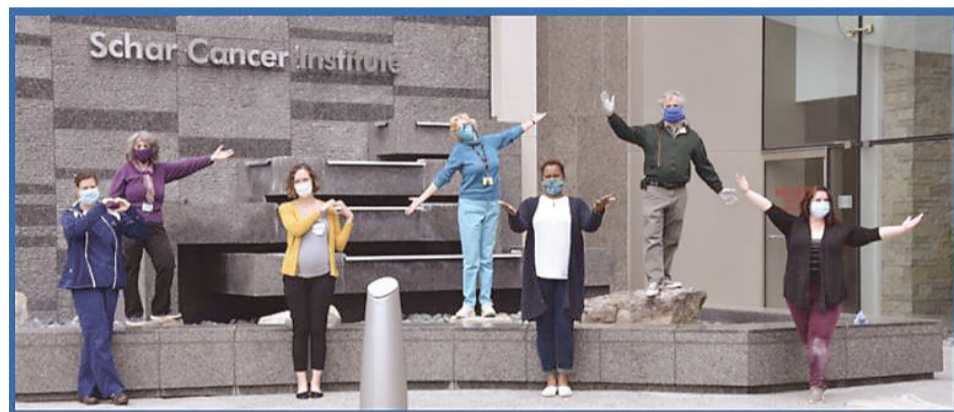
PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

When Anthony Hyatt plays the violin in the lobby at Inova's Schar Cancer Center in Fairfax, soothing sounds make something as stressful as radiation or chemotherapy a little easier. Hyatt is a founding Artist-in-Residence for the Smith Center for Healing and the Arts at the Inova Schar Cancer Institute.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

This piece is called "Boxer" and it is one of the many original pieces of art created through the program.



The nurses at the Schar Center show their thanks for the volunteers and philanthropists.

Musicians and Artists Ease the Cancer Experience

Soothing sounds echo through the lobbies at the Inova cancer centers around Northern Virginia.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

When Anthony Hyatt plays the violin at Inova's Schar Cancer Center in Fairfax, it's the soothing sounds that make something as stressful as radiation or chemotherapy a little easier.

Hyatt is part of a program at Inova called the "Arts and Healing Program," one facet of a bigger effort at Inova called Inova Life With Cancer. Musicians, visual artists, and poets perform in the lobbies at several Inova centers to deliver this type of treatment for their patients.

Life with Cancer's purpose is to enhance the quality of life of those affected by

cancer by providing evidence-based education, support, wellness programs and integrative therapies, the Inova information said. This program at Inova started in 1988 when Nando Di Filippo's wife died of cancer so he looked for resources to help him and his children understand and cope with their emotions and their changed life. From his donation, Inova started the program, and put the word out to artists and musicians.

Inova representatives worked with other hospitals that have similar programs and talked to arts foundations such as the South Center Partner for the Arts, to connect with the artists.

"When designing the program, we traveled around to see how other hospitals' arts

were being used," said Jennifer Bires, the executive director of Life with Cancer and Patient Experience.

As part of Inova's program, there are 17 musicians, storytellers, poets and visual artists that participate in Inova's cancer centers.

LIVE PERFORMANCE HAS VALUE

The American Cancer Society lists music as a "complementary method that has been studied and shown to help people feel better while they're undergoing standard cancer treatment under a doctor's care." They call it "Our Joyful Noise" series, said Vivienne Stearns-Elliott of American Cancer Society northeast region. Also on the list is acupuncture, massage therapy, prayer and spirituality, tai chi and yoga.

Hyatt has been playing violin since he was eight years old. He started working as a Teaching Artist working independently and with the Maryland based Arts for the Aging organization and continued with Artist in Residence programs at the Med-Star Georgetown University Hospital in

Washington, D.C.

"I was pleased to be invited to be a founding Artist-in-Residence for the Smith Center for Healing and the Arts at the Inova Schar Cancer Institute," Hyatt said.

In the hospital lobby, the music could come from their sound system, but the value of a live musician over a recorded one has many benefits. "I am able to respond to what is going on and to adjust continuously," Hyatt said. "I continuously change my selections, timbre, volume and tempo in an effort to provide healing experiences for our patients, caregivers and staff members." He said that this requires enhanced awareness and multitasking, constantly monitoring the environment and people there. "I am very happy when my music is able to provide a soothing experience for people who are stressed while dealing with difficult circumstances. When I am working I always look for opportunities to deliver that result," he said.

Hyatt is currently working on a book about his Arts in Healthcare experiences.

Fairfax City Manager Unveils Proposed FY 23 Budget

He's recommending a 4-cent, residential real-estate tax decrease for City homeowners, but they will still pay more.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The bad news for Fairfax City homeowners is that, because of increased Fairfax County assessments, their tax bills will rise this year. But the good news is that City Manager Rob Stalzer is recommending a 4-cent decrease in the real-estate tax rate for FY 23.

He unveiled his proposed budget last Tuesday, Feb. 22, to the mayor and City Council and suggested cutting the real-estate rate from its current \$1.075 per \$100 assessed valuation to \$1.035.

Still, the average residential tax bill would increase 4.7 percent based on the 8.75-percent jump in assessed values. So for calendar year 2022, the owner of an average Fairfax City home valued at \$588,964 would pay \$274 more in real-estate taxes.

However, Stalzer noted that the City's tax rate would be the third lowest in Northern Virginia. He also said the money yielded is critical to providing the services and quality of life City residents have come to expect, since "real-estate tax revenues are almost half of our income."

The budget also recognizes and rewards the contributions Fairfax employees have made to the City during the trying times of the pandemic and beyond. It proposes a 3.5-percent merit increase (\$650,000 total cost), as of Jan. 1, 2023, for eligible employees, plus a 2.6-percent market-rate adjustment to employee pay scales, effective this coming July 1, to retain parity within the region.

Furthermore, all eligible employees will receive a one-time bonus (\$830,000 total cost), on July 1, to address hazardous-duty pay and cost-of-living inflation. And as of Oct. 1, public-safety employees will be moved from pay ranges to a step system.

Almost 10 new employee positions totaling \$849,900 are funded in the FY 2023 budget, with \$487,400 of that total coming from the General Fund. They include a grants administrator in the Finance Department and an environmental sustainability specialist in Public Works.

The FY 23 expenditures for all

funds (General, Capital Projects, Old Town Service District, Transportation Tax, Cable, Wastewater, Stormwater and Transit) total \$193,151,232, which is an increase of 4.9 percent from FY 2022.

General Fund revenues and expenditures equal \$161,400,810 each – an increase of 4.15 percent from the adopted FY 2022 budget. Real-estate taxes account for 49 percent of the General Fund revenue, followed by other local taxes at 25 percent.

The largest General Fund expenditures are to education – 37 percent, or nearly \$60 million, and public safety (fire and rescue, plus police) – 19 percent, or almost \$31 million. The budget fully funds the City School Board's adopted FY23 contract with FCPS in the amount of \$53,480,000.

Guidelines for the FY 23 budget included focusing on economic development, redevelopment, continuity of government, improving internal and external customer services, and adopting and implementing the fully funded FY23-27 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) totaling \$279,982,513. Budgeted for the FY2023 CIP is \$78,899,389. Of that amount, 61.3 percent, or more than \$48 million, would come from the General Fund.

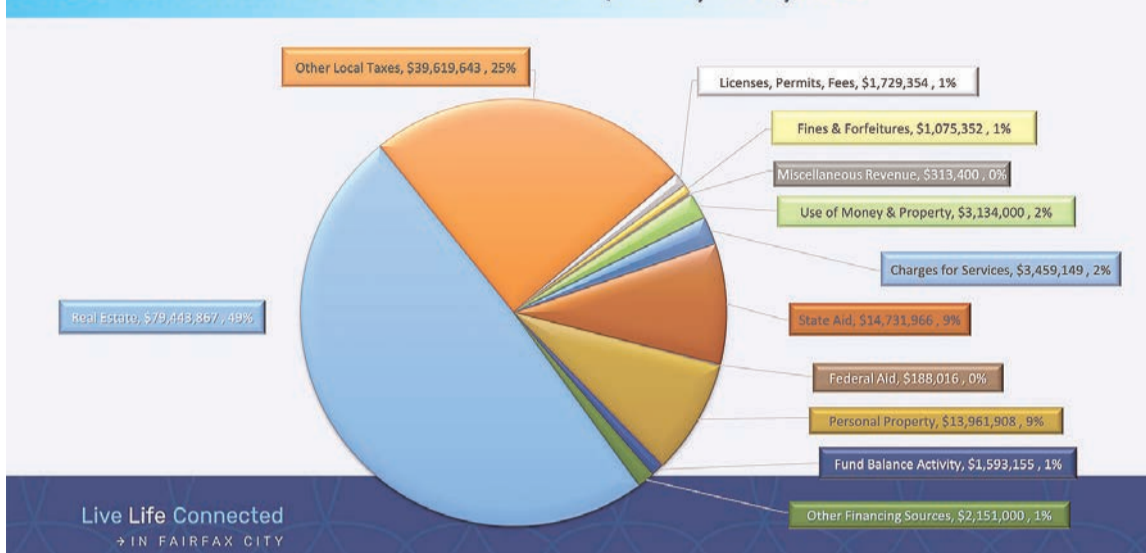
"The CIP is our true north, in terms of what we, as a city, are trying to do," said Stalzer. "We also know our schools have significant capital needs, and we're in the process of identifying them."

The Old Town Service District Fund was previously established to fund services and capital projects in the Old Town District. Because of the pandemic's effects on commercial properties, City Council levied a tax rate of 0 cents per \$100 assessed valuation in both FY 21 and FY 22. This year, however, Stalzer recommends it be increased to 4 cents.

"It's anticipated to generate \$181,000 to \$188,000 per year," he said. "And we'd use this money for the conversion of the gas lights to LED lights in the downtown area." Stalzer said residents have requested more light at night in the City's historic Old Town, and this project is estimated to cost \$1.35 million.

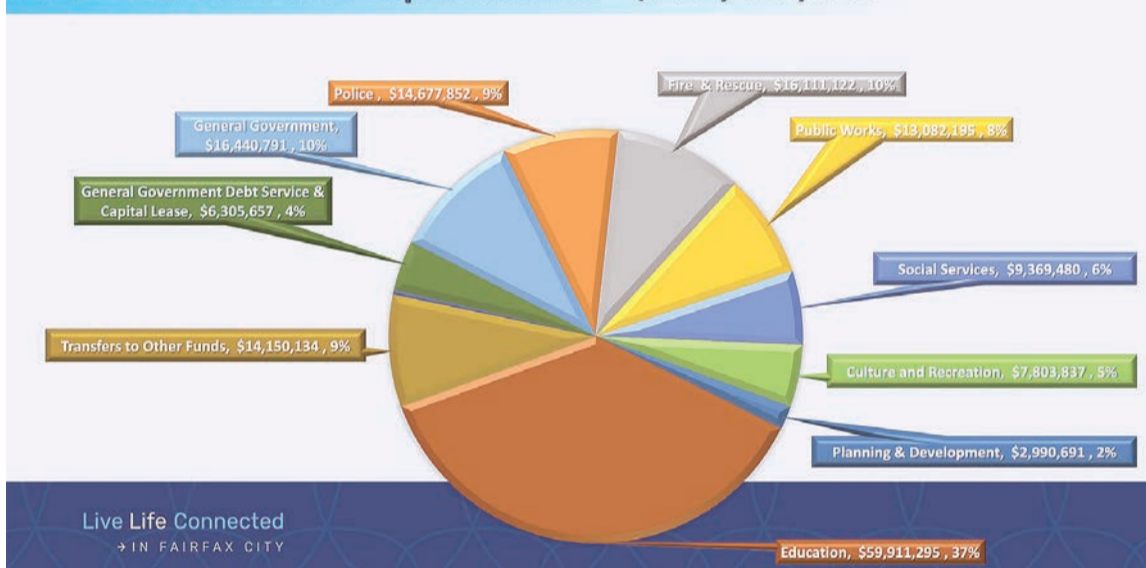
Pleased that the City is on a pos-

FY23 General Fund Revenues-\$161,400,810



City of Fairfax FY 23 General Fund revenues.

FY23 General Fund Expenditures - \$161,400,810



City of Fairfax FY 23 General Fund expenditures.

itive economic track, despite the effects of COVID-19, Stalzer listed several indications. They include the increase in real-estate assessments and tax revenues, as well as continued interest in Fairfax City by developers and the business community.

He also stressed the City's ability to obtain outside sources of funding – State, Federal, ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act), FEMA, NVTA 70-percent Transportation Funds, and Public Safety grants – to achieve City Council goals. In addition, Stalzer praised the ongoing Fairfax City/GMU partnership initiatives and was pleased to announce that the City's fire and police departments currently have zero vacancies for sworn and uniform positions.

Furthermore, he said, "This is the first time we've ever budgeted a 15-percent unassigned General Fund balance – and it speaks to the City's fiscal stability." It's also 3 percent more than Fairfax normally has in reserve and was a City

goal.

Stalzer said private-sector employment in Fairfax City has increased each year and the City's 2021 unemployment rate of 3.9 percent was well below the state and national averages. And, he added, "Three, key revenue sources are bellwethers for the local economy – general property taxes, local sales and use taxes, and Business Professional and Occupational License [BPOL] taxes."

In Fairfax City, said Stalzer, general property assessments increased 7.7 percent (including new construction) from 2021 to 2022. Estimated FY 22 BPOL tax revenues increased by \$0.8 million or 9 percent, while local sales and use tax revenue increased \$1 million or 7.7 percent.

The City's Tax Relief Program was also able to raise the income maximums and therefore impact a greater number of senior and disabled residents.

As a result, it anticipates an increase of up to 30 applications and

a rise in benefits for an estimated 22 percent of the existing applicants.

Fairfax City is slated to receive approximately \$29.6 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Some \$14.8 million was received in July 2021, and \$12.8 million in qualified ARPA expenditures – expected to be received this July – are included in the proposed budget.

"ARPA funds enabled us to do things we wanted to do, in a quicker time frame, said Stalzer. "This also resulted in lower costs and a better quality of life."

Public hearings on the proposed FY 23 budget are set for March 8, March 22 and April 12, during the Council's regular meetings, with adoption scheduled for May 3. First, though, will come several budget work sessions. Said Stalzer: "We look forward to starting our budget discussions with City Council next week."

<https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/finance/budget>

ROUNDUPS

— BONNIE HOBBS

Successful Souper Bowl Food Drive for Britepaths

Britepaths thanks Fairfax City residents Janet Jaworski and Stephanie McCarthy for organizing their Hugo the Gargoyle, Super Bowl-themed food drive for Britepaths' food pantry. Because of them and all those who supported their Souper Bowl, the nonprofit will be able to continue providing food for local families in need.

Besides the Hugo the Gargoyle collection site in the Old Lee Hills neighborhood, Twins Ace Hardware and Chubby Squirrel Brewing Co. also served as drop-off points. With collection bins labeled for either the L.A. Rams or the Cincinnati Bengals, people could vote for their favorite team by donating food into their team's bin.

Turns out, the Rams beat the Bengals in the Super Bowl and also in the food drive. L.A. received 307 items to Cincinnati's 259; but Fairfax's hungry families were the real winners. Altogether, Britepaths received donations valued at more than \$1,000 in the form of 362 pounds of food from Hugo the Gargoyle, 196 pounds from Twins Ace and 24 pounds from Chubby Squirrel.

Conversion of Street Lights to LEDs

The City of Fairfax has approximately 2,600 electric streetlights that will be converted from older, high-pressure, sodium-and-mercury vapor technology to energy-efficient, LED technology. The City will begin this project, this spring, with the aim of improving the quality of light, reducing light pollution, enhancing safety and security, reducing the energy burden, and saving taxpayer dollars.

Fairfax Daycare Provider Charged with Child Abuse

Fairfax County police have charged a local daycare provider with abuse and neglect of a child. The woman, 67, of Fairfax, operated an in-home daycare for more than 20 years. But since the allegations came to light, it's in the process of being shut down.

According to police, detectives from the Child Abuse Squad were notified Jan. 20 after an 8-month-old baby was treated at a local hospital for "significant bruising to the upper body." Detectives also discovered that the infant had attended the daycare in the woman's home on Jan. 19.

They say the parents observed the bruises when they arrived to pick up their child from the daycare. And while these injuries weren't considered life-threatening, police say "hospital personnel believed the injuries were a result of an assault and contacted Child Protective Services," which then notified the police.

After several interviews and additional investigation, the daycare operator was arrested, last Thursday, Feb. 24. She was taken to the Adult Detention Center and later released on an unsecured bond.

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

Detectives ask anyone whose child attends or previously attended this daycare – and believe their child may have had illegal contact – to call the Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 3.

Tips may also be submitted anonymously via Crime Solvers by phoning 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

BULLETIN BOARD

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

2022 TEEN JOB FAIRS

Two Teen Job Fairs will be held in Springfield and Chantilly on March 12 and March 19, 2022. The events are hosted by Supervisor Pat Herrity's office, Connection Newspapers and Fairfax County Public Schools. They include two teen job fairs and career-building workshops. They focus on students and young job seekers looking for a variety of employment opportunities; full time, after-school, seasonal positions, internship opportunities, and volunteer positions.

Dates:

Saturday, March 12 from 1-3 p.m. At West Springfield High School.
Saturday, March 19 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Chantilly High School.

NOW THRU 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 started at <http://www.lordoflifeva.org/esl>. Cost is \$20.

SEEKING SOFTBALL PLAYERS

The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia, a senior women's softball league, is looking for players. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. They play on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna.

For more information, visit the website www.goldengirls.org or call Marilyn at 571-261-9163.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit www.fairfax-county.gov/healthymindsfairfax or www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.
Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke sponsors a monthly meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, noon-1:30 p.m., for caregivers to learn and to share with others experiencing similar challenges. Before attending, contact the facilitator, Eileen Thompson at 703-451-8626 or eileen.thompson1@gmail.com.

Haven of Northern Virginia provides support, compassion, information and resources to the bereaved and seriously ill. To become a Haven volunteer, please call 703-941-7000 to request an orientation. Volunteers must complete a 30-hour training and commit to one year of service answering Haven phones (2.5 hours weekly). Next training is scheduled for fall 2017.

THE CONNECTION

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General Assembly Punts Cannabis Reform

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

This week, the House General Laws subcommittee on ABC and Gaming (on which I serve) voted on party lines not to move forward with Senator Adam Ebbin's SB 391, legislation that would have, among other things, expedited the regulation and enforcement for the legal sale of cannabis for adult use in the Commonwealth.

I am very disappointed by this outcome. Similar legislation on the House side was also defeated earlier this session, leaving no remaining vehicle to send to a conference committee to continue working on this critical issue during these next two weeks remaining in session. I believe it was premature to abandon the mission of this legislation without giving it a fair hearing.

Indeed, the inception of this legislation was the culmination of diligent work from both sides of the aisle; as Chairman of this very subcommittee during the past two sessions, I also sit on the Joint Cannabis Oversight Commission, where my colleagues and I from both chambers met several times in the past year over the interim to hold hearings with stakeholders across the Commonwealth to develop a comprehensive legal-use framework. This bill was the culmination of our Commission's legislative recommendations.



As Democratic Delegates David Bulova and Dawn Adams noted in this subcommittee meeting, a vote not to move forward with this legislation was a vote to allow the black market to proliferate for yet another year.

This legislation would have addressed three key goals: health concerns, public safety, and equity.

While July 1, 2021, marked the beginning of the legal possession of up to an ounce of cannabis for adult use in Virginia, there is currently no legal way to purchase cannabis within the Commonwealth. This raises an important question: if someone wants cannabis to possess and use legally, where do they buy it? The answer, unfortunately, is either from a street dealer (some of whom now operate online delivery services) or by bringing it into Virginia from another state or DC. These options are all illegal and can be unsafe.

An unregulated product endangers public health. Were pesticides, weed killers, or fungicides applied to the plant during cultivation? Were chemicals used during processing? Cannabis is a known "hyper-aggregator," plants that are highly adept at absorbing substances from their environment like pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, heavy metals, and other toxins and contaminants. Indeed, cannabis and hemp are excellent agents to effectively clean up the soil after environmental disasters. However, in the

context of plants intended for human consumption, these toxins and contaminants remain in the plant after harvest and are then transferred and can harm any person that consumes it.

Sadly, in Northern Virginia, a cannabis user recently overdosed and died after using fentanyl-laced cannabis.

Right now our citizens do not have access to a safe and legal product. This legislation would have green-lit some industrial hemp processors and Virginia's four pharmaceutical processors of medical cannabis — located in Manassas, Richmond, Norfolk, and Abington—to sell adult-use cannabis by Sept. 1, 2022 as a bridge to legal sales until the full market roll out starts the following year. Most significantly, medical cannabis, because it is highly regulated and tested, is a safe and reliable adult-use product. SB 391 would have also required these medical operators who participate in early sales to create incubator programs to establish small independent marijuana businesses that qualify as social equity applicants. Social equity candidates were narrowly defined in the legislation to focus on startup businesses operated by Virginians most affected by marijuana law enforcement.

By not moving forward with this measure, the Commonwealth has not just punted on cleaning up the illegal and dangerous black market but has passed up the opportunity to collect an estimated \$180-\$234 million in tax revenue that could support our communities with contributions to public schools, public health initiatives, and other investments. In a recent estimate, the illicit market in Virginia averages \$1.8 billion per year and is growing.

Don't California Virginia's Budding New Market

SHERIFF (RET). CURRIE MYERS
AND JACOB FISH

Criminal enforcement of marijuana laws has had a negative impact on our country. Prohibition has created a dangerous black market, locked many people up in jails unnecessarily, and taken time and energy from law enforcement to solve more serious crimes. Last year, Virginia became the first southern state to allow for a fully legal cannabis market by 2024. But this year unfortunately, legislators missed the opportunity to address the shortcomings in the law — deferring further action until 2023.

While we applaud Virginia for taking this first step, the current framework set up by the legislation has the Commonwealth going down a dangerous and counterproductive path many other states have unfortunately taken. For example, high taxes and overburdensome regulations in California's legal marijuana industry have resulted in high costs, cronyism, and the proliferation of the black

market. Fortunately, Virginia lawmakers have an opportunity this legislative session to "Un-California" its cannabis market before it opens for business.

The current reform plan in Virginia would impose heavy state and local excise taxes (21% state, up to 3% local), plus state sales tax as high as 7% and local "meals" taxes up to 7.5%; not to mention annual fees doled out by the "Virginia Cannabis Control Authority." Unsurprisingly, when California enacted their legal cannabis laws, they implemented a heavy tax structure, including a 7.25% state and up to a 3.5% local sales tax, a 15% excise tax on retail shops, and heavy taxes on farmers. These taxes can add 50% or more to the final price.

This has resulted in the black market being able to outcompete the legal one. It's estimated that in California, \$8.7 billion worth of cannabis products are purchased from non-legal sources and that 75% of the cannabis market is still controlled by unlicensed dealers. It's gotten so bad in California that

some localities have suspended their local taxes in order to allow legal retailers a fighting chance against their illicit counterparts.

In contrast, Michigan went with a much more reasonable taxing structure when they legalized their cannabis market. The most recent data shows that the state was able to capture over 60% of the market

share in the first year alone. This also means that more Michiganders are purchasing cannabis products that are regulated and tested for safety and quality.

Virginia lawmakers should also take another lesson from other states like Florida and Nevada who

SEE NEW MARKET, PAGE 14

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
south@connectionnewspapers.com

Mary Kimm
Editor and Publisher
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Bonnie Hobbs
Community Reporter, 703-778-9415
bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com

Mercia Hobson
Community Reporter
mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com

Mike Salmon
Contributing Writer
msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com

Ken Moore
Contributing Writer
kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com

Susan Laume
Contributing Writer

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk
Display Advertising/National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment Advertising
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Publisher
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

In Memoriam Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic

Art/Design:
Laurence Foong
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
Circulation Manager:
Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



PEOPLE

Jeopardy! Champion Title Barely Eludes Burke Student

Sullivan strong in quarter and semi-final rounds.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Burke's own Jeopardy! National College contestant, Megan Sullivan, emerged with a win in her first televised Jeopardy! quarter final match on Feb. 16. (See Connection, Feb. 8). With a winning score of \$8,401, she advanced to the Jeopardy! semi-finals. At watch parties on her University of Virginia campus, and at those hosted by her parents in Burke, the excitement level ran high, encouraged by her win.

On Feb. 18, as she competed in her semi-final match, Sullivan's combination of knowledge, gamesmanship, and wagering strategy, allowed her to perform very well. She found herself in the lead going into Final Jeopardy. She was hopeful when the final Jeopardy category, literature, was announced. As a junior studying the Classics, literature is a strong area for her. Unfortunately, the other important ingredient - luck - was not with her for that final question. Answering "Who was Madame Bovary?", instead of "Who was Lady Chatterley?", she finished second to Jaskaran Singh, who was the only one of the three contestants answering the final question correctly. Madame Bovary's 1856 character lived beyond her means to brighten a dull provincial life in Flaubert's novel first published in France; while Lady Chatterley's character sought the escape of physical pleasure in D. H. Lawrence's 1932 novel first published in Italy.

Sullivan said, "When I read the question, it was so frustrating because after the responses were read, I knew that with one more piece of intel, like the author's name, I



COURTESY JEOPARDYPRODUCTIONS INC

Megan Sullivan won her quarter final round and competed in the semi-finals.

would have gotten it right. Madame Bovary wasn't a bad guess, but I knew the era was totally wrong. I'm familiar with the book but I haven't read it." She added with a simile, "I will now."

By making it from the quarter to the semi-final round, she raised her prize money from \$10,000 to \$20,000.

Although she didn't make it to the finals, Sullivan said, "I was proud because I think I played much better in the semi finals, especially coming so close to unseating the champion in the whole tournament [Singh]."

Singh, a senior at the University of Texas, ultimately would be crowned the 2022 National College Champion, winning decisively on Feb. 22, with a commanding score in the first of the two final games, and holding on in the second to earn the win and the \$250,000 prize.

What is it like to be a Jeopardy! winner? Sullivan has been surprised to be rec-

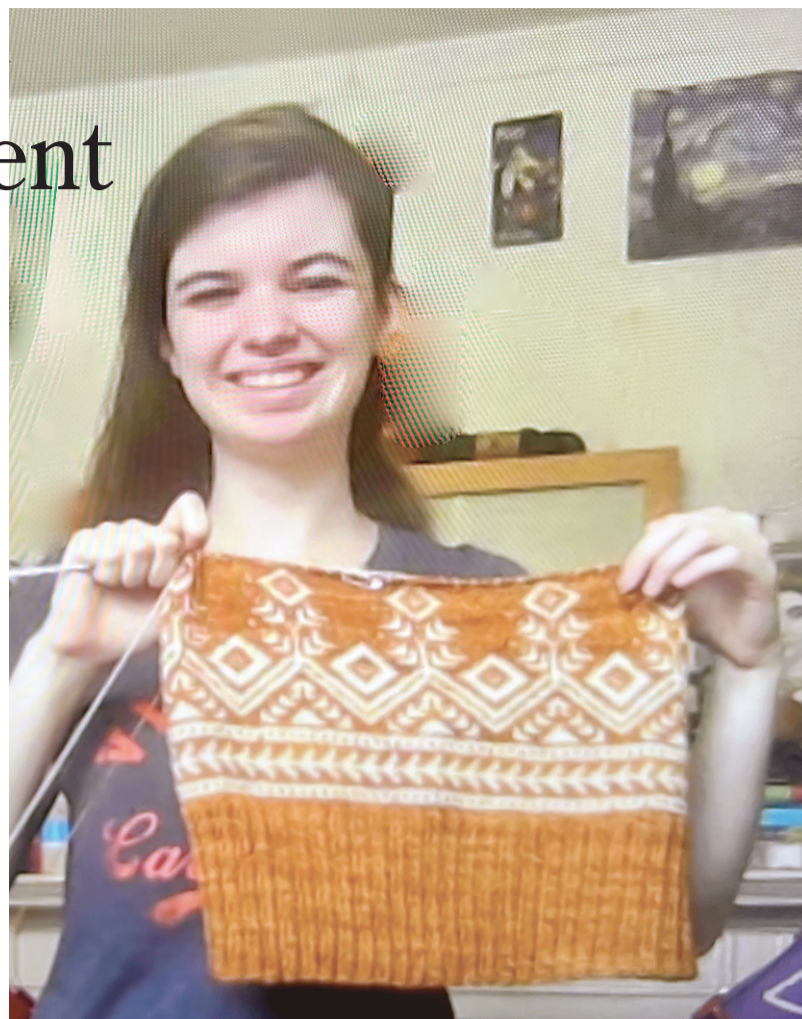


PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME

Sullivan relaxes from the activity of school and celebrity by knitting.

ognized often in public. She also says the celebrity has added to her work load, answering many emails and texts and doing promotions on social media. She has been invited as a surprise guest at a campus class Jeopardy game. Through the added excitement, she still finds time for her favorite hobby, knitting. She is working on a shirt, elaborately patterned, inspired by the epic poetry of Finnish and Karelian folklore, the Kalevala, which she finds fits with her interest in the Classics. She is using an expensive hand-dyed yarn, and she says, "I can afford it now."

Speaking of her prize money, she says, "I'm sort of in that college age gap between dependence and independence, so this is a

really good time to be handed a big chunk of change. As I prepare to go to grad school and live on my own. It's going to mean that I'll have to work less while in grad school."

What's next for University of Virginia's newest celebrity? Sullivan has more college and graduate school to complete. She then hopes to find an enticing location to begin a career as a high school Latin teacher. She feels assured that openings await her given the number of teachers in that curriculum reaching retirement age.

As an avid knitter, she's also calculating just how much more yarn she might purchase with her prize money.

"I have some more yarn purchases in the future."

Springfield Democrats Sponsor Food Drive

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

With Virginia holding elections every year, members of the Springfield District Democratic Committee (SDDC) spend many months each cycle planning and assisting with election activities. But as committee chairman, Andrew Scalise says, "Springfield Democrats is more than its name. In addition to helping elect Democrats, our volunteers give back to our community right here in Fairfax County. We chose Britepaths for our February Food Drive to help bring assistance to county residents who are struggling to make ends meet.



SDDC Chairman Andrew Scalise holds part of his pantry donation.



SDDC member Jane Barker of Clifton donates a trunk full of needed items.

PHOTOS BY DONNA REID

Britepaths not only provides them with food and gift cards for groceries, but they mentor families and provide services that help them become self-sufficient. That is a lofty goal well worth our support."

As an arm of the Democratic Party of Virginia, the supervisory district committee members provide the local area volunteer organization and activities necessary to support election of Democratic candidates to County, State, and National offices. For elections, the group's activities include: promoting voter registration, protecting people's right to vote, making sure citizens know who is on the

SEE FOOD DRIVE, PAGE 12

RESTAURANT WEEK



Bellissimo: Scallops over pasta with basil.



Anita's: Taco Salad with meat or beans.

'An Amazing Choice of Cuisine and Top-Notch Dining'

Fairfax City Restaurant Week is March 7 through March 14.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

It's time to rev up those taste buds and get ready for some delicious dishes spanning the globe. Fairfax City's Restaurant Week is Monday, March 7, through Monday, March 14. And because of popular demand, this year's event will happen twice – in the coming week and again in the summer.

Participating restaurants are offering three-course, prix fixe menus of \$20/person for lunch/brunch and \$35/person for dinner. Couple and family-meal options are available, as well. And new this time, specialty food places will offer a two for \$10 deal so establishments offering tasty food and drink, but not categorized as restaurants, could participate. They include Cameron's Coffee & Chocolates, Foundation Coffee Roasters, Baku Delicious and CupCakes & Beyond.

Since the City's restaurants offer a wide variety of international cuisine, diners will be able to feast on everything from Indian to Italian, Mexican, Irish, Korean, Vietnamese and traditional American food offered in modern and attractive ways.

Participating restaurants include: Coyote Grille, Ornerly Beer Co., Marumen Ramen Shop, The Wine House, Dolce Vita Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar, Capital Ale House, Earp's Ordinary, The Auld Shebeen, Masala Wok, Patriots Pub & Grill, High Side, The Auld Shebeen, Bellissimo Restaurant, Anita's New Mexico Style Mexican Food, Epicure Café, Hamrock's Restaurant, Kim's Kitchen & Bar, Ruffino's Spaghetti House, Bollywood Bistro; P.J. Skidoos, and Meokja Meokja.

"In 2018, we set out to cement Fairfax City as a regional, dining destination with the launch of an all-new, Fairfax City Restaurant Week program," said Economic Development Director Chris Bruno. "Now as we enter our fifth year celebrating our city's diverse and exciting culinary community, it's time to push the program even further."

Fairfax City Restaurant Week was founded and sponsored by Fairfax City's Economic Development Authority and the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce. And Bruno thanked both entities, as well as "our outstanding restaurants," for helping make Fairfax City the place to go for a large array of delicious, global cuisines.



Bollywood Bistro: Bombay Shrimp.

The 2022 Restaurant Week Committee, a consortium working with consultants and the restaurant community, plans and carries out the event on behalf of the sponsors. The goals are to expose visitors and area residents to Fairfax City, increase the number of people dining at each restaurant during that week, and increase brand recognition for the participating restaurants.

"The City of Fairfax has an amazing variety of independent, locally owned restaurants," said Jennifer Rose, executive director of the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce. "Noting how proud her organization is to once again support Fairfax City Restaurant Week, she added, "We believe we have the finest restaurants in the region that offer an amazing choice of cuisine. Fairfax City should be everyone's destination of choice for top-notch dining."

Fairfax Mayor David Meyer agrees. "Fairfax City has one of the most dynamic and diverse restaurant communities in the region," he said. "And it's exciting to have so many of the City's favorite restaurants participate in our Restaurant Week. This is a great opportunity to try new restaurants, plus tried-and-true favorites, as they all have special menus and offerings at extraordinary prices to engage both new and long-standing customers."

Diners are encouraged to follow at @FairfaxCityRestaurantWeek on Instagram and Facebook and tag #FairfaxCityEats. For more information, go to fairfaxcityrestaurantweek.com.

On the Menu

Here are examples of some of the many entrees (not the whole meal, including appetizers and desserts) that a sampling of the restaurants will be serving. fairfaxcityrestaurantweek.com

Dolce Vita

Gnocchi and Beef Tips - Seared beef tips and gnocchi, sautéed mushrooms, caramelized onions in a creamy beef demi-broth; Pollo Sorrenti - Sautéed chicken breast, prosciutto and tomato baked with provolone cheese in wine sauce over linguini; Penne Arrabiata - Homemade pasta tossed with capers, black olives and cherry peppers in homemade garlic-tomato sauce.

P.J. Skidoos

BBQ Ribs – Half rack with fries and coleslaw; Shrimp Scampi – Served with tomatoes, scallions, garlic in a lemon-butter, white-wine sauce over linguini; Chicken Scaloppini - Sautéed chicken breast with lemon butter, mushrooms and capers over linguini in light cream sauce; Broiled Atlantic Salmon – Served with honey-mustard glaze or lemon-butter sauce, spinach and rice; London Broil - Marinated flank steak sliced over mashed potatoes with mushroom-wine sauce.

Coyote Grille:

Steak Rajas Tostada - Crispy corn tortilla layered with steak, onions, peppers and garlic sautéed in Southwest cream sauce, sprinkled with parmesan cheese and served with black beans and green rice; BBQ Shrimp - Ancho barbacoa-sautéed shrimp with onions, peppers and corn, plus beans and rice; Veggie Relleno -Poblano pepper stuffed with rice, onions, corn, peas, carrots and potatoes, topped with ranchera sauce, sour cream, pico and melted cheese.

Capital Ale House

Mahi Mahi – Pan-seared and oven-roasted mahi mahi atop sautéed, garlic-butter broccolini, with mustard cream sauce; Chicken Cordon Bleu - Roulade of chicken stuffed with ham, gruyere and Dijon mustard and served over mashed potatoes and French green beans.

The Auld Shebeen

Fish and Chips – Battered, deep-fried cod fillets served with fries and coleslaw; Corned Beef and Cabbage - Served with mashed potatoes, carrots, cream sauce and Irish mustards; Guinness Beef Stew - Guinness-marinated beef, carrots and onions in brown sauce over mashed potatoes; Shepherd's Pie - Ground beef, onions, carrots and peas in brown gravy, topped with mashed potatoes and cheese; Cottage Pie – Chicken breast with onions, carrots and mushrooms in creamy herb sauce, topped with mashed potatoes and Parmesan cheese.



The Auld Shebeen: Bread pudding topped with ice cream.

Ruffino's

Tortellini Amatriciana - Italian sausage, prosciutto, sautéed with onions and roasted garlic in plum-tomato sauce tossed with tortellini; Lobster Ravioli - Fresh lobster and ricotta cheese in creamy sauce; Pollo Marsala - Chicken breast sautéed with mushrooms, Marsala wine, over linguini; Pollo Piccata – Pan-seared chicken with lemon-butter, white wine, garlic, capers over linguini; Shrimp Scampi - Jumbo garlic shrimp red and green peppers, tomato, in creamy sauce over pasta; Spaghetti Carbonara - Spaghetti tossed with pancetta, pecorino, caramelized onions, egg yolk and tomatoes.

The Wine House:

Braised Lamb Shank – Served with cannellini beans with chorizo, potatoes, rosemary demi-glaze; Faroe Island Salmon Fillet – With leek beurre blanc, saffron risotto cake, haricot vert; Jumbo Lump Crabcake – Dijon cream sauce, roasted potatoes; Pork Tenderloin – Wrapped in prosciutto and sundried tomato, honey glaze, asparagus, roasted potatoes; Steak Frites – Flat iron steak, fries, peppercorn cream sauce; Beef Burgundy – French beef stew with gnocchi, mushrooms, pearl onions, bacon; Winter Risotto - Champagne cream, mushroom medley, truffle oil and Parmesan.



The Wine House: Pork loin, asparagus and potatoes.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



In February, Lee District Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D) walked the Cinderbed Bikeway route with the Friends of Accotink Creek.



Deforestation and the magnolia bog were topics on the walk.

Group Opposes Cinder Bed Road Bikeway

Forest cover and a rare magnolia bog could be damaged by path to Franconia-Springfield Metro.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

In a semi-industrial area where Newington Road intersects with Cinder Bed Road in southern Fairfax County, there is a \$14 million project on the books to extend the existing bike/pedestrian trail north to the Franconia-Springfield Metro station. It would mean construction in a heavily wooded area that would impact the dwindling tree cover in the county, and a lesser known rare magnolia bog, that's growing in this wooded corridor.

Long Branch creek goes through this area, which links to several creeks in this part of the county. Friends of Accotink Creek

are against the bikeway. County district-wise, the path of the bikeway starts in the Mount Vernon

District and extends into Lee District, so in February, Lee District Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D) walked through the area with some of the Friends members to discuss the plan.

The bikeway plan was presented to the public May 10, 2021. In the presentation, one of the purposes of the project is connectivity. FCDOT received a Federal Grant for a pedestrian/ bicycle connection from Franconia/Springfield Metro/VRE station to Fort Belvoir. Accessing Fort Belvoir from the Cinder Bed-Newington Road intersection would still take some creative cycling. It's far from a straight shot.

Nonetheless the county is moving forward with the trail.

According to Lusk's office this project was

approved by the Board of Supervisors in 2014 and approved for funding in 2015 so there's no change in plans.

"As is true with any project, we are thoroughly responding to public feedback regarding the design in order to minimize concerns," Lusk said.

Philip Latasa was one of the Friends group that walked with Lusk, and he feels there is an alternative to cutting down trees and installing a lighting system here.

"There are many existing options already in place on neighboring roads and trails that already provide routes to Metro," Latasa said. "No sacrifice of natural habitat or citizens' environmental goals is required to enhance these routes. We simply do not have enough forests and streams to provide an alternate transportation system."

Latasa cited the county's "Complete Streets," program in the ActiveFairfax section of the county's transportation objectives. The Cinder Bed Road Bikeway does

not adhere to the plan, he said.

He named a number of existing trails that are facing maintenance needs, and he would like to see the money and effort go towards that instead of building a new trail.

Lusk said they made some changes to the plan in response to some of the environmental concerns and it meets the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act which is required for some funding.

"We continue to work through concerns that environmental advocates have brought to us about the project during our walk-through," he said. Pavement, tree cutting and lighting are still part of the plan although the county does typically plant additional greenery with a project like this.

To Latasa, there's even a global implication with the bikeway plan. "If we cannot forego trees-to-asphalt conversions in instances like these, we lose our moral standing to lecture Brazil and Indonesia about deforestation," he said.

Alarm.com Expands Technology R&D

Alarm.com will expand its technology research and development division at its Fairfax County headquarters, investing \$2.6 million and creating 180 jobs.

Gov. Glenn Youngkin made the announcement at Alarm.com headquarters in the Tysons area of Fairfax County at an event attended by state and local political and business leaders. This was the first economic development announcement

event for the governor, who took office Jan. 15.

Alarm.com delivers innovative and unified services for millions of homes and businesses. The company's platform integrates with a growing variety of IoT (Internet of Things) devices through its apps and interfaces.

"For more than 20 years, Alarm.com has been a leader in Virginia and continued to

SEE ALARM.COM, PAGE 10



From left, Fairfax County Chairman Jeff McKay; Gov. Glenn Youngkin; Steve Trundle, president and CEO of Alarm.com; Caren Merrick, state secretary of commerce and trade; Victor Hoskins, president and CEO of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority; and Anne Ferguson, vice president of marketing at Alarm.com.

New Deputy County Executive for Safety and Security Named

Board of Supervisors appoints former Fire and Rescue Department's assistant chief.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors appointed Thomas G. Arnold as Deputy County Executive for Safety and Security at its meeting on Feb. 22, 2022.

Arnold will oversee the Police Department, the Fire and Rescue Department, the Department of Emergency Management and

Security, the Department of Public Safety Communications and the Department of Animal Sheltering ... He will receive an annual salary of \$215,000, according to Fairfax County.

Arnold was the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department's (FRD) assistant fire chief since 2020. He worked as senior



SCREENSHOT

Thomas G. Arnold

advisor to the chief and liaison to other county departments. Arnold supervised the Fiscal Services Division, Data Analytics Strategy Management Division, Information Technology Division, Public Information Office, Health and Wellness Section, and Planning Section of the FRD.

Arnold holds numerous certifications, never stopping learning. Three years ago, he was awarded the Executive Fire Officer designation from the National Fire Academy. The program reportedly "is intense and in-

volves taking four graduate and upper-division-baccalaureate equivalent courses over a four-year period," according to a post on FRD's Facebook page. Additionally, Arnold has received several performance and accomplishment awards for his service. Arnold published papers on topics relating to fire and rescue.

Arnold began Fairfax County career 21 years ago as a firefighter in 2001. He advanced through the ranks to become a lieutenant, captain, battalion commander, and deputy chief. Arnold received a Master of Science in executive fire service leadership from Grand Canyon University. He holds a Bachelor of Science in business administration from Pennsylvania State University.

Executive Director, Police Civilian Review Panel

The Board of Supervisors appointed Steven Richardson as the executive director of the Fairfax County Police Civilian Review Panel. The appointment is effective Monday, Feb. 28.

The panel reviews completed Police Department investigations of complaints alleging abuse of authority or serious misconduct, to ensure accuracy, completeness, thoughtfulness, objectivity and impartiality. Learn more about how the panel works on the Civilian Review Panel webpage. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecivilianreviewpanel/complaint-process>

Richardson previously served as operations captain for the George Washington University Police Department. In this role, he supervised the performance of all investigations, detectives, patrol



Steven Richardson

services and personnel. Richardson also studied the deployment of resources and recommended more effective deployments when needed. In addition, he reviewed all use-of-force incidents and adjudicated patrol officer union grievances.

Previously, Richardson also served as criminal magistrate for North Carolina's Judicial District 26; project manager and courts and corrections senior advisor for the Cook County, Ill. Sheriff's Office; fellow at the University of Chicago Crime Lab; police officer and investigator for the New York City Police Department; and legis-

lative director for a New York City Council member.

Richardson holds a Bachelor of Arts in African-American studies from Binghamton University. He will receive an annual salary of \$120,000.



Sarah Locke, left, Old Town Tax Consultants, watches while Edwin Wright, Wright Whiskey, and Ken Board, John Marshall Bank, give away the door prize. Alison Ross Tompkins, The Fairfax, is the Chamber chairman.

Chamber Networking Fun

John Marshall Bank hosted the February Hello! Happy Hour networking event for Mount Vernon Lee Chamber of Commerce in the Franklin Street Branch. These events help businesses to develop relationships in a fun atmosphere. Visit www.MountVernonLeeChamber.org for more information about local businesses



Unwined in Belle View and owner Vanessa Moore provided gourmet cheese, meats and crackers. Vanessa poured samples of the selection of fine wines at Unwined.

Alarm.com Expands Technology R&D

FROM PAGE 9

grow in 2021, by not only the number of employees, but also expanding the ways in which we hire talent," said Alarm.com Vice President of Human Resources Victoria Schillinger. "Alarm.com, which has office locations in several other states, chose to make this investment in Virginia due to Northern Virginia's strong workforce, including its high concentration of STEM workers, numerous higher education institutions, and desirable quality of life."

Alarm.com employs about 700 workers in Virginia and was recently named to Fortune Magazine's list of the top 100 Fastest Growing Companies in 2021. Expansion of the company's research and development division will create opportunities in computer visualization, video analytics, facial recognition, energy and water management, data analytics, mobile development, and embedded systems.

"Alarm.com is one of Fairfax County's most prominent technology innovators and we are thrilled that it is choosing to expand its R&D capacity and create

more jobs here," said Victor Hoskins, president and CEO of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA).

Alarm.com occupies more than 195,000 square feet of office space at their headquarters in Tysons, a testing lab in Tysons, and the Alarm.com Demo House in Falls Church, a fully-automated, state-of-the-art smart home.

As an active member of the community, Alarm.com has a Charitable Giving Program that aims to positively impact the needs of under-served communities, children's health and education, STEM initiatives, first responders, as well as disaster response. Alarm.com offers a charitable match program for employees and in 2021, supported more than 150 501(c)(3) organizations.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay said: "The Board of Supervisors has worked hard to create an environment where businesses of all kinds can grow and thrive, and I am delighted to see a technology leader such as Alarm.com take advantage of the assets we have built here for companies and their employees."

Local Photographers Bring Nature Close-up

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Since famous landscape photographer Ansel Adams sold his first photographs of Yosemite in 1922 documenting the majesty of the American West on film, people have been fascinated with pictures highlighting the beauty of nature and wildlife. The popularity of nature photography has only increased with the ease and readiness of camera phones, allowing many of us to capture the happened-upon bird or butterfly.

Then there are those who have raised the practice to an art form for personal enjoyment, science, conservation, and education of the public about the natural world. Meet two of those local nature photographers, whose names you might recognize from your social media feeds or widely circulated magazines, who stand out for the quality of their wildlife photographs.

Judy Gallagher is a member of the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia's board of directors, and frequent photographer of insects and spiders; with a library of over 123,000 pictures of more than 4,000 species of insects. Gallagher uses photography to record the beauty of these small and very important, but often unnoticed, members of our world. Her work has been used by the Smithsonian Magazine and National Geographic. Wikimedia Commons, uses a full catalog of her insects to provide free educational content on insects to the world (commons.wikimedia.org/insects).

Gallagher begged her parents for a Brownie camera at age seven, and first used it to photograph insects as a high school sophomore for a biology assignment. She was "blown away at the variety, shapes, and colors" she saw.

As an adult, she returned to photography after the death of her parents, as an urge to do something new. By this time, photography had moved to digital and she could take many more pictures. Her tip to beginning nature photographers, "Know your equipment and what it can do. You'll find insects everywhere, but you can't take good pictures if you don't know your equipment."

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PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Nature photographer Judy Gallagher captures a wide variety of insects with her macro lens equipped single lens reflex (SLR) camera.



PHOTO COURTESY SARAH GAMBLE

Wildlife photographer Jane Gamble recommends new photographers put their hobby money into the best telephoto lens possible to capture subject clarity and detail.



PHOTO BY JUDY GALLAGHER

Flower Fly, (*Spilomyia longicornis*) a fly that mimics a wasp as a defense for protection from predators.

Her camera of choice: Canon 5D Mark IV with 100 mm macro lens.

Jane Gamble, of Alexandria, enjoys photographing all wildlife, but says "birds are an addiction." She estimates her photo library at about 300,000 pictures since she began, in earnest about four years ago.

You can find her photographs in use by the National Park Service and locally by Fairfax County Park Authority and the Audubon Naturalist Society. She exhibited a solo show at Green Springs Gardens last summer, with sale proceeds donated to the park, and expects to do another show with friends there this summer. She is often among the avid nature photographers who regularly occupy the boardwalk at Huntley Meadows Park (3701 Lockhead Blvd, Al-

exandria), where long lenses have built lasting friendships around the shared passion for showing nature up close.

About four years ago, during kayaking trips with her husband, Gamble saw great wildlife but felt she was missing getting great photos. That changed when her husband gifted her an inexpensive, but better, camera kit for Christmas. She gradually moved up to bigger, better telephoto lenses, able to see improved clarity and detail. Her tip to beginning nature photographers, "You can't appreciate birds in the same way without binoculars or a 300 mm lens. Get the biggest lens you can afford. The saying goes,



PHOTO BY JANE GAMBLE

Observing this Red Vein Indian Mallow (*Abutilon striatum*), Gamble thought it would be nice to see a hummingbird on it ... and an Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypso Anna*) appeared for the photo.

'date your camera, but marry the lens.' And telephoto lenses allow a safe and respectful distance from wildlife," a principle Gamble calls primary. Her equipment of choice: Nikon D500, with Nikkor 200-500mm f/5.6 lens.

These photographers, and many others who make their work available without charge, do so to share their enjoyment and respect for wildlife and our environment, in the hope that all will learn to share their philosophy on the importance of conservation of our natural world.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Before Cell Phones, Texting and the Web, CB Radio Ruled

The Citizen Band culture even had their own colorful lingo.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

“Breaker one-nine, breaker one-nine, you got your ears on?” A question like this will likely bring stares and smirks these days but back in the 1970s, the answer would likely be “ten-four good buddy,” via the citizen band radios that were popular. These radios, initially favored by truckers, brought on a whole culture of 18-wheelers, Smokey the Bear and a song that pulled it all together.

Truck drivers had always used CB radios to talk with other truck drivers and keep an eye on road conditions so they could continue to make timely deliveries and keep their livelihoods going. It made the solo trips more fun too. The CB radio “caught on the same way social media and online communication does today,” it said in a story on the “Country Music Project,” website. The oil crisis in 1973 brought on a nationwide speed limit standard of 55 miles per hour and the truck drivers skirted around that, using the CB radio to form convoys and avoid speed traps. Since the trucks were all lined up together, the police, known as “Smokey the Bear,” had a hard time handing out speeding tickets, the legend goes.

In 1975, CW McCall came out with a country song called “Convoy,” opening the

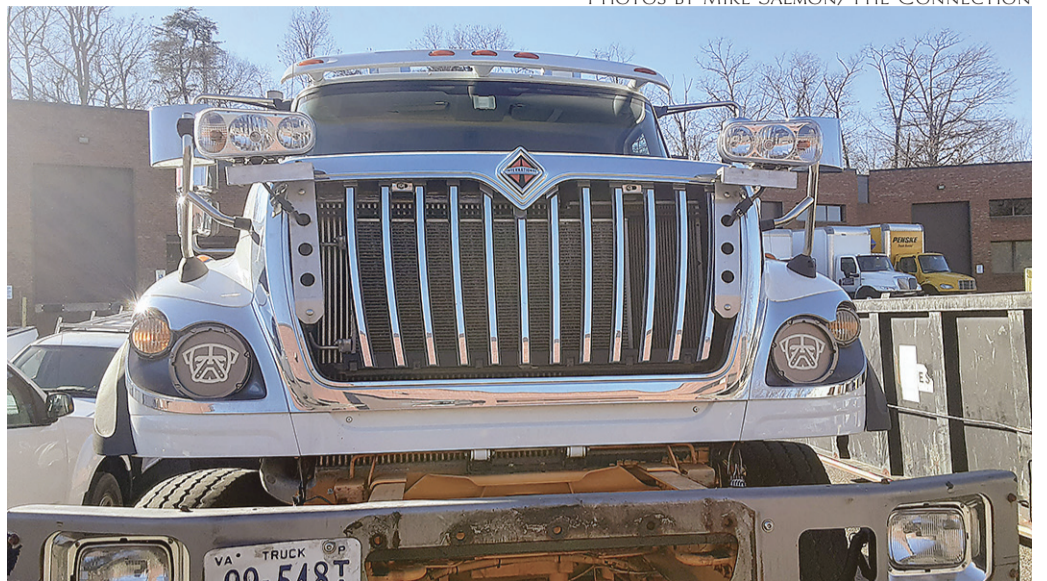


Trucking will always be for those with the “tough guy,” attitude for both men and women in the industry.

doors to mainstream CB culture. Everybody got into it too.

“Pig pen, this is Rubber Duck, we’re about to put the hammer down,” a line in the song goes. The song is a CB conversation between two truck drivers and others on Channel 19 that “had their ears on.”

That song is still part of the culture, said Dale Bennett, president of the Virginia Truckers Association in Richmond. He was recently interviewed by WRVA radio, and



Splattered bugs on the windshield and catching some shut eye at the next weigh station are part of the job description.



Blast from the Past

the station played the “Convoy” to set the mood. “They used that as the lead-in,” Bennett said.

According to “Country Music Project,” “Convoy” by C.W. McCall is about a fictional group of truckers that organize a protest over Citizen’s Band (CB) radio using their own made-up code words. Although the story in the song is fictional, it is inspired by real protests and the CB radio fad, their website said.

“After hearing about this unique dialogue, McCall and songwriter Chip Davis bought a CB radio which inspired them to write “Convoy,” the story goes. In 2014, Rolling Stone Magazine released a list of the 100 Greatest Country Songs and “Convoy” was on the list. The “Convoy,” movie was released after the song came out, starring Kris Kristofferson, Ali McGraw and Ernest Borgnine. Lots of CB talk, roadblocks and police cars getting smashed.

Bennett knows of the lore and the way Hollywood exaggerated the CB culture on films like Smokey and the Bandit. “Made for a great movie,” he said, adding that truckers still use the CBs as a real tool in the cab. Unlike cell phones, the driver with a CB has instant communications with other drivers around that immediate area so it adds another dynamic. “A means of instant communications,” Bennett said, and since the driver just grabs the mike and hits the talk button, it’s not like dialing a lengthy number so it’s not looked at by the law like a cell phone is, he said.

Channel 19 seemed to be the most popular CB channel, and the radio reserved Channel 8 for emergencies. There is a list of “10” codes with 10-4 being the most popular meaning “okay,” but 10-36 is the time, and 10-20 is the location.

“This is the Blast from the Past, I’ll catch you on the flip-flop, over and out.”

Blast from the Past is an occasional column that looks into people, places and events in Fairfax County from earlier times. Have an idea that I could look into? Email me at msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com

Springfield Democrats Sponsor Food Drive

FROM PAGE 7

ballot, how they stand on issues, where to vote in person and how to vote by absentee ballot.

Outside of election periods, the group spends time on a variety of efforts contributing to the community. Their February food drive organized multiple drop points for the convenience of donating members, with collectors making multiple deliveries to the charity as supplies accumulated. Jane Barker, Clifton, said, “George [State Senator George Barker] and I are happy to help out!this wonderful organization helps so many local needy families. Also thanks to SDDC for giving us the opportunity to help fill the pantry shelves!” The February food drive collected approximately \$1,200 of needed food stuffs and personal items from



Melissa Chabot, and her son Owen, 4, of Springfield, ready to receive donations at one of several drop off points for SDDC members’ February food drive

Britepaths’ urgent and on-going needs lists.

Next month the SDDC group will conduct a highway litter pick-up event on March 26

as part of its regular commitment to Virginia’s Adopt-a-Highway Program to beautify Burke Road.



Shopping totes filled with food donations create a colorful mosaic to add to the benefit of Britepaths’ pantry serving food insecure families within Fairfax County.

The Britepaths pantry, located at 3959 Pender Dr Suite 200, is generally open to receive donations, weekdays from 10 am until 2 pm; www.britepaths.org

THURSDAY/MARCH 3

Screening of "All Light, Everywhere." 4:30-8 p.m. At the Johnson Center Cinema, GMU, Fairfax. George Mason University's Visiting Filmmakers Series will hold a screening of "All Light, Everywhere," followed by a conversation with the film's director Theo Anthony. "All Light, Everywhere" is an award-winning film that explores the shared histories of cameras, weapons, policing and justice. As surveillance technologies become a fixture in everyday life, the film interrogates the complexity of an objective point of view, probing the biases inherent in both human perception and the lens. The film screening will begin at 4:30 p.m., and the post-screening Q&A with Theo Anthony will begin around 6:30 p.m.



Shannon Rodgers and Nathaniel McCay as Eurydice and Father in Sarah Ruhl's "Eurydice," playing March 3-6, 2022, presented by The Mason Players in Fairfax.

MARCH 3-6

"Eurydice." March 3-5 at 8 p.m. and March 5-6 at 2 p.m. At GMU TheaterSpace (de Laski Performing Arts Building, Room: A105), 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. "Eurydice" by Sarah Ruhl is presented by The Mason Players and reimagines the classic myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, not through Orpheus's infamous pilgrimage to retrieve his bride, but through the eyes of its heroine. Dying too young on her wedding day, Eurydice must journey to the underworld, where she begins to discover that the cost of living again can sometimes exceed the cost of staying dead. Visit www.TheMasonPlayers.com or theater.gmu.edu.

SATURDAY/MARCH 5

History in Kitchen. Gunston Hall. 10:30-11:15 a.m. Virtual. This free and virtual three-part series will illuminate what kinds of food were eaten by different people in Colonial Virginia. Discover each week how to prepare a simple recipe. Visit the website: <https://gunstonhall.org/events/history-in-the-kitchen-2/>

SATURDAY/MARCH 5

Taisha Estrada. 7:30 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, W16, McGuireWoods Gallery, Lorton; Seating - G.A. Row Seating. Puerto Rican singer-songwriter Taisha Estrada's style blends Latin styles with jazz, R&B, and pop, and is heavily influenced by the sensory experience of the Caribbean. Visit www.workhousearts.org/onstage

SUNDAY/MARCH 6

Ceylon Mitchell. 2 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, W16, McGuireWoods Gallery, Lorton; Seating - G.A. Row Seating. A contemporary classical flutist, educator, and entrepreneur whose mission is to celebrate Black and Latinx voices in music. Visit www.workhousearts.org/onstage

SUNDAY/MARCH 6

Dewberry Faculty Artist Series: Glenn Smith. 3 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Dr, Fairfax. Free; Registration Required. In-person at Harris Theatre; livestreamed

on CVPA website. Visit the website: <https://cfa.gmu.edu/>

SUNDAY/MARCH 6

Dewberry Faculty Artist Series: Anna Balakerskaia. 7 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Dr, Fairfax. Free; Registration Required. In-person at Harris Theatre; livestreamed on CVPA website. Visit the website: <https://cfa.gmu.edu/>

MONDAY/MARCH 7

Bubble Party Fun! 10:30-11:30 a.m. At Stacy C. Sherwood Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Join Miss Mollie for Bubble play and exploration with interactive games. Perfect for preschoolers but open to all ages. Part of the City of Fairfax's Funday Monday program. Register Online for this free event. Masks required regardless of vaccination status. Visit the website: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts>

MONDAY/MARCH 7

Mason Symphony Orchestra and Concerto Soloists. 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Dr, Fairfax. Cost: \$15 General Public, \$10 Seniors, \$5 Students. Visit the website: <https://cfa.gmu.edu/>

MARCH 7-14

Fairfax City Restaurant Week. Participating Fairfax City restaurants are offering three-course prix fixe menus of \$20 for lunch/brunch and \$35 for dinner per person with couple and family meal options available. New this year, specialty restaurants will offer a Two for \$10 Deal providing food lovers the opportunity to further explore the global kitchens found across neighborhoods in Fairfax City. Participating restaurants include: Coyote Grille & Cantina, Ornerly Beer Company, Marumen, The Wine House, The Auld Shebeen, Dolce Vita Italian Kitchen and Wine Bar, Capital Ale House, Earp's Ordinary, Foundation Coffee Roasters, Patriots Pub & Grill, High Side, Bellissimo Restaurant, Anita's New Mexico Style Mexican Food, Epicure Café, Hamrock's Restaurant, Ruffino's Spaghetti

House, and Bollywood Bistro. Visit fairfaxcityrestaurantweek.com.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 9

University Singers. 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Dr, Fairfax. Tickets: \$12 General Public, \$8 Seniors, \$5 Students. Visit the website: <https://cfa.gmu.edu/>

FRIDAY/MARCH 11

Alma Wind Ensemble. 8-10 p.m. At Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. This concert highlights the contributions of women composers throughout history. Exclusively highlighting women's work, composers include Mel Bonis, Katy Abbott, Florence Price, Sally Whitwell, among others. Flute, Clarinet & Piano.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12

Second Saturday Art Walk At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. All six gallery buildings will be open and artists will be on hand to share their work and processes with you. Come enjoy an evening out with our visual artists. <https://www.workhousearts.org/monthly-featured-artists-1>

SATURDAY/MARCH 12

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra: An Evening with Brahms and Tchaikovsky. 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Dr, Fairfax. Featuring Sofya Gulyak, piano. Tickets: \$15 Students, Adult prices starting at \$40. Visit the website: <https://cfa.gmu.edu/>

SUNDAY/MARCH 13

"Cat Daddies" Screening. 4:15-6:15 p.m. At University Mall Theaters, 10659 Braddock Road, Fairfax. Happy three-year anniversary to Patriot Pawsabilities. Help celebrate in purr-son for "Cat Daddies" presented by Gray Hat Films and Visual Communications, benefiting Patriot Pawsabilities Cat Lounge. "Cat Daddies" is a tender portrait of eight men whose love for cats has changed their lives, from internet celebrity to occupational therapy, and in the case of one disabled homeless man, a reason to hope. Visit the website: tinyurl.com/catdaddiesfairfax

Managing Anxiety Triggered by News From Ukraine

Music and meditation among the ways to cope.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Sitting on yoga mats with their eyes closed as meditation music fills the air, Stephanie Dowd's yoga and meditation students seek a sense of calm. For the past two weeks, the Arlington instructor offered a special class for those who are seeking solace in the midst of an abundance of disturbing news about the crisis in Ukraine

"My students have come to class talking about the sadness and stress they're feeling," she said. "They're looking for ways to decompress from the upsetting headlines."

The onslaught of disturbing images and news headlines about the crisis in Ukraine can take a toll on one's mental health. While feelings of stress over negative events is normal, there is a point in which these feelings can become unmanageable.

"It's normal to feel some level of anxiety over negative national and international events," said Bethesda psychologist Michele Windsor. "The key is having enough self awareness to recognize those when feelings are interfering with your ability to carry out daily tasks."

"Deep breathing, meditation or just spending five minutes sitting quietly and without access to news, smartphones and social media can help cultivate that self awareness," Windsor said.

When members of her prayer group began to express feelings of profound sadness over the crisis, Yves Jaffe said they discussed some of the ways in which they can find comfort in their faith. "I play the flute and I've started playing at the beginning and end of our gatherings.

The sounds are peaceful and give us a sense of calm. There's another woman in our group who's a pianist and she plays, "Let there be Peace on Earth" while we sing it.

In fact, spending time with friends and setting limits on news consumption can reduce anxiety, says Windsor. "Because we're all attached to our smartphones, get news alerts and spend time on social media, we can lose track of the amount of negative news we're getting," she said. "Make a conscious effort to unplug. Set aside a certain amount of time each day to stay off the internet and social media. There are very few reasons why most of us can't choose to stay away from these things for at least three hours each day. It can do wonders for our mental health."

"The key is having enough self awareness to recognize when those feelings are interfering with your ability to carry out daily tasks."

— Michele Windsor

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OPINION

Virginia's Budding New Market

FROM PAGE 6

have allowed cannabis oligopolies to control their state's markets due to anti-competitive regulations and licensure limits. Arbitrary licensure limitations create less competition and poorer quality products – as well as breed corruption. As a 2020 Politico article stated: "These practices effectively put million-dollar decisions in the hands of ... the mayors and councilors of small towns and cities, along with the friends and supporters of politicians who appoint them to boards. In Nevada, where 130 retail licenses were up for grabs, large campaign contributions were doled out to County Commissioners responsible for shelling out these licenses just before applicant hearings. Virginia's proposed law contains licensure caps from farming to retail. The proposals also contain no mechanism for this number to increase as Virginia's population and economy grows, meaning the licensure scheme will become more problematic as the years go on.

Virginia's current proposal also allows a license to be denied to an individual if they have been convicted within the past seven years of a "crime of moral turpitude" which is as vague as it sounds. This means that many of the roughly 1.6 million Virginians with a criminal conviction on their record, many of whom carry that record due to criminal enforcement of marijuana prohibition, would be left out of the market based on someone's judgment call as to whether the crime is one of "moral turpitude." Employment is one of the most important factors in whether someone will be successful after reentering society from the criminal justice system. Certainly, some violent crimes and offenses that have a direct relationship to the job should be considered by the licensing boards, but "moral turpitude" exclusions create unnecessary barriers for those trying to contribute to society as well as increase their chances to commit future crimes.

Virginia's legislative session creates a perfect opportunity to re-examine the future of the cannabis market in the state. We hope lawmakers take note of the lessons learned from other states and revisit the current plan instead of leaving it unchanged.

Currie Myers is the retired sheriff of Johnson County, Kansas. Jacob Fish is the Deputy Director of Americans for Prosperity-Virginia.

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New TJ Policy Invalidated

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

On Friday, Feb. 25, a federal judge for the Eastern District of Virginia, Alexandria Division ruled that the Fairfax County School Board's new admissions policy for Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, first implemented for the Class of 2025, is "discriminatory."

In his ruling, Claude M. Hilton, United States District Judge, wrote, "The proper remedy for a legal provision enacted with discriminatory intent is invalidation."

Hilton itemized within his 31-page Opinion the School Board's process and reasons for bringing about racial balance at TJ. He discussed how TJ's admission change was "infected with the talk of racial balancing from its inception."

According to Hilton, the purpose of the Board's admissions overhaul was to change the racial makeup of TJ to the detriment of Asian-Americans. "The Board's overhaul of TJ admissions has had, and will have, a substantial impact on Asian-American applicants to TJ," added Hilton in his Opinion.

"For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiff The Coalition for TJ is entitled to Summary Judgment, and the Defendant Fairfax County School Board's Motion for a Summary Judgment is denied."

According to Erin Wilcox, Pacific Legal Foundation attorney and lead attorney for the TJ case, the summary judgment is a final decision from the federal district court judge.

TJ is an elite, regional Fairfax County Public School and a Virginia state-chartered magnet school, often ranked as the top high school in the nation. The school is under the sole direction and control of the Fairfax County School Board. It admits students who meet the eligibility requirements not only from Fairfax and the City of Fairfax but four participating Northern Virginia school divisions — Arlington County, Falls Church City, Loudoun County, and Prince William County. TJ admits slightly more than 400 first-year students from over 3,000 who apply each year.

According to Hilton, the altered TJ admissions policy did away with the previous three merit-based standardized tests, a minimum core 3.0-grade point average, and that students have completed or be enrolled in Algebra I. The policy changed other minimum application requirements as well.

For students to be eligible for TJ under the new policy, they must maintain a 3.5 GPA, be enrolled in a full-year honors Algebra I or higher course, an honors science course, and at least one other honors course, or the Young Scholars program.

Additionally, the new policy, implemented in late fall 2020, moved away from the multi-stage evaluation process to a one-round holistic evaluation. It weighed GPA, a student portrait sheet, a problem solving essay, and "experience factors," attending a middle school deemed historically underrepresented at TJ, coming from an economically disadvantaged family, and statuses as an English language learner and a special education student, into admission considerations.

"The challenged policy renders their children (the Coalition's) unable to compete on

a level playing field for a racial purpose," Hilton wrote. He ruled that the case presents substantial evidence of disparate impact. According to Hilton, for the Class of 2025, the proportion of admitted Asian-American students fell to about 54 percent. Whereas, "for the previous five years, Asian-American students never made up less than 65 percent of the admitted class," Hilton wrote.

"The undisputed evidence demonstrates precisely how the Board's actions caused and will continue to cause, a substantial racial impact. The Board instituted a system that does not treat all applicants to TJ equally," Hilton wrote.

While the new process allots seats equal to 1.5 percent of each school's eighth-grade class, applicants who do not attain a place at their school must compete for one of only approximately 100 unallocated seats throughout the area.

In the decision, Hilton said that the set-aside disproportionately forces Asian-American students to compete against more eligible and interested applicants. When applicants outside the top 1.5 percent are placed in the unallocated pool of 100, they are also treated unequally.

FCPS declared that the "experience factors" would be used in their holistic review. "One of these factors is whether a student attends a middle school deemed 'historically underrepresented' at TJ. According to Hilton, none of the six primary FCPS TJ feeder schools qualify for that consideration, so students at these schools are at a disadvantage in the unallocated pool of 100 possible seated applicants compared to their peers from disadvantaged schools.

According to Hilton, the Board's main problem is its concentration on the goal of having TJ match the demographics of the surrounding area, which is predominantly expressed in racial terms. "Far from a compelling interest, racial balancing for its own sake is 'patently unconstitutional,'" Hilton wrote. He added, "The Board cannot transform racial balancing into a compelling interest simply by relabeling it 'racial diversity.'"

Finally, Hilton said that even if the Board could establish a compelling reason to justify racially discriminatory changes to the TJ admissions process, the Board must demonstrate that the revised policy is "necessary" to achieve that interest.

According to Hilton, the plan must be a "last resort" to accomplish the purportedly compelling interest. He suggested increasing the size of TJ and providing free test prep before defaulting to a system "that treats applicants unequally in hopes of engineering a particular racial outcome."

"This is a monumental win for parents and students here in Fairfax County, but also for equal treatment in education across the country," said Pacific Legal Foundation attorney Erin Wilcox. "We hope this ruling sends the message that government cannot choose who receives the opportunity to attend public schools based on race or ethnicity."

As for the next steps, for the defendant and plaintiff, Wilcox said, "The defendant has 30 days to appeal the district court's decision to the US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Because they prevailed, the plaintiff has no next steps at this time."

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More Than a Virtue



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As I sit and write this column on Sat., February 26, 2022, it is 13 years, almost to the day (it was a Thursday actually, Feb. 27, 2009) when Team Lourie (me, my wife, Dina and my brother, Richard) first met an oncologist who would become the center of my universe. This initial meeting WAS to review your recent diagnostic medical history and discuss treatment. Moreover, once this meeting occurs and a cancer diagnosis is confirmed, your oncologist is placed on speed-dial and his/her email is auto-selected every time you type the first few letters of their name. This oncologist becomes your lifeline, phone a friend and/or the person you ask about all thing's cancer related. And there's plenty to ask, especially if you're clueless to begin with, as was Team Lourie.

I wouldn't say I've learned my lessons well, but after so many years, one does accrue a working knowledge/familiarity with certain practices and procedures. And though I never mastered the pronunciation of some of the early-on/heavy-duty chemotherapy I infused, I always knew where to be and when. As a result, I was described as a "compliant" patient. Meaning I did what I was told and never missed any appointments. (You mean not all patients are compliant," I remember asking. The answer I received: "You'd be surprised." After a diagnosis of cancer, how does a diagnosee not show up for treatment, et cetera? Apparently, it happens, more than I can understand.)

But I never had to be told twice. And though text and emails were sent with regularity by my provider, I was always aware in advance and even though I was contacted multiple times on multiple devices, I never needed to be reminded. I was ready, willing, and able. As was the case with "Deets," (Danny Glover's character in "Lonesome Dove"). When he died, Capt. Woodrow Call (Tommy Lee Jones) carved the following sentiment on his headstone: "Never shirked a task. Cheerful in all weathers." He was dependable and reliable, as have I been during this cancer adventure.

Now whether my compliance and cheerful attitude has had any bearing on my survival, or whether a possible misdiagnosis — which led to my diagnosis being changed in 2020 to papillary thyroid cancer from the original non-small cell lung cancer after multiple biopsies confirmed the rediagnosis, Team Lourie can't know for sure — and of course, no one is admitting it. I've been told that papillary thyroid cancer, generally speaking, is a slow-moving (perhaps that's why I've survived so long), curable type of cancer. Quite a bit different than the "terminal" diagnosis/"13 month to two years" prognosis I initially received back in 2009.

Maybe that's why I am alive and reasonably well. When you're told that you have two years to live, maximum, it's hard to be mad if you're still alive 13 YEARS LATER. Over these many years, I have learned to roll with the punches and go with the flow because if being diagnosed with cancer has taught me anything, it has taught me how to be patient — and how to be one as well.

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



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