



## Celebration of Spring

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### Battle for TJ

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### Will Gas Tax Holiday Help?

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Hikers head back toward the Riverbend Visitors Center.

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

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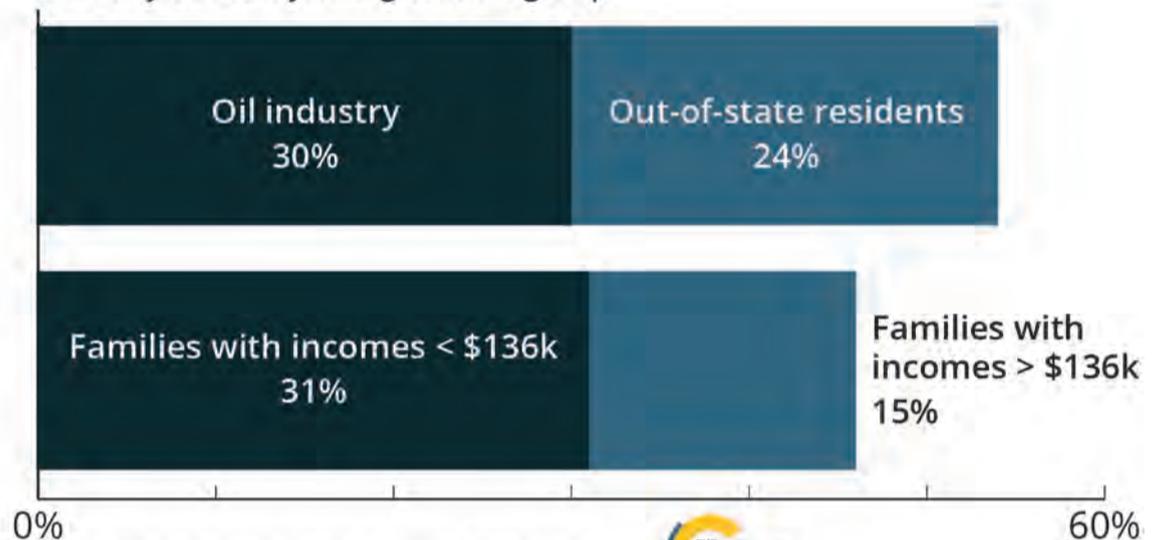


## NEWS

### Off Target: Majority of “Savings” Flow to Oil Industry and People Outside of Virginia

54% of benefits under proposed three-month gas tax suspension will not reach Virginia families

Share of tax cuts flowing to each group



Source: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, March 2022



# Fossil Fuel Fiesta

## Governor proposes gas-tax holiday, but will Virginians benefit?

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE CONNECTION

A majority of savings from Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s proposed three-month gas tax holiday would not go to Virginians according to data compiled by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy and the Commonwealth Institute. By looking at the experience of Illinois and Indiana, the groups determined that the oil industry and out-of-state drivers would drive into the sunset with a majority of the benefit. That would leave Virginians with an estimated 46 percent of the profits.

“If we get rid of the state retail gas tax, which is around 26 cents per gallon, the price of gas would not automatically go down by 26 cents per gallon,” said Chris Wodicka, a senior policy analyst at the Commonwealth Institute. “So that difference would effectively go to oil companies for them to add to their bottom line.”

Rather than pass savings along to motorists, oil producers would end up raking in about a third of the

profits. But that doesn’t mean Virginia drivers will get to reap the rest of the benefits. Because Virginia is a tourist destination with three interstate highways, about a quarter of the remaining savings would be taken by people who don’t live in Virginia.

“A significant slice of Virginia’s gas tax isn’t paid by Virginians in the first place. It’s paid by tourists headed down to Williamsburg or Virginia Beach. It’s paid by truckers headed up and down I-81, passing along their higher transportation costs to, in many cases, out-of-state residents.”

A HISTORIC \$2.6 billion surplus created a massive windfall for lawmakers, who are usually fighting over dwindling resources. This year, though, they got to fight over how to spend a giant pot of money. Republicans argued for tax cuts; Democrats pressed for services.

Lawmakers left town last month without coming to an agreement, and then the governor suggested a three-month gas tax holiday.

“Virginians need tax relief and it’s time for the General Assembly to act on the multiple tax relief proposals,” said

the governor in a written statement. “With gas prices and inflation squeezing families’ pocket books across Virginia and the nation and with over \$1 billion in unanticipated revenue in our transportation fund, the General Assembly must act now.”

**“Higher gas prices really hurt people, and people really notice it. It is so much more visible a tax than what’s withheld from your paycheck. As a result, politicians have to be acutely sensitive to gas prices.”**

— Stephen Farnsworth, director of the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington

SEE FOSSIL FUEL FIESTA, PAGE 11  
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# Rishika Singh, McLean Eagle Scout

**R**ishika Singh, a 15-year-old is the first girl to have become an Eagle Scout from Troop 128 and is a freshman at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. Scouts from troop 128 both the BT128 (Boys Troop) and the GT128 (Girls Troop) showed their tremendous support in making this project a reality with guidance from adult troop leaders like Mr. Balleisen, Mr. Brooke, Mr. Barre and Ms. Thomas.

Rishika chose this project as she aspires to be either a cardiologist or Oncologist and serving these patients especially the kids is something that is very close to her heart. She chose, "Ivy lily pads" as her Eagle project for which she reached out to many hospitals in the Washington DC area and finally chose Inova Schar Cancer Institute as her beneficiary. She setup a GoFund <https://gofund.me/211ca6e8> account to raise funds and promote her project. She also plans to deliver a few Ivy Lily Pads each year to local hospitals going forward.

Lily pads are wooden circular blocks that sit on the base of an I.V. pole and allow children who are tired and are not up to walking on their own to use the pole as a mode of transportation. These kids require transfusions which may take from couple of hours to all day. Nick Konkler from Washington first came up with the idea, Nick designed IV pole lily pads to help little kids fighting cancer. He died before he could make them, but his family and friends at Auburn River-

side High School brought his dream to life. Every year, around the anniversary of his passing, his mom and friends fundraise in his memory.

Becoming an Eagle Scout is one of the highest accomplishments a young person can achieve. Rishika would join her brother Amrit Raj Singh and enjoy all his cub scout activities without being able to officially join the troop because girls were not included.

As soon as they allowed girls to join, she became a member of a very loving group of kids.

She loves to play sports, especially soccer and basketball.

Gerald R. Ford, the first Eagle Scout to become President of the United States, once said that the principles "which scouting encourages - self-discipline, teamwork and moral and patriotic values - are the building

blocks of character."

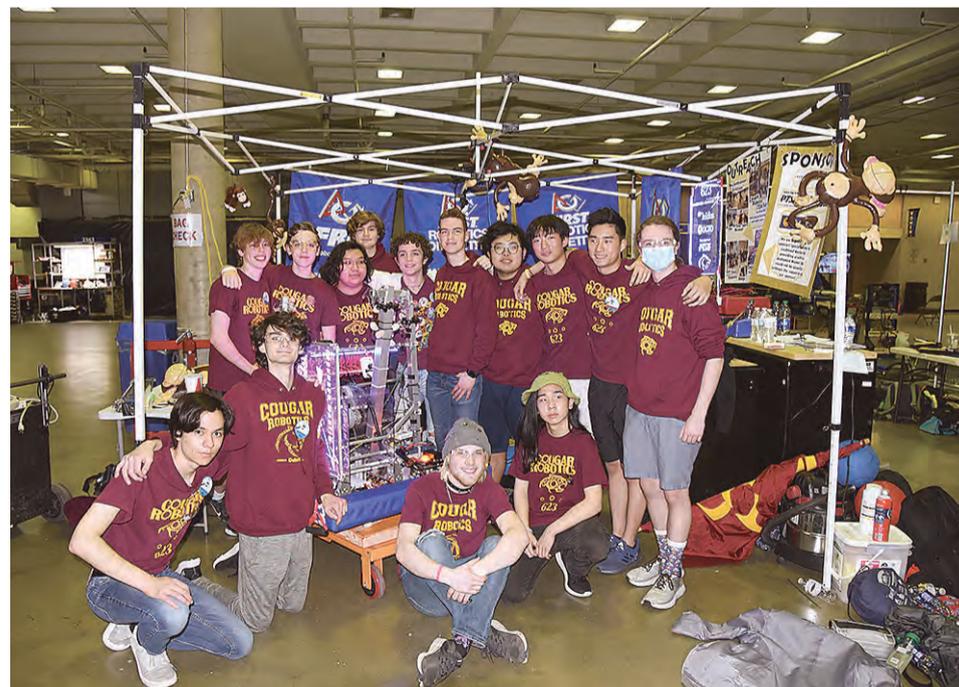
To reach the milestone of Eagle Scout takes years of hard work and discipline, culminating in a final project to hone leadership and organizational skills while fostering a habit of community service. Because the idea is to promote the scout's leadership abilities, Eagle candidates are allowed to recruit volunteers to help them complete the projects.



# Climbing to the Top with 'George' the Robot

**O**akton High School's Cougar Robotics Team 623 is going to battle it out at the World Championship in Houston, TX against teams from all over the world. For 21 years, Oakton High School has had the Cougar Robotics Club, which promotes STEM. The club competes in a world-wide competition called FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology). FIRST is an international youth organization that was developed to inspire students in engineering and technology fields while instilling their core tenets of gracious professionalism and cooperative competition. It combines the excitement of sport with the rigors of science and technology and has created the ultimate Sport of the Mind. Oakton High School supports three separate robotics teams within the Club. Since the Pandemic started, the Club wasn't able to build a brand new robot, lacking access to the school for many months. The international program FIRST, also altered their plans, since no one could support large-scale events. The Club was excited in late 2021, when they were able to compete at off-season events with the robot that was built by students that had graduated in 2020 and 2021. The Cougar Robotics team was very successful in off-season, winning both the Battle O' Baltimore and the CHSy Champs.

January started a new season, called



**Oakton High School's Cougar Robotics Team 623 will head to the World Championships in Houston**

Rapid React, with a brand new game and new objectives for the robot to accomplish. This year the students, lead by the only Senior, Captain Carson Graham, was up for the challenge. With an all-new build team, several new programmers, and a few kind-of nervous mentors, the students collabo-

rated and engineered a brand new robot from scratch.

Teams are given six weeks to design, build and program a robot to meet new game challenges. This year's challenges include picking up and shooting 'cargo' at a hub in the center of the playing field, and tra-

versing ascending monkey bars to earn big points during end game.

The Cougars battled it out in DC at two different qualification competitions against 20 other teams, taking home the win at the final qualifier. Their robot, that they lovingly call "George" (since it can climb all four of the monkey bars), has gained great respect by the judges at each event. The team has been awarded the Quality Award, which celebrates machine robustness in concept and fabrication; and also the Creativity Award sponsored by Rockwell Automation which celebrates creativity that enhances strategy of play.

Oakton's Cougar Robotics team earned enough points to score themselves a spot at the First Chesapeake District Championships this past week in Hampton, VA. Saturday night, after three long days of successful matches,

Cougar Robotics learned that they had won another Quality Award and earned themselves a top ranking of 5th in the District, out of 112 teams. The Cougars were ecstatic to learn that their accomplishments had secured them a ticket to the World Championship competition, which begins April 20th, where they will compete against hundreds of teams from all over the world.

Congratulations to Oakton's Cougar Robotics team on your journey for World Domination!

## A Basic Foundation

DELEGATE KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM



Last week was spring break for my two elementary school-age grandchildren. When they visited us mid-week and learned that I would be away for the last two days of the week to attend the Virginia Forum, they wondered aloud why I would want to attend something that sounded like school when it was supposed to be vacation time. I explained that I like learning new things and that I always learn something new about Virginia's history when I attend the Forum. It is like school, graduate school that is, when historians and scholars present papers and discussions are held on the latest research on Virginia's past. The critical discussions would never meet the standards of the censors that occupy the State Department of Education who with the approval of the governor are about getting controversy and divisive theories out of the classroom.

The other reason I attend the Virginia Forum every year that I did not take the time to explain

to my young grandchildren is that I believe a basic and sound foundation for our future can only be accomplished to the degree to which we honestly examine and understand our past. Certainly the history of the Commonwealth is filled with the glorification of events, a Lost Cause movement to cover up the reasons for and consequences of major events, and political movements that tell the stories that will keep certain interests in power. Nonpartisan and essentially nonpolitical historians, researchers, and scholars at Virginia Forum examine in astonishing detail the events of our past with a close examination of documented facts. So much of the state's written history is totally male-dominated and whitewashed. At the Forum we learned of the incredible research and writing of Suzanne Lebsack who helps us understand the important role that women who we have not heard from previously played in the building of our state and country. Others presented papers on white supremacy that prevailed during most of our history.

Knowing factually what happened in the past

can help us from making the same mistakes again. A governor was elected with the promise of getting rid of parole in our justice system and thereby lowering crime. He succeeded in effectively eliminating parole, and we have prisons stuffed with people who with little or no risk could be returned to society as productive citizens. The legislature is now attempting to have honest debate about the impact of a no-parole policy, but that easy-answer political slogan still resonates with people who are not well informed. Parole needs very much to be reformed, not eliminated, in order that it can be part of a criminal justice system that is restorative. Nonpartisan history of the problem can help us understand how it can be a positive part of our criminal justice system.

Another governor got elected on a simple slogan of "End the car tax." He was successful in getting nearly a billion dollars — which continues to be appropriated even today — that the state uses for paying the local car tax. It was a very unpopular tax, but the political answer denies the education budget a million dollars every year.

To the extent to which we can honestly understand the past, we can build a strong basic foundation for the future.

## Despite Challenging Start Alcorn Doubles Down

JOHN LOVAAS



Barely halfway through his term as Hunter Mill District Supervisor, Walter Alcorn has announced plans to seek re-election in November 2023 to a second 4-year term. It's a demanding job

which pays \$95,000/year for the theoretically part time work. Having known him for 25 years, back to when I briefly considered running for Supervisor, I was curious and talked with him about his decision.

His start as Supervisor was hardly auspicious. It coincided with the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic. Building chemistry for an effective Board of Supervisors, four of whom were newcomers, proved difficult in part due to all-virtual work. Still, he feels he's been able to get some things done. Looking around Reston, I agree. I see tangible improvements, e.g., gaps filled with sidewalks so needed in Reston, improvements in bike safety with added lanes, and intersection signals and crosswalks. He proudly notes a joint initiative with Supervisor John Foust to get the County to commit \$100 million to pedestrian and bicycle safety over the next five years.

A priority Alcorn goal was cre-

### THE INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE

ating a "community-driven" process to prepare an update of the Reston Comprehensive Plan to guide land-use decisions for a generation — to a time when our still unin-

corporated settlement's population is likely to surpass 100,000. Good progress to report here. A first draft plan is in hand, written largely by reps of community organizations with a notably smaller developer role than in the last plan. The Task Force is likely to reduce some densities further from transit stations and to establish an ultimate target Reston population in the 110,000-120,000 range. Equity, a current County buzzword is assured throughout with little explanation of how it is assured. Natural open space will shrink relatively but we are assured that there will always be two fully 18-hole golf courses!

### New plan ETA-Fall 2022.

Alcorn pledged to continue to make affordable housing a priority. Homelessness, a perennial problem in wealthy Fairfax, has been the subject of grand initiatives with mixed results. Most eligible beneficiaries have incomes up to the

county median level, \$100,000. People earning Virginia's minimum wage, \$11/hour, even with two in a household, are not served by such programs, and need much lower cost units. Mr. Alcorn has an innovative idea for addressing them. He suggests repurposing long-vacant commercial space into basic home units for transitional housing for lower income homeless people. As I write this column, tents occupied by homeless people have sprung up outside his office. Yet, to date he has found no traction for his common-sense idea, nor any compelling reason not to try it, he tells me.

Sometimes private business groups pose difficult challenges. For example, he's been unable to engage Reston Town Center ownership on questions about their puzzling public parking policies which have kept Restonians away and discouraged formerly popular businesses, many of which have left. Most recent examples are Chicos, Clyde's and Bowtie Theatre.

In Lake Anne, the Supervisor has been forthcoming, conditionally offering county assistance for Reston's original village center to address critical aging infrastruc-

SEE A L CORN. PAGE 5

### Let Us Know Your View

Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name. Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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## OPINION

# Despite Challenging Start Alcorn Doubles Down

FROM PAGE 4

ture. Dealing with feuding groups in the Condo association has not been easy. Unfortunately, in one case he may have fueled tensions by appearing to put his hand on the scale to tilt a Board election in favor of one side in the voting, and in another he's commissioned consultants to recommend a "sustainable" model for the village center, mentioning, e.g., becoming an arts center. The scope of work was discussed with neither the Condo Board nor the merchants potentially most affected. Some fence mending seems in order to successfully move forward.

What, I asked, made him decide to run again. His main reason is that he wants to see initiatives that he has worked on actually implemented, and it was taking more time and effort than anticipated

to get things done on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

I asked him if he had a re-election fundraising goal and to outline his approach to fundraising. It's too early to have a goal, not knowing what opposition he might have, and he plans no changes in approach from what he used the first time around. I was pleasantly surprised that he had raised a lot in small, non-special interest money and almost nothing from land development interests for his first campaign.

Mr. Alcorn clearly has learned the political game. For example, he hired one of his stronger primary opponents on his staff, likely neutralizing her. Another of his staffers was recently elected Chair of the local Democratic Party, discouraging competition from that area. He is ready for another campaign.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Request: Lower Tax Rate by 10 Cents to \$1.04

My wife and I have been homeowners and taxpayers in Fairfax County since 1968. We are retired and living on a fixed income. Therefore, I wish to protest the increases in the Fairfax County budget and real estate taxes. From the year 2000 to 2020, real estate taxes have increased approximately three times the inflation rate and household income. This year my assessment increased 12.84%. The County Board wants to keep the real estate tax rate at \$1.14 per \$100 of assessed value which means that the average tax bill would increase by \$666. Based on the tax rate of \$1.14, my tax bill will be \$1,142 greater than last year which is outrageous. I understand that overall tax assessments increased an average of 9.5% countywide. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Consumer Price Index (inflation rate) for the year 2021 was 4.7%. So, for many years I have seen the real estate taxes usually increase two to three times the inflation rate, year after year and decade after decade.

I request that you lower the tax rate by 10 cents to \$1.04.

Last year in FY22, the Adopted Budget Plan of General Funds Disbursements was \$4,527,325,441 and for FY2023 the General Funds Disbursements is \$4,776,728,869, an increase of \$249,403,428. or  
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5.2% over FY 2022 Adopted Budget Plan. This increase is greater than the inflation rate of 4.7% for calendar year 2021. For many years, I have seen the County and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) budgets usually increase two to three times the inflation rate, however this year is an exception. Nevertheless, in an overall \$9 billion budget, you should be able to reduce it.

The County is proposing to issue more bonds in 2023 and future years. For FY 2023, the County debt for bond interest is \$43.9 million or 2.8% of the county budget. In the good times as the economy booms, why does the County feel they must keep issuing bonds? I have read that Fairfax County wants taxpayers to approve a \$180 million bond issue for WMATA this November but has so far failed to respond on how these funds will be used. Is this true?

The FCPS has had reductions in students over the past two years and is now down to approximately 178,000 students. As I understand, the FCPS has had a reduction of around 10,000 students and yet the FCPS budget continues to rise. Why is that?

**Charles McAndrew**  
Oak Hill  
Board Member of the Fairfax  
County Taxpayers Alliance



## 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
SCOTT	16685	619	BIG STONY CREEK ROAD	BRANCH	3/30/2022
BLAND	3048	604	WALKERS CREEK ROAD	BIG WALKER CREEK #3	3/28/2022
WASHINGTON	19036	616	WALNUT GROVE ROAD	NORDYKE CREEK	3/28/2022
SMYTH	17394	16	B.F. BUCHANAN HIGHWAY	WHITE OAK BRANCH	3/23/2022
WASHINGTON	18891	58	GATE CITY HIGHWAY	BRANCH	3/23/2022
CRAIG	5503	615	CRAIGS CREEK ROAD	MILL CREEK	3/11/2022

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.*

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Fairfax County Park Authority holds its Bluebells at the Bend Festival at Riverbend Park on Saturday, April 9.



Hikers head back toward the Riverbend Visitors Center.

# Annual Bluebells at The Bend Returns

**Festival at Riverbend Park 2022.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Fairfax County Park Authority held its Bluebells at the Bend Festival 2022 on Saturday, April 9. The famous wildflower bluebell walks rivaled the use of the eagle scope set up on the Potomac Heritage Trail for visitors to catch a glimpse of bald eagles. A mated pair has returned on Minnehaha Island and built a nest, visible from the trail.

The island is a three-acre plot of land in the middle of the Potomac River that Potomac Conservancy has protected with a conservation easement. One parent has been seen fishing for food, while the other has been seen warming up the eggs or eaglets.

When children were not hiking the trails or using the scope, they were entertained by exhibits, music by Andrew McKnight, a puppet show, meeting live animals, nature crafts, magnet fishing, and a ninja course.

Families attended the festival for multiple reasons. Brook Crespo of Springfield brought her children Ava, 7, and Max, 4. “We came before the pandemic, and Ava loved it. So, we came back,” Crespo said.

Katherine Connell, an Arlington resident, came to buy nursery-grown bluebells for her preschool class at Clarendon Child Care Center. The Friends of Riverbend Park was selling potted nursery-grown bluebells on the deck of the Visitors Center for the benefit of Riverbend Park.



Alexandra Guano, Adriana Ramirez, Daniel Alvarez, 5, and Miguel Alvarez, 3, of Fairfax and Annandale.

“This is for our spring planting done by 2 ½ to 5 year-olds,” Connell said. The plant, Connell said, would be large enough for the children to handle, and they would be able to watch the flowers bud and bloom.

Adriana Ramirez of Fairfax and Alexandra Guano of Annandale, along with Daniel Alvarez, 5, and Miguel Alvarez, 3, had never been to the Bluebell Festival and thought it would be an excellent outing on a beautiful spring morning, as did the Ger family.



The Ger family (from left) Lyla, Jonathan, Mason, Derek, Dreama and Blair enjoy the scenery at Bluebells at the Bend- Festival at Riverbend Park 2022.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS



Ava Crespo, 7, and Max Crespo, 4, of Springfield, check out small critters that live in the stream with Danielle Wynne at the exhibit for watershed education and outreach. Wynne is an ecologist with Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services.

## Festival at Riverbend Park 2022



Katherine Connell of Arlington reaches out for the bluebell plant from Hugh Morrow III, president of Friends of Riverbend Park.



Youngsters visit the outdoor classroom meeting a turtle that appears very interested in them.

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# Creating an Elegant and ADHD-friendly Home

Designers share tips for combining style and effective organization.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

Large, plastic storage containers often come to mind when decluttering and organizing one's home. While effective, those receptacles might look unsightly sitting in the middle of the living room or in the corner of the dining room.

For an adult with ADHD, managing clutter and organization can be particularly difficult. Combining those challenges with the desire for an elegant interior can be particularly daunting. Local designers offer ideas for using storage containers to achieve that goal.

**HOME LIFESTYLE** storage containers to achieve that goal.

"Think of them as an opportunity to be creative with a home's décor," said Anne Walker of Anne Walker Design. "Storage solutions are a wonderful way to add color and visual interest to living spaces."

Use boxes in bright colors to hold papers, pens and other office supplies, suggests Walker. "Arranging the boxes in groups on open shelves makes them easy to access and very functional,

**"Think of them as an opportunity to be creative with a home's décor. Storage solutions are a wonderful way to add color and visual interest to living spaces."**

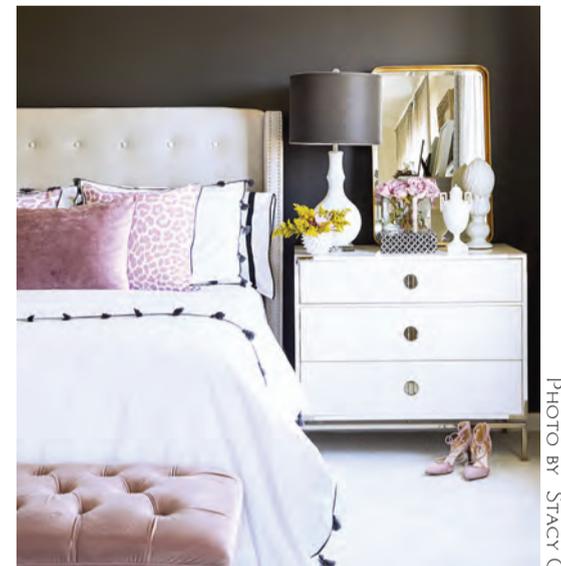
— Anne Walker of Anne Walker Design.

she said. [Placing] labels on each box makes organization quick and easy."

A bedside table can become a cluttered eye sore when topped with a pile of items like books, magazines, tissue or lip balm. "Try [using] small dressers for night stands so that you have more storage space," said interior designer Sallie Lord of GreyHunt Interiors. "We love using boxes on night stands that store your favorite items such as nighttime lotion or keep sakes or jewelry."

When one needs a storage space that keeps items visible, Lord recommends open shelving. "They can be added to each room and they have a chic look," she said. "This works particularly well in the bathroom and kitchen. They are both pretty and functional. In the kitchen they can be used to hold cooking utensils and mixing bowls. In the bathroom they can hold a toothbrush and toothpaste."

Ideally a dining room should be used to house traditional items such as china, silver and table linens. If space is an issue in one's home a dining room table must be used for completing homework or playing family games, someone with



Small boxes on a night stand can be used to store jewelry or nighttime necessities.

PHOTO BY STACY GOLDBERG



Placing labeled boxes in groups on an open shelf makes them functional and easily accessible.

PHOTO BY ANNE WALKER



The box on this coffee table helps prevent clutter while blending seamlessly into the room's decor.

PHOTO BY CHRISTY KOSNIC

ADHD might allow the space to become overrun with clutter unless a designated storage is conveniently located. "A low cabinet in a color and style that is consistent with the decor of the rest of the room is the perfect storage space, said Lord.

For someone with ADHD, returning household items to their appropriate location is necessary for maintaining organization. "For example, in addition to having a space for papers in your home office, you have to set aside a specific time each day to clean up those papers and return them to that space, said therapist Carol Barnaby, LCSW.

# Coalition for TJ Files Emergency Request to Vacate the 4th Circuit Stay

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**O**n April 8, Pacific Legal Foundation, counsel for Coalition for TJ, filed an emergency request in the Supreme Court of the United States in the case Coalition for TJ v. Fairfax County School Board. According to the coalition's lawsuit, the admissions process is designed to reduce the number of Asian American students admitted to TJ, violating their constitutional rights. The case is to vacate the March 31 stay pending an appeal by the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit (No. 22-1280) by U.S. District Judge Claude Hilton.

Coalition for TJ v. Fairfax County School Board challenged the new admissions plan (2020) for students applying to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJ).

"The Fourth Circuit's decision to allow TJ's discriminatory process to continue will cause significant harm to the students who are going through the admissions process for the next school year," said Pacific Legal Foundation attorney Glenn Rope in a statement on April 8. "The district court decision found a clear constitutional violation, and we hope that the Supreme Court will agree that this stay should be vacated, and the discriminatory process halted while the case proceeds."

TJ is an elite magnet school. As the Virginia Governor School for Science and Technology in Northern Virginia, the Virginia Department of Education supports the school. Fairfax County School Board administers the program and TJ serves other school districts, including Arlington, Loudoun, Prince William counties, and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church. TJ has been named among the best high schools in the country.

On March 31, 2022, a three-judge panel of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, under the direction of federal Judge Toby Heytens and concurred by Judge Robert King, voted 2-1 to grant a stay pending an appeal to the Fairfax County School Board (the School Board) and Scott Brabrand, in his official capacity as Superintendent of the Fairfax County School Board, against Coalition for TJ. Judge Allison Jones Rushing, the panel's third judge, voted to deny the March 31 motion.

The 4th Circuit order on March 31 did not overturn the U.S. district court's decision by Judge Claude Hilton Feb. 25, 2022 disallowing the new admissions policies. But the or-



Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJ), located in Alexandria.

der was put on hold while considering the school board's appeal.

The School Board may continue to use the challenged admissions plan for students applying to TJ, according to the March 31 judgment.

Coalition for TJ issued a statement following the 4th Circuit judges' 2-1 decision, stating that "Judge Toby Heytens and Judge Robert Bruce King of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals have made a grave error in allowing Fairfax County Public Schools to continue its illegal admissions process that discriminates against Asian American students applying to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. If the judges' decision stands, we would see Fairfax County Public Schools usher in a second class of students to America's No. 1 public high school through an unconstitutional race-based admissions process."

Judge Heytens filed a concurring opinion for the March 31 vote, writing in part, "I believe the public interest favors a stay given the timing and logistical constraints inherent in repealing the current admissions policy and implementing a new one so close to the end of the current admissions cycle. Thousands of students and their families will be thrown into disarray for the next several months if the district court's order is not stayed."

On Oct. 25, 2021, applications for the TJ Class of 2026 opened with applications due by Dec. 15, 2021. Students should receive notification of their admission status this month, April 2022, according to FCPS.

In her dissenting opinion, Judge Rushing stated, "Everyone — even temporarily frustrated applicants and their families

— ultimately benefits from a public-school admissions process not tainted by unconstitutional discrimination."

According to Judge Heytens, undisputed data presented to the district court demonstrate that a higher percentage of Asian American students were admitted than applied, even under the current plan. He wrote in his opinion, "Taking all this into account, it seems the more prudent course is to allow the current admissions cycle to proceed according to settled expectations and require a change, if any, beginning with the next class."

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology admissions had been questioned for decades because of the demographics of the student body which included only a tiny percentage of economically disadvantaged students.

For example, in 2015, Fairfax County Public Schools said 8 percent of applicants and 1.2 percent of those admitted qualify for free and reduced meals. Of all students in Fairfax County, by comparison, more than 28 percent received free and reduced meals at the time.

Numbers of Black and Latino students were also very low. The admitted class of 2019 was 2.4 percent Hispanic, 1.6 percent Black.

In 2003, nearly 20 years ago, the Fairfax County School Board established a Blue Ribbon panel of experts to study the disparities and make recommendations. But revamped admissions policies made little change in the disparities.

It wasn't until qualitative changes in the admissions process in 2020 that change

was reflected in the makeup of TJ's student body, with students entering in 2021 for the class of 2025. Black students increased from 1.23 percent (2020-21) to 7.09 percent. Hispanic students increased from 3.29 percent (2020-21) to 11.27 percent. The number of economically disadvantaged students [those eligible to receive reduced-price or free meals at school] increased from slightly greater than 0.5 percent (0.62 in 2020-21) to 25.09 percent.

Every middle school in the Fairfax County Public School division was represented at TJ as seats in the Class of 2025 were allocated for the top 1.5 percent of applicants from every middle school's eighth-grade student population. Students from historically under-represented schools increased to 30.73 percent versus 5.56 percent (2020-21).

The Coalition for TJ filed a federal lawsuit against the School Board with the help of the Pacific Legal Foundation, claiming that the School Board's changes were specifically designed to reduce the percentage of Asian American students who enroll at TJ, to equalize the school per Fairfax County's racial demographics.

The New York Times reported that the Pacific Legal Foundation is behind multiple lawsuits that challenge elite public high schools changing their admissions policies to diversify their student body. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/16/us/school-admissions-affirmative-action.html?smid=url-share>

In February, a federal judge struck down the new admissions policy. But late in March, the U.S. Court of Appeals issued a stay, allowing the current applications, already in process for the class of 2026, to move forward under the invalidated admissions process.

The Coalition for TJ filed on April 8, 2022 an emergency request with the U.S. Supreme Court to vacate the Fourth Circuit's stay (March 31, 2022).

According to Pacific Legal Foundation, the Supreme Court is expected to rule on the coalition's emergency request in the coming weeks.

Even if the Supreme Court does not vacate the stay, the Fourth Circuit or Supreme Court could ultimately agree with the district court judge that TJ's revised admissions policy is unlawful, says Pacific Legal in its online statement. Pacific Legal Foundation adds that it expects a Fourth Circuit decision on the school board's appeal around the end of the year.

# CALENDAR

## NOW THRU APRIL 28

A collection of paintings by Layla Gray and Coty Dickson entitled "The Four Seasons" is on display at the Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, VA 22066. The public can view this collection of favorite seasonal paintings in the library's large meeting room from now through Thursday, April 28, 2022 during regular library hours. Contact Coty Dickson at cotyndickson@gmail.com for additional information.



In rehearsal for VTC's "Death of a Salesman," opening April 22, are actors Patrick Killoran as Biff, Tom Flatt as Will Loman, Gayle Nichols-Grimes portraying Linda and Michael Angeloni as Happy.

## NOW THRU APRIL 16

Photos with the Easter Bunny. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean, Fashion Court, Level 1 near Nordstrom. Tysons Corner Center welcomes the Easter Bunny back on March 18th. Visit the Bunny for an unforgettable family photo experience. The option to pre-book your appointment is available and recommended to reduce wait time. The Bunny will be available Monday - Saturday from 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. and Sunday from 12 p.m. - 6 p.m.

## NOW THRU APRIL 30

The Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park invite the public to participate in its 2022 photo contest. Help celebrate all that is special about the farm with the second "Focus on the Farm" fundraiser. Open to photographers of all ages and abilities, capture the beauty and farm life at Frying Pan Farm Park. The categories include nature, landscape and scenery, and farm animals. Photos must be taken, and entries submitted between March 1 and April 30, 2022. You can enter up to 10 photos. The fee is \$7 per entry for adults, and \$5 per entry for children up to age 16. Go to the Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park website for information; or email the Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park at friends@fryingpanpark.org. Frying Pan Park is located at 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Call 703-437-9101.

## APRIL 1-17

"Nat Turner in Jerusalem." Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday at 2 p.m. At NextStop Theatre Company, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. This powerful play delves into an important moment in American history, which has continued to shake the conscience of the nation for almost two centuries. Through powerful performances, audiences are invited to take part in a deep exploration of human morality and the grim reality of the past. Visit the website: <https://www.nextstoptheatre.org/nat-turner-in-jerusalem>

## APRIL 14-MAY 8

"The Mamalogues." Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 and 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. At 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. In this satirical comedy, three friends share the joys, challenges, and anxieties of being middle class single Black mothers in predominantly white suburbs. The story celebrates motherhood and community while exploring racial profiling on the playground and supporting your kid who is perpetually the Only Black Child (OBC). Follow their journey as they lean in and steer their children from pampers to college while navigating their own road toward retirement. Visit [www.1ststage.org](http://www.1ststage.org).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 23

Clifton Lions Club Family Pancake Breakfast. 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. At Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton. Cost is \$10 per adult; \$5 per child. Proceeds go to charity.

## FRIDAY/APRIL 15

Blood Drive. 1-6 p.m. At McLean Community Center, McLean. McLean Community Center is helping the American Red Cross with Diverse Blood Donations! It is urgent for donors of all ethnicities to support patients in need. Join MCC and support the community with your lifesaving blood donation. All donors will receive a \$10 Amazon Gift Card via email. For an appointment, call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 16

Model Train Open House. 1-5 p.m. At Vienna Train Station, 231 Dominion Road, NE, Vienna. Stop by the Historic Vienna Train Station where you can see and hear HO scale model trolleys and trains including Thomas and some of his friends on display and in operation. Great family fun and activity for the young and young-at-heart. Hosted by the Northern Virginia Model Railroaders. See [www.nvmr.org](http://www.nvmr.org).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 16

Hoppy Egg Hunting. 9:30-11:30 a.m. At Bready Park, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Egg Hunt Times: Age 5-7 at 9:45 a.m.; Age 3-4 at 10:30 a.m., and walking-2 at 11:15 a.m. Activities include an egg hunt, craft projects, story time, a petting zoo, coloring mural, potting station, and photos with the Easter bunny. Bring a basket or bag to collect eggs. Pre-registration is highly encouraged. Visit [herndon-va.gov/recreation](https://www.herndon-va.gov/recreation) or call 703-787-7300.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 16

Green Reston. 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. At the plaza in front of RCC Hunters Woods. Join in a fun and eco-friendly family event to mark Earth Day. Come learn about sustainable living and eco-friendly alternatives for household items. Kids' events include decorating a birdhouse to take home, face painting and making a container garden. Free; registration required. To register, visit [myRCC.com](http://myRCC.com).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 16

MCC Adult Board Candidate Meet & Greet. 10-11:45 a.m. Come meet the candidates for our upcoming board elections in the McLean Room at McLean Community Center, McLean. We have nine adult

candidates running for three board seats. This is an opportunity for you to chat with our candidates, ask them any questions you have regarding their candidacy, share your feedback on what you love about MCC, as well as what you'd like to see improved.

## APRIL 16-17

Easter Eggstravaganza. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Roer's Zoofari, 1228 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. Roer's Zoofari invites the Reston community to its annual Easter Eggstravaganza. Adult Admission - \$30, Child Admission - \$20, Member Adult - \$5, Member Child - \$5. Visit the website: <https://www.roerszoofari.com/easter-2022/>

## APRIL 22 TO MAY 7

"Death of a Salesman." Presented by Vienna Theatre Company. At 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. Show times are: 8 p.m.: Fridays and Saturdays: April 22, 23, 29, 30; May 6, 7, 2022; 2 p.m.: Sundays: May 1, May 8, 2022. Arthur Miller's 1949 Pulitzer Prize-winning drama about the tragic shortcomings of an American dreamer, is widely considered to be one of the greatest plays of the 20th century. Purchase tickets at [viennava.gov/webtrac](http://viennava.gov/webtrac), in person at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. SE during open hours, or before each performance if available. Visit [www.viennatheatrecompany.org](http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org).

## APRIL 22-24

ValeArts Show. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Old Vale Schoolhouse, 3124 Fox Mill Road, Oakton. The exhibit, Colorful Journeys, will be bursting in springtime colors at this historic venue. Admirers of all ages are welcome to view paintings in oil, watercolor, mixed media, encaustic, and acrylic to delight the eye and stir the senses. All paintings are for sale. Visit <https://www.valearts.com> for more information.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 23

Earth Day McLean—Act Locally. 9 a.m.–noon. At McLean Community Center, McLean. Free admission for MCC district residents; registration is required. This drive-through, outdoor, environmental action event provides a convenient way for McLean residents to better the planet. Several local community businesses and organizations will provide four key facets of environmental health in the spirit of shredding, reusing, recycling and planting.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 23

Parks and Sugarland Run Cleanup Day. 9 a.m. to noon. At Runnymede Park, 195 Herndon Parkway,

Herndon. Join your fellow community members and help cleanup parks, Sugarland Run watershed, and stream locations. Meet at Runnymede Park for supplies and assignments, then work on your own to help care for one of the eleven parks or three trails in Herndon. They'll be picking up litter, removing non-native invasive plants, and otherwise refreshing our parks as we head into spring. Visit [herndon-va.gov/recreation](http://herndon-va.gov/recreation), or call 703-787-7300.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 23

Roomful of Blues. 8 p.m. At Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. A Roomful Of Blues is filled with soaring blues, zydeco twists, late-night ballads, Latin-tinged funk and a touch of vintage, fifth-gear rock 'n' roll. Tickets are \$25-\$35. Website: [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 23

Doodle POP 4 p.m. At McLean Community Center, McLean. A mischievous duo starts to doodle... and ends up creating a whole imaginative world! They invite the audience along on their sea adventure with a tiny little turtle. What will happen as we follow their vivid drawings into this beautiful watery world, and will they return the turtle to the sea safely? Doodle POP is a touching and playful nonverbal show that uses live musicians to perform the accompanying score and sound effects. Created by BRUSH Theatre of South Korea.

## APRIL 23-24

Yard Sale and Giveaway Day. Gate Post Estates is will be coupling a Giveaway Day with their annual yard sale. The yard sale will take place on Saturday, April 23, beginning at 8 a.m., and the Giveaway Day will be the following day, on Sunday, April 24, beginning at 10 a.m. For the Giveaway Day, residents will place any items they wish to donate to the community in front of their homes and mark them with a "Giveaway" or "Free" sign. Gate Post Estates is located off of Route 29, across from the Centreville Baptist Church.

## APRIL 23-24

Spring Book Sale. At Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Dr., Centreville. Saturday, April 23 and Sunday, April 24, 10 a.m. - 5

p.m. Children's books, teen and adult fiction, classics, poetry & literature, nonfiction, DVDs, audio books and CDs. No scanners or other electronic price-checking allowed. Cash, check and credit cards accepted.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 24

Vocal Quartet Concert. 4-5:30 p.m. At Church of the Holy Comforter, 543 Beulah Road, NE, Vienna. Concert by the vocal quartet Third Practice, featuring the Hermit Songs of Samuel Barber and other works from the Renaissance to the present day that express longing for both solitude and connection. Visit the website: <https://holycomforter.com/music/>

## SUNDAY/APRIL 24

10th Annual McLean Chocolate Festival. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At the McLean Community Center, McLean. Taste the specialties of area chocolatiers and enjoy fun for the whole family. The youngest attendees can enjoy a children's game room. The McLean Chocolate Festival is a fundraiser for the McLean Rotary, with proceeds benefiting many local organizations. Cost: \$2 admission. Visit: [www.mcleanchocolatefestival.com](http://www.mcleanchocolatefestival.com).

## SATURDAY/MAY 7

Celebrate Pilates Day. At RTR Pilates, 9849 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Register for one of three free trial reformer classes at RTRPilates.com/PilatesDay. Check out the studio, shop great retail, sip champagne and meet our community.

## MAY 21-22

Girls on the Run Spring Registration. GOTR NOVA will be offering an in-person, 10-week curriculum for the Spring 2022 season. Two in-person 5Ks presented by Cigna will be held on May 21st and 22nd in Sterling and Ballston, respectively. Teams will continue to be school and community-based to further our outreach efforts in being accessible to every girl across Northern Virginia. Currently, 105 teams throughout Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, Loudoun, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William are open for Spring 2022 registration through March 1, 2022. For more information about spring registration and sites for Girls on the Run of NOVA, visit [www.gotrnova.org](http://www.gotrnova.org).

## 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.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 24

Hunger Conversation Project. 5-6:30 p.m. At Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. Conversation with Ramona Carroll from the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood/Community Services about hunger in Vienna and the surrounding community. Stay to pack care bags for those in need. Free. Visit the website: [andrewchapelumc.org](http://andrewchapelumc.org)

## SHEPHERD'S CENTER SPRING CLASSES

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia will hold Spring classes

from April 21 to June 9, 2022. All Classes will be held virtually on Zoom and in person at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Registration: April 4-19, 2022. The Spring 2022 semester schedule includes 40-plus classes with a wide range of subjects -- from a Health and Wellness series to National and World Affairs. The following classes are but a few of the classes to choose from:

❖ April 28 - "Sorting Fact from Fiction" - Larry Lipman, AARP

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

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**Legals**

**ABC LICENSE**

Kusshi Pike 7 LLC trading as Kusshi Ko, 8365 Leesburg Pike, Vienna, Fairfax County, Virginia 22182. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Wine & Beer On & Off Premises and Keg license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Tone Chow, Member. Date notice posted at establishment: April 9, 2022. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at [www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or 800-552-3200.

**Legals**

**Legals**

American Towers LLC is proposing to construct a 140-foot monopole telecommunications tower at Old Dominion Drive, Mclean, Fairfax County, VA, in the public ROW. The new tower structure will not be lit and the facility will include a 42-ft by 100-ft lease area and associated easements, along with a 30ft buffer surrounding the lease area. American Towers LLC seeks comments from all interested persons on any potential significant impact the proposed action could have on the quality of the human environment pursuant to 47 C.F.R. Section 1.1307, including potential impacts to historic or cultural resources that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Interested persons may comment or raise concerns about the proposed action by submitting an e-mail to [enviro.services@americantower.com](mailto:enviro.services@americantower.com). Paper comments can be sent to: American Towers LLC, Attn: Environmental Compliance, 10 Presidential Way, Woburn, MA 01801. Requests or comments should be limited to environmental and historic/cultural resource impact concerns and must be received on or before 5/13/2022. This invitation to comment is separate from any local planning/zoning process that may apply to this project.

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**NEWS**

**Purple for Military Kids Day**

**April 20**

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) recognizes all military-connected children in April during the Month of the Military Child. This yearly tradition is part of a national celebration to recognize military children for their resilience, strength, and sacrifices.

April 20, 2022 is designated as Purple Up! For Military Kids Day. FCPS has over 13,500 military-connected youth as part of its student body. These children enrich the school community with their wide-ranging life experiences.

Show support for military children, Purple Up! on April 20. Wear purple as a visible way to show appreciation for military-connected youth. Why purple? Purple symbolizes all branches of the military as a combination of Army green, Marine red, along with Coast Guard, Air Force, Space Force and Navy blue.

**Resources for Military Families**

More information on supports for Military families: [https://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/resources-military-families?utm\\_campaign+=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/resources-military-families?utm_campaign+=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

The Parent Resource Center (PRC) offers a welcoming and engaging environment for families, educators and community members. The PRC provides access to information and resources to support the success of all students, including those with learning challenges, special needs and disabilities. Military families may be interested in the Military Connected Families padlet, as well as the lending library, webinars and other resources. Contact the PRC for more information

Call 703-204-3941  
Email [prc@fcps.edu](mailto:prc@fcps.edu)

**BULLETIN BOARD**

FROM PAGE 9

- ❖ May 5 – “Monarch Butterflies – Life Cycle and Migration” – Scott Schroth
- ❖ May 19 – “Whale Watching in Baja” – Paul Wormeli
- ❖ May 26 – “Vienna African American Trailblazers and Liberty Amendments – Gloria Runyon/Sylvia/DeeDee Students may attend one or all of the all spring classes for a \$55 fee and are encouraged to create their own schedule – attend classes all day or attend only one class. For a complete listing of classes

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

# Fossil Fuel Fiesta

FROM PAGE 2

Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36) briefly tried a parliamentary move he hoped would have prevented lawmakers from considering any bill introduced by the governor during the special session. But after a consultation with Republican Lt. Gov. Winsome Sears, who has the power to rule the amendment out of order, Surovell abandoned his amendment to the procedural resolution. After lawmakers left town, Sen. Steve Newman (R-23) and Del. Tara Durant (R-28) introduced legislation on behalf of the governor to implement a three-month gas tax holiday.

“Higher gas prices really hurt people, and people really notice it. It is so much more visible a tax than what’s withheld from your paycheck,” said Stephen Farnsworth, director of the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington. “As a result, politicians have to be acutely sensitive to gas prices.”

**THE ESTIMATED COST** of the three-month gas tax holiday is \$437 million. The governor plans to pay for the holiday using money from the Commonwealth Transportation Fund, which is expected to take in \$1 billion in unanticipated revenue. The bill seems poised to pass a Republican-controlled House, although Senate Democrats may end up rejecting the bill. Democrats say the Republican governor should not have called lawmakers back to Richmond when budget conferees had not yet reached a compromise.

“The governor thinks he’s still the co-CEO of a company — he’s not, he is the governor of the commonwealth of Virginia, and his glaring incompetence is beginning to harm Virginians,” said DPVA Spokesperson Gianni Snidle. “The governor is wasting taxpayer dollars to play political theater and it needs to stop.”

## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 10

or to register, visit the AIL page on the SCNOVA website at SCNOVA Adventures in Learning Spring 2022 or call the office at 703-281-0538. Visit [www.scnova.org](http://www.scnova.org) or contact the Office at 703-281-0538.

### SATURDAY/APRIL 23

Sen. Mark Warner will host his annual Academy Day on Saturday, April 23, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. This is a virtual event that will be hosted on Accelevents.

The event will offer students, their parents or guardians, and school counselors a comprehensive overview of the United States service academies and their admission processes.

Attendees will have the opportunity to join breakout sessions with representatives from the United States service academies for presentations and an interactive question and answer period. On the main stage, you will hear from representatives from the Virginia congressional delegation about the application procedures for congressional nominations to the academies as well as speakers from the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board, the University of Virginia ROTC programs, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, the Virginia Military Institute, and the Virginia Women’s Institute for Leadership at Mary Baldwin University. There will also be time to speak in more detail with many of these representatives at their virtual resource tables.

Information on the nomination process for the service academies is available on the Senator’s website at [www.warner.senate.gov](http://www.warner.senate.gov). You may email [academy\\_noms@warner.senate.gov](mailto:academy_noms@warner.senate.gov) with any questions.

### SATURDAY/APRIL 30

In conjunction with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and state and local law enforcement agencies, the Vienna Police Department will again participate in a one-day initiative to remove potentially dangerous controlled substances from area homes.

On April 30, 2022, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., the Vienna Police Department will have a collection site for old, expired, unused, or unwanted medications. Prescription medications, controlled or non-controlled substances, and over-the-counter drugs may be turned in anonymously at the collection point inside the Vienna

Police Department temporary facility located at 301 Center Street, South, Vienna, Virginia 22180 (The former Faith Baptist Church).

Participants may dispose of medication in its original container or by removing it and disposing of it directly into the collection box. If an original container is used, the individual should consider removing any identifying information from the prescription label. Liquid products should remain sealed in their original container to prevent leakage.

### MCA OUTSTANDING CHARACTER AWARD FOR TEENS

The McLean Citizens Association is again sponsoring Teen Character Awards to recognize teens of exceptional ethical and compassionate character. Teens who have, on their own and without compensation or formal recognition, cared for elderly relatives or younger siblings, or who have helped out in the neighborhood or community (defined as the Greater Washington D.C. metropolitan area), deserve to be recognized not only for themselves but as an example to others.

The award is not a competition. All teens whose nominations indicate they meet the criteria will receive an award. The McLean Citizens Association Education and Youth Committee will review nominations to determine compliance with the criteria. The criteria are listed on the attached description of the award.

The award consists of a certificate which will be presented on the stage at McLean Day on Saturday, May 21, 2022, at 3 p.m. Names of award winners will be provided to local newspapers to highlight recognition of the teens’ achievements. A nomination application is attached or you can click on this link - Application - Outstanding Character Award for Teenagers.

Nominations must be submitted via email to the McLean Citizens Association no later than Friday, April 22. For further information email Jim Beggs, MCA Education & Youth Committee Chair, at [e\\_y\\_committee@mcleancitizens.org](mailto:e_y_committee@mcleancitizens.org).

### YOUTH POLLINATOR GARDEN GRANTS

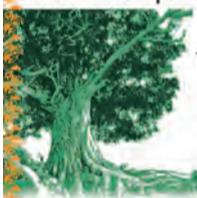
As part of the Great Falls Garden Club’s 80th Anniversary Celebration, the Garden Club is sponsoring a \$150 Youth Pollinator Garden Grant to be awarded to a child ages 9-14 who lives in the 22066 Zip Code.

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## Going, Going, I Wish They Were Gone

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



All those Charmin and Cottonelle television commercials for “the go”/“down there care.” As my late mother used to say about so many nauseating subjects: “It’s enough already.” I realize toilet paper is a staple, especially during a pandemic, but is it necessary that there are so many television advertisements? They’re appearing so often that I’ve even seen these competing companies/products advertise during the same commercial break. Not exactly back-to-back, but very nearly so. Talk about overkill. If these brands aren’t careful, they’re going to kill the goose that laid ply at their doorstep.

I mean, how much prodding/encouragement do I need every day to assist me with my toilet paper decisions? Not nearly as much as I’m getting, that’s for sure. How many more times must I see that adolescent bear wiggle his butt? And how many more times must I hear about treating “the skin that I don’t see as well as I treat the skin that I do see?” No more, please? I have enough visuals of forearms being wiped to last me a lifetime. I know that toilet paper sales are a huge business with endless repeat customer buys, but I’ve reached my point of no return. As in there’s no more return on their advertising investment in my household. We have been saturated with toilet paper problems/solutions so much so that if I never see another television commercial, funny or not, it will be soon enough for me.

Besides, I’m a grown man. I know what works for me – and what doesn’t. And that awareness most definitely includes toilet paper and all its features and benefits – and innuendos. I may be stubborn or a creature of consumer habit – or merely protective of my privacy, but all this recurring toilet paper market penetration/saturation is becoming too much to bear. I’m not a prude in the least, but I do feel as if there are certain subjects/descriptions which are off limits – or rather should be. However, the recent spate of toilet paper verbal and visual manipulation has crossed the line I never thought needed to be drawn because it was clear to everybody that it already existed. Apparently, the rules of advertising aren’t aware of these lines.

I understand that market share and profit are crucial to a commercial ventures’ success/viability. But to invoke a famous question from the 1954 McCarthy hearings: “Where’s your decency?” Gone. That’s where if the frequency and substance of these toilet paper advertisements are allowed to continue. Enough is enough, which for Scott brands is 1000 sheets. For me however, it’s really none of anybody’s business what I do in the privacy of my own bathroom. Whether I use an off-brand, single, double, or triple ply or paper infused with aloe. I’m happy to be left to my own devices. I’ll figure it out and the less the advertisers have to do with it, the better.

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



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