

CONNECTION

Reston ♦ Herndon ♦ ^{Oak Hill} Chantilly ♦ CENTRE VIEW

Little League Opening Day

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PHOTO BY TOM MANNING

The youngest players listen to the guest speakers at the Chantilly Youth Association Little League Opening Day celebration at Preston Pierce Field in Chantilly on April 24.

**Fox Mill Road and Pinecrest Road Intersection Improvements
Fairfax County**

Virtual Design Public Hearing

Wednesday, May 18, 2022, 7 p.m.
<https://www.virginiadot.org/FoxMillPinecrest>

Find out about planned improvements at the intersection of Fox Mill Road (Route 665) and Pinecrest Road to relieve congestion and improve safety and traffic operations. The improvements include installing a permanent traffic signal, constructing left-turn lanes on northbound and southbound Fox Mill Road, adding four crosswalks and reconstructing sidewalks and curb ramps. The project also includes constructing an eight-foot-wide walkway and curb ramp at the southeast corner of the intersection.

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

Review project information and meeting details on the webpage above or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-691-6710 or TTY/TDD 711 to make an appointment with appropriate personnel.

In accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement created pursuant to Code of Virginia § 10.1-1188(b), VDOT has determined this project is within a list of project/activities to qualify for an exemption from the State Environmental Review Process. However, all required environmental clearances, regulatory approvals and permits will be obtained prior to project construction.

Give your comments during the meeting, or by **May 31, 2022** via the comment form on the project website, by mail to Mr. Sitaram Kodali, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or by email to meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "Fox Mill Road and Pinecrest Road Intersection Improvements" in the subject line.

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

State Project: 0665-029-428, C501, P101, R201
UPC: 118460

In case an alternate date is needed, the meeting will be held Tuesday, May 31, 2022 at the same time.

COMMUNITY



Fairfax Veg Feast 2022, the community listens to how a diet of whole, plant-based foods may impact one's health as related to chronic diseases.

Fairfax Veg Fest 2022

Transforming the person and planet with a plant-based diet.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Fresh, plant-based foods, world-renown speakers, yoga for children, adoptable dogs, and exhibitors, what could be better on a spring Sunday? It was the fourth annual Fairfax Veg Fest held on April 24.

Organizer Gwen Whittaker reported that 3,500 people attended the Fairfax Veg Fest 2022 event in Herndon, sponsored by GreenFare Health and Wellness, Inc., a nonprofit organization. The seven-hour free event, held outdoors in the parking lot of Northwest Federal Credit Union, featured 80 exhibitors. It focused on healthy eating, wellness programs, animal compassion, and eco-friendly products against a backdrop of live music, cooking demonstrations, and world-famous speaker presentations. All food and products sold on-site at the fest were vegan.

Whittaker is the founder and CEO of GreenFare Organic Café (2015) and GreenFare Health and Wellness, Inc. (2020). Fairfax Veg Fest supports people who want to learn how a diet of whole, plant-based foods impacts one's health and could prevent and reverse many chronic diseases.

Whittaker is also the founder and former operator of Mosaic, Inc. It is an IT company focused on enabling talent to bring disparate data together across all agencies in the intelligence community. Whittaker closed that chapter in her life after her fiancé, a consummate lover of BBQ meats and fried foods, died suddenly of a heart attack at age 50.

Whittaker suggests people aren't destined to suf-



From left, Matt Kilcullen and Pericles Silva help a customer at the GreenFare Organic Café booth.

fer or die from heart disease or most of the common chronic illnesses if they choose a whole-plant diet free of salt, sugar, and fat. She acquired a certificate in Plant-Based Nutrition from the Center for Nutritional Studies at Cornell. Then Whittaker opened a healthy-eating café in the Town of Herndon, wanting to share the message with others.

Whittaker organized the Fairfax Veg Fest 2022, which showcased plant-based cooking demonstrations by several chefs, including Pericles Silva, operations manager at GreenFare Organic Café. Silva has a master's degree in Sports Nutrition, is a Food for Life Instructor with the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine and is certified in Plant-Based Nutrition by Cornell. He has been teaching classes at GreenFare and Whole Foods Market for over a decade.

SEE VEG FEST, PAGE 6

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NEWS

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS



SCREENSHOT

From left, Candace Hunstad, principal Herndon ES; Yaara Crane, assistant principal, Herndon ES; Elizabeth Baxter, assistant principal, Herndon ES; Sheila Olem, mayor Town of Herndon; Tara Reddy, treasurer Herndon ES PTA; Sean Regan, councilmember, Town of Herndon; Sara Murphy, president of the Herndon ES PTA; and Pradip Dhakal, councilmember, Town of Herndon; hold the \$25,000 check from the Herndon Elementary School PTA for a playground enclosure.



The Herndon Elementary community celebrates at the school's 60th Anniversary Celebration held April 24.

Herndon Elementary Celebrates 60th Anniversary

Celebrating 60 years of BEElonging.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Herndon Elementary School (HES) held its 60th Anniversary Celebration (1961-2021) on Sunday, April 24. The outdoor party featured two colossal inflatable slides, music, games, food, a Hershey's ice cream truck, and free cupcakes and t-shirts for every student, teacher, and staff member at the school.

"It was a wonderful day to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Herndon Elementary School with students, staff and community," said Scott Brabrand, superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools. "Some of the parents I saw were my former students at Herndon High almost 30 years ago. This is a testament to the strong roots of connection that remain in the entire Herndon community all these years. A special thanks to Principal Hunstad and the PTA for inviting me to share this special day with them."

Also there was Dranesville School Board Member Elaine Tholen, Regional Superintendent Douglas Tyson, Mayor Sheila Olem and Councilmembers Pradip Dhakal and Sean Regan.

"I was so happy to see the large community turnout to celebrate 60 years of learning,"

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From left, Bianca Romera, Isabel Romero, 10, Retgi, 8, Omer, 6, and Amani Abderahman at the Herndon Elementary 60th Anniversary Celebration.

said Tholen. "I was also happy to be there to recognize all of the outdoor learning efforts at the school and the monetary support of FCFT and the HES PTA for that work."

On Sept. 5, 1961, the school, which had at that time a capacity of 600 pupils, received its first students. According to school history, pupils could purchase a lunch for 25 cents and milk for 3 cents. Since then, the structure has undergone numerous extensions



What is a party without pizza?

and renovations as it battled overcrowding. According to a January 2001 report to the school board, Herndon Elementary had 15 classroom trailers.

During the 60th Anniversary Celebration, the PTA gave the school a \$25,000 check to fund an enclosed student play space for the Head Start and special education programs. Proceeds from the PTA's spring fundraiser and a grant from the Town of Herndon made the donation possible.

Later that evening, Candace Hunstad, principal, said, "Today was special. This



Scott Brabrand, superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools, joins Candace Hunstad, principal of Herndon Elementary School. "Some of the parents I saw were my former students at Herndon High almost 30 years ago," Brabrand said.

community is so supportive of our students and wonderful staff. We continue to strive for excellence as we lay the foundation for every student to become a global thinker and leader. We want to thank Mayor Olem, the Herndon Town Council, our amazing PTA, and Dr. Brabrand for their unwavering support of our students."

HIGH SCHOOL THEATER

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Back row, from left, are Katie Wood, Christian Chong and Adama Sawi (as a paramedic); and (front row, from left), are Emily Thomas and Gabriel Amiryar (as bodies).



From left, Lorkin Kelley, as Angela, being interviewed by Katie Wood, as the detective.

Centreville High Presents Mystery-thriller, 'Trap'

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Featuring a cast and crew of about 30, Centreville High presents the mystery-thriller, "Trap." And the story is bound to keep attendees guessing.

While 241 people are watching a high-school play, all but one – teenager Angela Lure – suddenly fall unconscious. Then, through documentary-style interviews with forensics professionals, the suspense builds en route to uncovering the shocking truth of the horrific events that overtook the Oak Box Theater in Menachap, Calif.

"The audience is going to be riveted," said Director Tiffany Williams. "Throughout the show, there'll be a lot of surprising and engaging revelations where the audience may gasp out loud."

The curtain rises Friday-Saturday, April 29-30, at 7 p.m.; and Sunday, May 1, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10 at the door or via www.theatrecentreville.com. Due to mild scarieness, it's recommended for ages 10 and up.

"It's a really interesting show, and the audience will continually discover new things," said Williams. "Parts of the play are re-enacted to help solve the mystery, so there's a play within the play. The students have grown by leaps and bounds in their confidence and skills."

"We have a lot of talent to work with, from the tech crew behind the scenes to the actors on the stage," she continued. "Senior Pyper Sullivan, our assistant director, designed the costumes and helped coordinate them with the actors. And this play's an ensemble, so most of the actors portray more than one role. Everybody's contributing, and it shows."

Most of the scenes take place in the theater, with others happening in a police station and a hospital. "It's set in modern day, but there's one flashback scene to the 1940s

because Menachap has had many, serious incidents," said Williams. "And since the play is acted out via interviews, it's a really unique and fun genre."

This show is also a fundraiser for the Centreville High Theater Boosters Scholarship Fund. Raffle tickets will be sold before the play and during intermission. Winners will receive tickets to two different escape rooms, plus two escape-room games to play at home.

Junior Katie Wood portrays Det. Gwendolyn Heche, as well as a lawyer and a counselor. As Heche, she's a failed artist turned detective. "She's very intuitive and cares deeply about her cases," said Wood. "But she gets too involved with both the cases and the people. She wants to be the person

"The audience will like the mystery of it and will be trying to figure out what happened, along with the characters onstage."

— Christian Chong

Angela can confide in. However, she's an anxious person who feels like she could lose her job if she does one thing wrong in the investigation, so she's under pressure."

Wood loves her role because "I think Heche is a true representation of an empathetic person who cares more about others than about herself. It's also fun and challenging to work the mind-twisting mystery of this case because of its supernatural elements."

She said the audience will like the show's intensity and the deep range of emotions the cast explores in portraying their characters. "There are also some darker emotions like despair and grief," said Wood. "And people will like experiencing the mystery along

with the characters because of the way the story flows and engages them."

Playing 16-year-old Angela Lure is senior Lorkin Kelley. "Before witnessing the events at the theater, she was a normal, teenage girl," said Kelley. "She played soccer, started a CPR club at school and played piano. She was busy and social. But afterward, she becomes nervous, cautious and closed off and doesn't trust people. But she doesn't know why – she just knows something's wrong – and Heche helps her remember."

Kelley saw part of herself in Angela because she, too, likes being busy. "But it was also hard to see her traumatized," said Kelley. "So I tried picturing myself alone in a room, unable to move. She's a challenge because it took awhile to figure out who she

was and how I wanted to portray her. But I like playing her because she's unique to the plot and is the only one who can reveal to the audience what happened."

"The audience will really enjoy all the plot twists," said Kelley. "Each character sells their lines in an engaging way, and the suspense is huge and builds throughout the show."

Senior Mädchen Watt is the head tech, plus the set and lighting designer. She's worked in tech since her freshman year, so she's excited to finally take the reins. Watt manages and teaches the other techs and makes sure things are going smoothly. And since it's an abstract play, she said the set needed to fit with it, while also letting the audience know what's happening.

"The play begins as a show in a theater onstage," she said. "But as the show progresses, it moves into the audience – which adds to the creepiness." Regarding the lighting, Watt "tried to use simple lighting, until certain moments when I use color to show the importance and emotion of the action. It ranges from blue to green, red and pink, depending on the setting of the scene."

She said the toughest part is having a finite amount of time to get all the tasks done. And, she added, "Working with the LED movable heads is also difficult because I have to program them for color, shape, clarity and movement."

Best part, said Watt, is "seeing it all come together. It's a proud feeling to see all your work become reality onstage." Calling this play a "psychological thriller," she said, "It'll leave the audience with a different outlook on the world. It changes you."

Senior Christian Chong is head of props, but also plays a newspaper reporter and a translator. His biggest part, though, is as Fire Capt. Donovan, who responds to Angela's 911 call. "He's generally friendly but can be intimidating when he has to be serious," explained Chong. "He's good at his job and cares about his crew's wellbeing."

He said it's fun portraying Donovan because "I get to yell, at some points, and have an argument with one of the other firefighters. Donovan's also a contrast to my other two characters because he has more emotions than they do." Chong is also pleased that he got to write four pieces of background music for this show. They'll be heard during intermission, curtain call and before one scene in the play.

As for the show, he said, "The audience will like the mystery of it and will be trying to figure out what happened, along with the characters onstage. It's fun, exciting and intense and has a shocking ending."

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Ed Begley Jr. for Environmental Sustainability

Reston Community Center will welcome actor and environmental activist Ed Begley Jr. to the CenterStage as part of a special evening of events to raise awareness about environmental sustainability.

As part of RCC's Professional Touring Artists Series, Begley will bring his program "Living Simply So Others Might Simply Live" to the CenterStage on Wednesday, May 4 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15 (Reston) \$20 (Non-Reston) and are available at the RCC Box Office or online.

Begley says that as environmental issues become more pressing, there are two possible responses: forget them and hope that government and corporations will figure it out; or to take action and make a difference. He will share his insights about environmental sustainability.

Copies of Begley's book Guide to Sustainable Living will be available for sale at RCC. Begley will sign books after the program.

Begley (Best in Show, St. Elsewhere, A Mighty Wind are among his acting credits) is a six-time Emmy Award nominee who in recent years has shared his passion for sustainable living in a reality TV show (Living with Ed), a podcast and books.

At 5 p.m. on May 4, Begley will join RCC and Reston Association, as well as local officials, for the dedication of a new pollinator garden adjacent to Hunters Woods Village Center. The free garden event is presented in partnership with Reston Association.

Since 2019, Reston Association has participated in the National Wildlife Federation's Mayor's Monarch Pledge. The planting of this new pollinator garden will help Reston achieve recertification for 2022.

"Spring is a great time for people to act by adding native plants to their yards," said Katie Shaw, manager of RA's Walker Nature Center.

ROUNDUPS

I-66 East and West Overnight Closures in Centreville

Full closures of I-66 East and West are planned during the overnight hours from now through Saturday night, April 30, in Centreville. The closures are for the continued installation of bridge beams for a new Route 28 South bridge over I-66 and for new access ramps to the future Express Lanes.

The I-66 East and West detours will reroute drivers to Route 28 North, exit to Westfields Boulevard West, stay right to Route 28 South and then follow signs to return to I-66. Drivers traveling on I-66 during this time should expect delays and consider using alternate routes. The Route 28 Interchange is being rebuilt as part of the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Project.

Car Seat Inspections, May 5

Parents may get their children's car seats inspected on Thursday, May 5, from 5-8:30 p.m., outside the Sully District Police Station. It's at 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. Inspections are done on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants are asked to wear a mask and adhere to social-distancing and safety precautions.

They should also install the child safety seat themselves, so the inspection can be performed. The seat will be properly re-installed, if necessary, and parents will be taught how to install the seat properly, in the future. Another car-seat inspection is scheduled for May 19, at the same place and time.

Unattended Lit Candle Cause of Reston Apartment Fire


Sunday, April 10, at approximately 7:54 p.m., units were dispatched for a reported garden apartment fire in the 2200 block of Stone Wheel Drive in the Reston area of Fairfax County.

Units arrived on the scene of a three-story, garden style apartment and reported fire on the third floor. A second alarm was requested. One occupant was found in the apartment during a primary search


in a back bedroom. The occupant was evacuated with firefighter assistance. EMS medically evaluated the occupant who eventually refused transport to the hospital. There were no firefighter or other civilian injuries reported.

Twelve occupants were in the apartment building at the time of the fire. An occupant of the

SEE APARTMENT FIRE, PAGE 11



Public Hearings



Funding the Right Transportation Projects

You are invited to share comments on transportation projects that have been recommended for funding in the FY2023-2028 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). Additionally, pursuant to §33.2-202, comments will be accepted for new projects valued in excess of \$25 million. The Commonwealth Transportation Board will take your comments into consideration as it develops the FY2023-2028 SYIP. The program allocates public funds to highway, road, bridge, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and public transportation projects. All federally eligible projects in the SYIP will be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program to document how Virginia will obligate its federal funds.

Meeting materials will be available <https://www.ctb.virginia.gov/planning/springmeetings2022/default.asp> before April 25, 2022.

Public meetings begin at 4 p.m. in each of the locations except as noted below:
A formal comment period will be held at these meetings.

Monday, April 25 Fredericksburg District James Monroe High School 2300 Washington Avenue Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401	Tuesday, April 26 Culpeper District Culpeper District Auditorium 1601 Orange Road Culpeper, Virginia 22701	Thursday, April 28 Richmond District Richmond District Auditorium 2430 Pine Forest Drive Colonial Heights, Virginia 23834
Monday, May 2 Staunton District Blue Ridge Community College Plecker Center 1 College Lane Weyers Cave, Virginia 24486	Tuesday, May 3 Lynchburg District Virginian Hotel, 712 Church Street Lynchburg, Virginia 24504	Wednesday, May 4 *Northern Virginia District Northern Virginia District Office Potomac Conference Room 4975 Alliance Drive Fairfax, Virginia 22030 *meeting begins at 5:30 p.m.
Monday, May 9 Hampton Roads District Hampton Roads District Auditorium 7511 Burbage Drive, Suffolk, Virginia 23435	Wednesday, May 11 Bristol District Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center One Partnership Circle Abingdon, Virginia 24210	Thursday, May 12 Salem District Holiday Inn Valley View 3315 Ordway Drive NW Roanoke, Virginia 24017

*The Northern Virginia District meeting will serve as the required joint public meeting with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, the Virginia Railway Express, and the CTB per § 33.2-214.3 of the Code of Virginia.

You can submit comments by email or mail by May 23, 2022.

For roads and highways: Six-YearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov, or Infrastructure Investment Director, Virginia Department of Transportation 1401 East Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219.

For rail and public transportation: DRPTPR@drpt.virginia.gov, Public Information Office, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation 800 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond VA, 23219.

The Commonwealth is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its services 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 these policies or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-2730 or the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-4440 (TTY users call 711).

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OPINION

S.O.S.

BY DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM

The universal meaning of the distinctive Morse code sequence known as SOS historically has been meant to indicate extreme distress especially for ships at sea — "Save Our Ship" was a phrase used to make it easy to remember the order of the dots and dashes of the distress code.

Over time the meaning has expanded to indicate other areas of distress. For me, the current need for which we generally need to turn our attention is to Save Our Schools. Not that schools are doing bad things. It is that a small, vocal, and politically-motivated band of misdirected people are irrationally attacking our schools in such a way that it interferes with the schools' mission of educating our children.

We need to save our schools from some of the same people who believe that vaccines include microchips from which the government can know our every move, that the last presidential election was stolen, and that a group



of pedophiles operate out of the basement of a pizza parlor in Northwest D.C. They pay little or no attention to scientific fact unless it supports their cause, and they often express a longing for a return to a time that never really existed.

We need to save our schools from those who view their rights to free speech and assembly as opportunities to disrupt public meetings of duly elected persons responsible for governing our schools. They use shouting and vile speech and even sometimes have resorted to throwing things at school board members.

Even more concerning to me, as this small band of book burners who do all they can to bring mistrust to schools by second-guessing teachers and administrators with dubious and mostly false information, are the politicians who use the confusion and doubt about what they term "government schools" for their political gain. In my view, there is no more important task of government than educating our children. Yet, there are those elected to office who are the big-

gest enemies of free public education.

Our last election for governor in Virginia brought forth the negative reactions to public schools that are being seen throughout the country. The new governor railed against Critical Race Theory and divisive concepts that left those who know about schools in our Commonwealth scratching their heads as to what he was talking about. His appointments of at least two individuals from other states who were known for the disruption of schools caused further doubt. It is becoming increasingly clear that he is in a race with others for public attention to build a national profile for whatever his ambitions are by using public schools as his punching bag.

I have the honor of having worked for the public schools for thirty years. My wife was a teacher as are two of our children. I have lived during the period when the schools glorified by some as the good old days graduated fewer than half the children who entered them to a time when all children are educated to realize their full potential. We cannot allow a small band of misdirected individuals destroy what is a hallmark of our country. Join me in helping to save our schools by speaking out on their behalf.



Skylar Solano, 7, and her sister, Victoria, 5, enjoy their drinks at the Fairfax Veg Fest 2022 while dad, Rod, looks on.



James Wilks, a speaker at Fairfax Veg Fest 2022, is the producer and narrator of the documentary film "The Game Changers" that debuted at the Sundance Film Festival in 2018. It is about plant-based eating in professional sports.



Robert Denk sits in the shade listening to speakers at the Fairfax Veg Fest 2022.



Gwyn Whittaker of Herndon organized the Fairfax Veg Fest 2022.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Fairfax Veg Fest

FROM PAGE 2

Robert Denk of Rockville sat in the grass under the trees at Veg Fest. Denk said that he attended the D.C. VegFest but came to Herndon to hear speaker T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D. author of "The China Study" (2005). The book became a best-seller (2013) about nutrition and looks at how animal protein intake affects cancer risk and says that a plant-based diet is better for one's health.

Along with Campbell, attendees

heard from other speakers including Neal Barnard, M.D., president of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine and author of 18 books on the benefits of a plant-based diet, and Gene Baur on industrialized factory farming's abuses. Attendees also learned how to make simple lifestyle changes that benefit commodified animals and lessen the demand for animal-based products.

GreenFare Organic Cafe is located at 408 Elden Street in Herndon.

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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FARMERS MARKET



Market managers Fran and John Lovaas

Reston Farmers Market Opens for its 25th Season Saturday, April 30th

In addition to 26 returning farmers/vendors, shoppers will find five newcomers bringing ice cream, microgreens, cut flowers, native plants and fresh veggie & fruit juices.

The Market at Lake Anne opens at 8 a.m., closes at 12 noon. The volunteer managers again are Fran and John Lovaas, and Keith & Anne Strange.



Farmers and vendors of Reston Farmers Market



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From left, Rae Ehde (mom), Hansini Bachu (Princess Amaria), Rory Ketzle (XJ-188-E) and Zack Smith (Bo Blaster) rehearse a scene.



Hansini Bachu (Princess Amaria) and Zack Smith (Bo Blaster) are in Chantilly High's "Space Princess Wars."

'Hilarious Comedy for the Entire Family'

Chantilly High's children's show, 'Space Princess Wars.'

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

A mash-up of "Star Wars" and "The Princess Bride," Chantilly High's new children's show is "Space Princess Wars." And it promises a good time for both children and adults.

"It's purely written for laugh-out-loud entertainment for the entire family," said Director Shannon Spicer. "I love it, not only as a director, but as a parent, since I grew up watching these two films as a kid. Younger children will love the show for the comedy and adventure, and their parents will get a bit of nostalgia along the way."

It's the story of a mom reading a screenplay she's written, to her daughter, Archer. In it, a young teen named Moon Starchild and an old man named Galdromius are in outer space and must journey across the galaxy to try to save Princess Amaria from three goons. On the way, they have to overcome threats and obstacles, including one from the dark queen, Mordra.

Show times are Thursday-Friday, May 5-6, at 7 p.m.; and Saturday, May 7, at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$7 at the door or via www.chantillyhsdrama.com.

Sophomore Tyler Ellison plays Moon Starchild. "He's energetic and ambitious and believes he has some greater destiny in the galaxy," said Ellison. "He's been sheltered from what's happening there, since he's lived his life on a farm. One

day, Galdromius – who knows his uncle – comes to his house and asks him to help rescue the princess, and their adventure begins."

Ellison likes his character's energy; and "Because he's so passionate, I can show a lot of his emotions," he said. "Starchild is also in the middle of another story unfolding, so it's interesting to see how he interacts with all these new characters coming into his life. Playing the lead is a lot of responsibility, but also fun, and I'm happy to have this opportunity."

As for the show, Ellison said, "Lots of the humor is charming, and all the characters are likable because of their distinct personalities. The audience will also enjoy the fun and unique costumes, plus the makeshift-looking sets showing the world coming together in Archer's eyes."

Portraying Bo Blaster is sophomore Zack Smith. "He's a Han Solo-esque, charming rogue and smuggler," said Smith. "He lives on a spaceship, going from place to place, and taking jobs just for the money. He's also witty, fearless, comical and sarcastic. He's introverted, at first, but eventually becomes more open to other people."

Smith said Blaster reminds him of himself because "He has a lot of my mannerisms and personality – the sarcasm, humor and wit. He keeps the audience on their toes because they don't always know what he's going to do next. And it's fun playing him because of how his personality changes throughout the show." Smith likes being

in a children's show because "It's all over-the-top movements, big personalities and acting in smart, but unexpected, ways."

He said children in the audience will like the play's funny, slapstick humor. And, added Smith, "It's told like a little kid's story, so they get to use their imaginations. They'll also like seeing the projections of different spaceships. And there's definitely humor for adults, too."

Freshman Anya Saffari plays Archer, who's about 10. "She's dramatic, expressive and stubborn," said Saffari. "She likes to get her way and is pretty annoyed when she doesn't. But she's still a kind person and loving to her mom. And while her mom reads, she interrupts to ask questions and give her opinions."

Enjoying her role, Saffari said, "Archer's very funny; her lines bring a lot of humor to the show – especially when she tells her mom, 'That's wrong; you can't do this,' about the story she wrote. It's fun acting really big and childlike because it reminds the actors of their own childhoods. And even though we're older, we still laugh at the things kids would."

She said audiences will love the play's comedy. "I don't think the mom intended her story to be funny," said Saffari. "But because she has a low budget to produce it, people come onstage randomly, holding lightsabers and planets – and the kids will find this hilarious."

The co-stage managers are students Anna Crowley and Rachel "Mini Crispy"

Shear, and they discussed the set and props. "We'll have some unique fight choreography," said Crowley. "And because it's set in space, the characters use lightsabers and blasters to fight with aliens, such as a variety of different-looking teddy bears."

For the set, said Shear, "We're repurposing the 'Into the Woods' set [which ends its run April 30]. For example, we'll use its runway extension for a spaceship or a path." Crowley added that its high platforms will become Archer's bedroom.

"One of the gags is that the show's on a tight budget, so a person will make all the sound effects with his voice," said Shear. "And the actors will walk cardboard spaceships across the stage."

"The planets are made of foam," noted Crowley. "And the actors will glide on hoverboards and rollerblades to portray the planets."

Director Spicer double cast the show to give more students the opportunity to perform, so there's a cast and crew of about 50 total. "The actors have really picked up on the comedic moments and learned to master all the physical comedy," she said. "And our costume head, freshman Zander Hall, came up with a great homage to 'Star Wars' and 'The Princess Bride,' while ensuring the colors are bright and lively and will appeal to young families."

And under props master Sam Cole, said Spicer, the students constructed spaceships, planets and special-effects props that "really add to the visual storytelling element because they're so colorful and engaging. Most of all, this show is very funny – and we could all use some laughs."

CALENDAR

NOW THRU 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.



Deidra LaWan Starnes and Tamiaka Chavis star in "The Mamalogues," at 1st Stage, now through May 8, 2022.

NOW THRU MAY 1

Art in 3D. 12-5 p.m. At Reston Art Gallery and Studios, 11400 Washington Plaza W at Lake Anne, Reston. An "Art in 3D" reception will be held Sunday, May 1 from 2-4 p.m. Nine artists renowned for their work in Reston, D.C., and beyond are exhibiting their sculptures and assemblages of metal, wood, clay, fiber, and found objects displayed on plinths, on walls, and suspended from the ceiling. Enjoy works by Lisa Battle, Sandra Dovberg, Doug Fuller, Dierdre McGuire, Kelly Ayotte-Phelan, Guy Rando, Wayne Schiffelbein, Ira Tattelman, and Guy Zoller. Visit the website: www.restonartgallery.com.

times are: 8 p.m.: Fridays and Saturdays: April 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, in person at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. SE during open hours, or before each performance if available. Visit www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

NOW THRU MAY 7

"Death of a Salesman." Presented by Vienna Theatre Company. At 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. Show

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 27

Sensory Awareness Day. 2:30-6 p.m. At the Old Firehouse in McLean. Challenge your senses at the Old

Firehouse! This unique and fun event, supporting Autism Awareness Month, will provide ALL who attend a sensory exploration (taste, smell, sound, sight and touch). This event is free and open to all.

APRIL 27 TO MAY 1

Book Sale. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. The Friends of the Reston Regional Library are hosting its Big Spring Sale of Gently Used Books and Media. Shop tens of thousands of items in great condition and support the library. Categories include hardcover and trade paperback fiction and a wide range of non-fiction including Art, Biography, Cooking, Economics, History, Science, and more. Specific dates and times at the website: www.restonlibraryfriends.com

APRIL 28-MAY 7

"A Year with Frog and Toad." At George C. Marshall High School, Falls Church. The play is a warm and funny musical based on Arnold Lobel's beloved Frog & Toad children's books. Performances are Thursday, April 28 @ 7:30 p.m.; Friday, April 29 @ 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Friday, May 6 @ 7:30 p.m.; and Saturday, May 7 @ 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.. The box office opens at 3 p.m. for the matinees and 6 p.m. for evening shows. Tickets can be purchased online at www.statements theatre.org

THURSDAY/APRIL 28

Green Expo. 7 to 9 p.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry

Street, SE, Vienna. The annual event features nearly two dozen exhibitors offering information about topics including: composting, recycling, beekeeping, pollinators and native gardens, green landscaping, home energy efficiency, Solarize Vienna, ways to reduce plastic usage, citizen science, volunteer opportunities, sustainable businesses in Vienna, and much more. Attendees can enjoy a live raptor exhibit and ask questions of the Town's arborist. Email CSC@viennava.gov or call 703-255-6300.

APRIL 29 TO MAY 1

Used Book Sale. At Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Gently used books, DVDs, CDs and audio books for children and adults. Sponsored by Friends of the Chantilly Regional Library to benefit programs and renovation projects at the library. Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday, April 29; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, April 30; 1-4 p.m. Sunday, May 1.

REGISTER FOR MAY 14

It's only a month away from a great opportunity to enjoy scenic bike routes through Hunter Mill District in the 2022 Tour de Hunter Mill sponsored by @WalterAlcornFFX, @BikeFairfax, and others. Register for May 14 ride here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/second-annual-tour-de-hunter-mill-tickets-293139206257>

APRIL 29 TO MAY 25

Watercolor Exhibition. At Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike,

Great Falls. Celebrating a Lifetime of Art showcases the watercolors of Catharine Noland (1920-2020). A reception will be held Saturday, May 14, from 2-4 p.m. Event start and stop times correspond to normal library hours, which are available at:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/great-falls>

APRIL 29, 30, MAY 1

Theatre in the Park. 7 p.m. At Reston Town Square Park, Reston. William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" is reimagined by NextStop Theatre and presented by Reston Community Center and Reston Town Center Association. This production of one of Shakespeare's most beloved and hilarious comedies, with a contemporary spin, will be Reston's first-ever professional Theatre in the Park event. The shows will take place on a stage especially designed for the production and are free and open to all ages. There are no rain dates.

APRIL 29-30

AAUW Used Book Sale. At Falls Church Community Center, 223 Little Falls Street, Falls Church. Great bargains on great books. Most books are priced at \$4 or less. Buy a book, Send a girl to college! Hours: Friday, April 29 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, April 30 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 703-637-4488, visit <http://fallschurcharea.va.aauw.net/booksale> or email: fallschurcharea-va@auw.net

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Announcements

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Legals

ABC LICENSE
Ryan Incorporated trading as PlantHouse, 921 N. St. Asaph Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-1510. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Wine and Beer On and Off license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Bailey Ryan - CEO/President. Date notice posted at establishment: 4-15-2022. 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 or (800) 552-3200.

CALENDAR

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Unattended Lit Candle Cause of Reston Apartment Fire

FROM PAGE 5

building heard a smoke alarm sounding. Upon investigation, he observed smoke coming from one of the units. He alerted the occupants and activated the building fire alarm.

Fire Investigators determined that the fire was accidental in nature and started in an

apartment on the third floor. The cause of the fire was an unattended lit candle that spread to ordinary combustibles.

Approximately 15 building occupants were displaced because of the fire. Property management of the apartment complex worked with Red Cross to assist all residents who were displaced. Damages as a result of the fire were approximately \$125,000.

Legals

**Public Hearing for the Town of Clifton, Virginia
Proposed FY2023 Town Budget
May 3, 2022**

Notice is hereby given that the Town Council of the Town of Clifton, Virginia will conduct an electronic Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 3, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. using Zoom teleconferencing audio and video service to consider the proposed FYE2306 Town Budget. The Public Hearing will be conducted in accordance with the Town of Clifton's Declaration of a Local Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic under Virginia Code § 44-146.21.

Obituary

**Daniel Allen Kercher (83)
Passed away on April 3, 2022.**



Daniel (Dan) is survived by his wife, Ann Kercher; sons, David (Sandy) Kercher and Thomas (Kim) Kercher; grandchildren, Julie, Maddie, Alisyn, Audrey, and Anna; and brother David (Jan). Dan is preceded in death by his parents, Avis and Allen Kercher.

Dan was raised in Hershey, Pennsylvania, a few blocks from the Chocolate Factory where his father cut millstones for grinding cocoa beans. Dan was a member of the church choir, and took great joy in singing to the congregation during Sunday services. Dan was an excellent pianist, and humbly played throughout his life.

Dan met his lifetime sweetheart, Ann, at Hershey High School and they remained together in marriage for over sixty one years. Dan and Ann joyfully lived together and raised their sons, David and Tom. They embraced being grandparents to their five granddaughters.

Dan graduated from Franklin and Marshall College with a degree in Mathematics. Following college, Dan worked for IBM in the field of computer programming for over forty years, where he played a role in developing software for military and banking mainframe computers.

Dan was not only an academic, but had a great appreciation for the arts. He adored music of all genres, especially classical and the Three Tenors. He loved sculpture, modern art, and was an avid reader. He sailed through the toughest Sudoku puzzles and the most challenging crossword puzzles in pen. Dan was an inquisitive, avid learner and an informative teacher.

Foremost, Dan loved his wife Ann. He was immensely proud of David and Tom and never tired of hearing about the lives of his granddaughters. Dan was very content and felt he led a life well lived.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to a cause that is important to you; Dan would love that.

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I Know What I Saw and Heard



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As the homeowner of a historic 250-plus year-old house located on two acres in Montgomery County, there are constant maintenance-type demands, none of which, cancer notwithstanding, I am able or even willing to do. Nevertheless, I am caretaker of a property that has been designated as "historic" with the Montgomery County Planning Commission. Though compliance with the Commission is required for renovation like doors, windows, roof, downspouts, gutters and of course, additions, day-to-day upkeep inside and outside the house, grounds included, fall exclusively on the homeowner. And so, whenever I can afford (literally) help, I am almost dutybound to pursue it.

Winds gusting during or after a soaking rain always make me nervous. On a property full of hundred-year-old trees, there is always a risk of a tree toppling to the ground, and/or maybe even hitting the house, as we are surrounded by trees. Many of which, due the passage of time, the collection of moisture and the weakening of roots have already fallen on previous occasions. And so, it happened again a few weeks back multiple trees at multiple locations – some even risking an adjacent neighbor's property, fell or were leaning, compelled me to damage control.

I called our local tree service company – with whom we have had dealings with previously, to come by and estimate the fix. They came by later that day. I can't say the price they quoted me was in the range of what I expected – unfortunately. However, after a few days delay on my part, they offered a lower price, one that was a tiny bit more palatable.

And so, it was on Thursday morning, April 14 when I wrote the following paragraph:

With apologies to Robert Duvall as Lt. Col. Bill Kilgore in the movie "Apocalypse Now" (1979); I love the sound of chain saws in the morning, especially when it's not me holding one. I was forewarned by my architect-friend/homeowner Marty who after seeing my two acres of trees, bushes, shrubs, and all advised me that I needed a chain saw, a tool he characterized as "the most respected tool in the homeowner's arsenal." As a lifelong renter, the need for such equipment had previously been beyond my purview. But here I was, proud owner of a property that required all hands-on deck, so to speak.

The next Christmas, I received as a gift, a Poulan-brand 14" gas chain saw. Subsequently, as advised, I went out and bought steel-toed work boots and rawhide work gloves. I was almost ready to saw when after numerous unsuccessful pulls of the rip-chord, I was unable even to get the chain saw started. A neighbor came by at my request to help and with his one pull, I was in the chain-saw business. And though I tried to fulfill my responsibility, I failed miserably. I didn't hurt myself exactly, other than my pride, but I soon realized I wasn't the man for the job. Ed's Tree Service are the men for the job, as they were on the 14th, and thankfully so. All I could do was see what needed to be done.

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

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LITTLE LEAGUE

PHOTOS BY TOM MANNING/THE CONNECTION



Coach Johnny Blauer with some of his AAA Nationals players. Coach Blauer's team is off to a great start and is looking forward to the rest of the season.



Players from the Chantilly and Oakton high school teams that helped out with the ceremony.

Little League Opening Day Celebration

For the first time since 2019, the Chantilly Youth Association Little League (CYALL) hosted an Opening Day celebration at Preston Pierce Field in Chantilly on April 24 to honor its 53rd season. Sean Collins, the new CYA Little League President, presided over the day's festivities.

The parade of teams was welcomed onto the field by members of the Chantilly and Oakton high school baseball teams.

Alex Robbins, Director of Community Relations for the Washington Nationals was a guest speaker. Robbins offered the players words of advice from Nationals Manager Dave Martinez and delighted the crowd by announcing that the CYA Little League will host a visit from a Washington Nationals

player in June.

Leslie Lesch from Baseball for a Better Life Fund announced plans for the John Lesch Batting Pavilion at Chantilly Park. The fund was established in memory of John Lesch, who volunteered for over 20 years in CYA Little League but lost his battle with cancer in 2019. Donations are being accepted for the project:

http://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=ZP3AQ692PNZE8. Former CYA Little League President Rob Fitzhugh, was also recognized for his many years of service to the Chantilly Little League. The ceremonial first pitch was thrown by pitcher Dylan Weinschenk to catcher Kage Reese. It was a beautiful day to celebrate the start of the spring baseball season!



The Domizioli brothers (from left) Nicholas (5), Seth (12), and Benjamin (9). Seth is in his last year of eligibility for Little League and Nicholas is starting his first season, making this the only year all three brothers will participate in CYALL together.



CYALL volunteer umpires, (from left) Ed Sammler, Tom DeFranco, and Darren Schuberg, representing a combined 52 years of experience umpiring CYALL games, are already busy calling games in the young spring season.



Jim Moeller and his son James arrived early for their first CYALL Opening Day celebration.



Alex Robbins, Director of Community Relations for the Washington Nationals, addresses the players, coaches, and families.



The youngest players listen to the guest speakers at the Chantilly Youth Association Little League Opening Day celebration at Preston Pierce Field in Chantilly on April 24.