

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

APRIL 28, 2022

Mount Vernon Student Got a Lesson in Politics

Senate page program pays off for eighth grader.

BY MIKE SALMON
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Diego Orendain, an eighth-grader at Whitman Middle School, spent a few weeks in Richmond getting an insider's view of the Virginia General Assembly as a Virginia Senate page for Sen. Scott Surovel (D-36th).

It was a big deal for this 14-year-old who walked away with many of life's lessons that he may not have gotten in the classroom. He led a group of students that came up with their own bills, and led the debate that followed, and broke out of his shell that sometimes forms in eighth grade.

"I learned a lot about being social and talking to new people," he said. "It really helped me coming back to school."

Diego was joined by five other FCPS students this year in the Senate Page Program: Caroline Lefton from Cooper Middle School, Dalayna Carr from Langley High School, Gretchen Schmitt from Kilmer Middle School, Summer Allwood from Lake Brad-dock Secondary School and Elizabeth Bartos from Washington Irving Middle School.

His group came up with two bills, and one came from a real-life experience of another student who was stuck in the snow with her family and had trouble flagging down a car. Their bill backed emergency signs for an event like that. Diego presented the bill, and



Wearing a suit was no big deal for Diego.

then led the debate.

While in Richmond, Diego witnessed senators weighing legislation, including the bill to make masks optional in Virginia schools.

"Watching them debate made me realize that they respect each other even if they don't agree with one another," Diego said. "Every time the session ends, senators walk towards their 'debater' and talk like they have been best friends since they were born."

The experience was appreciated by others too, who could see that some of the lessons

were irreplaceable. Working in this state setting where they discussed some of the legal procedures was similar to civics and social studies on the school agenda. "This will help him in his civics class, fits nicely with eighth grade," said Craig Herring, principal at Walt Whitman.

At Walt Whitman, his teacher Katie Richter, an Advanced Academics Resource Teacher, helped sign him up for the program and make it all happen. "Miss Richter made me confident, my parents too, they said it was going to be a great experience," he said. Di-

ego kept up with the other classes, and even excelled in math when he got back.

He is affiliated with his church in Mount Vernon, and this helped to some extent, particularly when he had to wear a sports coat and tie every day. Diego dresses up for church so it was not a big deal, and he stepped up when another student needed help.

"I taught my roommate how to tie a tie, that was pretty exciting," he said.

Diego stayed in the Marriott Hotel a few blocks away from the legislative building and went home every weekend.



Working with a group of students from other schools was a skill he learned.

United Community Honors Reverend Dr. Keary Kincannon

Hyland Humanitarian Award is the top award and goes to those who make positive impacts.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE PACKET

If the Washington Metropolitan area is looked at as a mixing bowl of cultures and ethnicities, Hybla Valley may be the center of that mixing bowl, with Reverend Dr. Keary Kincannon leading the way. For all that he achieved, Kincannon was recently awarded the Gerald W. Hyland Humanitarian Award in front of a church full of residents that recognized his efforts at the United Community's Volunteer Appreciation Day ceremony on Saturday, April 23.

Although Kincannon was grateful to be recognized, he was not about to leave all the others out, especially the number of vol-

unteers at United Community, and his wife Judy. "I would never have been able to do this alone," he said, "I share this award with you."

United Community's Board of Directors created the Hyland Award in 2017 to recognize outstanding individuals who have demonstrated a long-term, sustained commitment to serving people in need through empowering, transforming and enriching the lives of residents of the surrounding communities. The award is named for Gerald W. Hyland, a former member of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors who represented the Mount Vernon Community for



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

SEE UNITED COMMUNITY, PAGE 7

Supervisor Rodney Lusk, left, Dr. Keary Kincannon and UC chairman Tom Curcio.



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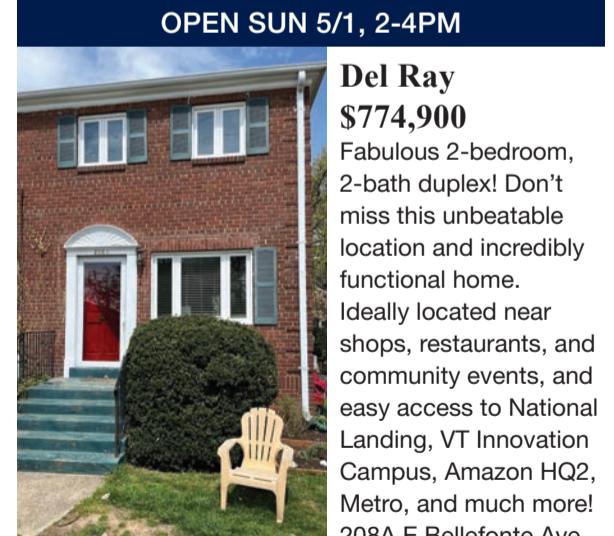


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NEWS



Supervisor Dan Storck welcomed attendees.



GWM Parkway Superintendent Charles Cuvelier presented Supervisor Dan Storck a certificate of appreciation, here at the Park Service's mobile visitor center.



Containers encouraged responsible trash disposal.

Mount Vernon Environmental Expo Draws a Crowd

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

From lentils to lanternflies, from reptiles to recycling, from pelts to pollution. You could touch a tegu, make a caddisfly, eat solar-cooked brownies, ride an electric bicycle, feel animal fur, color a bird and learn about climate change, pollution, stormwater runoff, electric cars, native plants, non-polluting leaf blowers, energy-efficient homes and even delve into sewage treatment.

Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck's April 23 and fourth Environmental Expo was a hotbed of environmental messaging, as a steady stream of visitors explored 36 exhibits and took nature and history tours on a balmy Saturday at Fort Hunt Park from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

With her two youngsters in tow, Sarah Parker, Hollin Hall resident, called it a "kid friendly" event where she could "teach my kids to take care of the Earth."

Grace Reidy who lives in the Union Farm subdivision walks and bikes in Fort Hunt Park and went to support the National Park Service (NPS), a cosponsor.

Supervisor Storck opened the event and promoted his vision that everyone would "find something new and be inspired to find one thing to make a difference." NPS's George Washington Memorial Parkway Superintendent Charles Cuvelier presented Storck a certificate of appreciation.

Many visitors were intrigued by the Solar Cookers International volunteers cooking food in the sun on the ground with cooking vessels encased on three sides by silvery reflectors, some homemade with cardboard and tinfoil. Peg Barratt and Nancy Warner explained that when the sun's light energy hits a black pot it changes to heat energy and the cooking vessel's glass lid traps the heat.

They offered tasty samples of curried lentil stew, brownies, zucchini bread and other sun-baked dishes prepared on-the-spot. On cooking times, Barratt said that on a sunny



Solar cooking uses a black vessel, glass lid and reflectors.



Mount Vernon resident Greg Crider discussed the red beans and rice cooking at 200 degrees with solar cooking advocate Nancy Warner.



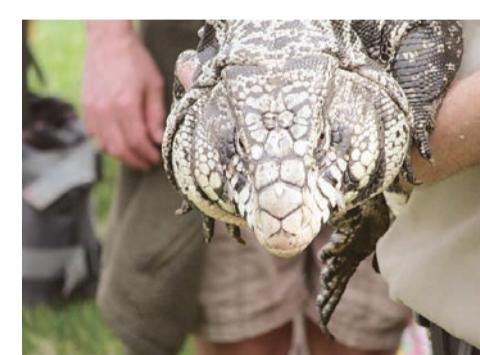
Mount Vernon resident Betsy Martin explained that Audubon ambassadors help homeowners create native habitats that have many environmental benefits.



Billy B. the Natural Science Song and Dance Guy, accompanied by energetic youngsters on the stage, conveyed conservation messages in song and dance.



Brian Crystal with Reptile Wonders brought a blue-tongued skink.



The South American tegu with puffy "cheeks" from Reptile Wonders enchanted many.

day it would take one to two hours for fish and chicken, three to four hours for bread and potatoes and five to eight hours for dried bean soups and stews. Solar Cookers International works in over 135 countries, especially areas lacking a modern energy infrastructure. Advocates argue that it is carbon-free and can curb deforestation, reduce pollution-related respiratory diseases and bolster energy independence.

Cleaner Transportation

Mary Cramer, representing the Electric Vehicle Association of the District of Columbia, promoted her 2019 Tesla Model 3 car which she said has a 310-mile range. In addition to its low emissions, she likes it because it is "mindlessly simple" and "low maintenance." Hubcaps cost \$25, she added. Among others, Gabriel Kemeny touted the Aptera, a new-age-looking car that has its own so-

lar panels that power it. The group's flyer showed electric car base prices ranging from \$27,400 for a Nissan LEAF to \$200,000 for a Tesla Roadster.

Alexis Glenn with the Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling displayed an electric cargo

bicycle. Dubbing it a "bike minivan," she said the vehicle could carry two kids seat belted in or an 85-pound dog in the cargo compartment. She made the case that biking "is one of the most environmentally-friendly ways to get around."

Nearby, Pedego let folks take a trial run on a battery-powered bike that sells for \$1,800 to \$5,000. It takes two to five hours to charge the bike's battery in a regular wall outlet. Their flyer maintains that people get more exercise on these bikes than on tradi-

SEE ENVIRONMENTAL EXPO, PAGE 5

MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE ♦ APRIL 28 - MAY 4, 2022 ♦ 3



Don Beyer



Victoria Virasinh

Deep Blue Primary

Incumbent congressman to face first-time candidate.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE GAZETTE

The Eighth Congressional District is the bluest of the blue strongholds, giving President Biden 78 percent of the vote in 2020 — the largest margin of victory for all the Virginia congressional districts. For many years, the district was represented by U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8), who decided to step down in 2014 after serving 12 terms in Congress. Beyer emerged that year from a field of 10 candidates in the Democratic primary, and has not been challenged in a Democratic primary since that time. This year, though, Victoria Virasinh is challenging Beyer for the Democratic nomination.

“It is difficult to knock off an established incumbent member in a first run for public office,” said Mark Rozell, dean of the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University. “Unless there is some dissatisfaction among the district’s Democratic Party voters with Beyer — and I do not see any — it is going to be especially difficult in this case.”

Virasinh is calling attention to Beyer’s personal wealth, criticizing the performance of his stock portfolio at a time when he was in a position to have what she calls “privileged information” as a member of Congress. She is calling for a prohibition on members of Congress being able to buy and sell stocks.

That’s a policy proposal that Beyer actually agrees with. Two months ago, he says, he moved all his investments from stocks to mutual funds when the issue of self-dealing on Capitol Hill became a topic of conversation. On the campaign trail, Virasinh has tried to fashion herself as a progressive alternative to the incumbent — a new voice of a new

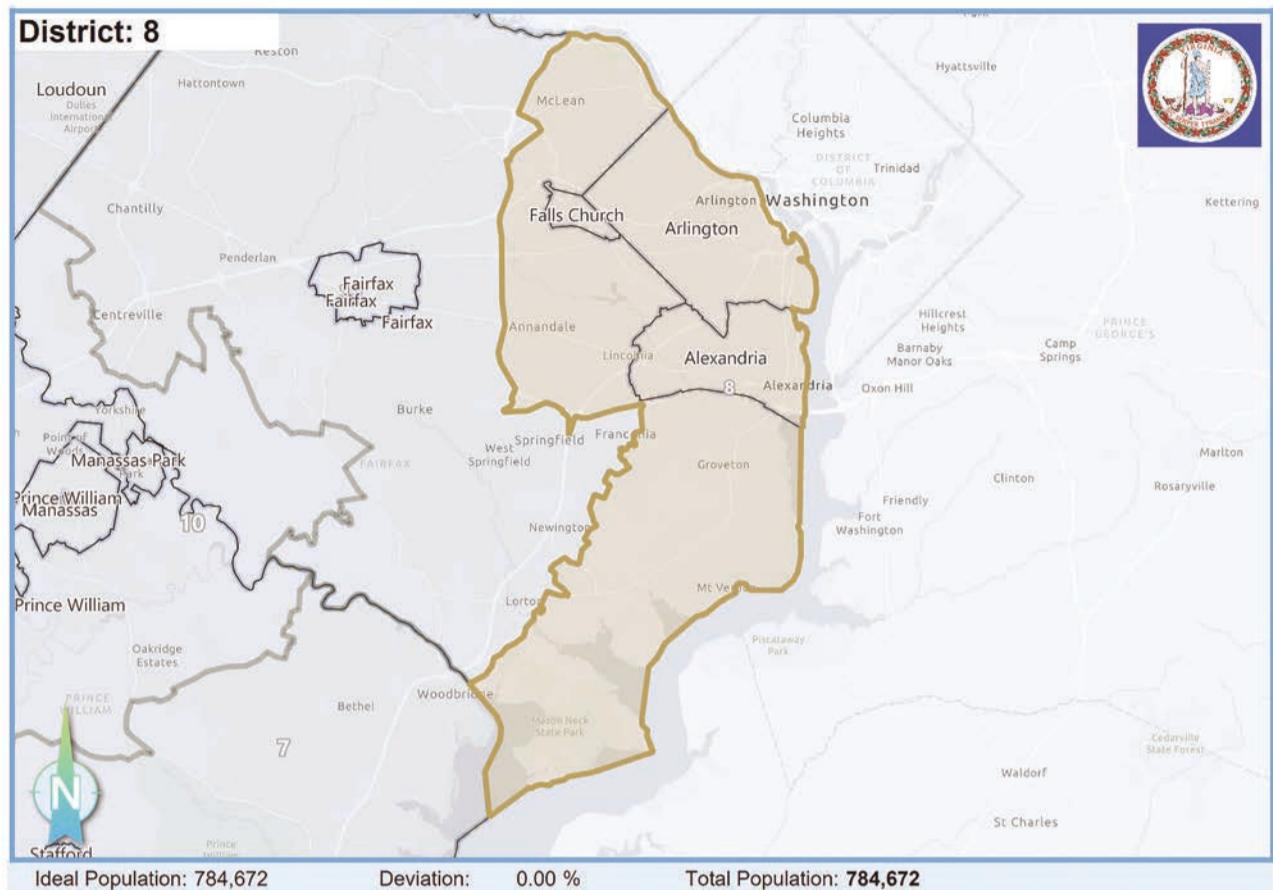
generation challenging someone who has been a fixture of Virginia politics for decades.

“I could see a progressive challenge viable in the case of an incumbent voting well to the right of his or her constituency, but that is not the situation here,” said Rozell. “To the extent that the challenger can draw out some contrasts and give Democratic Party voters reason to consider an alternative, that is all good for the process as it helps to hold the incumbent accountable.”

VICTORIA VIRASINH is a native of Arlington, where her parents were part of a community that included refugees from India and immigrants from South America. She earned scholarships to St. Agnes Catholic School in Arlington and Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School in Washington, D.C. Virasinh has a bachelor of arts in international relations and a master of arts in Latin American Studies, both from Stanford University. She interned at the Internal Revenue Service and the office of Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) before joining Palantir Technology leading public-private partnerships. She’s now a full-time candidate.

“If I was born in this area today, my story would not be possible,” she said when asked why she’s running in the primary. “This area has exploded in growth, which is really exciting. But one of the problems is that it’s much harder to find affordable housing.”

If elected, she says, she would support a prohibition against members of Congress buying and selling stocks. She pointed to disclosure reports from Beyer indicating



“It is difficult to knock off an established incumbent member in a first run for public office. Unless there is some dissatisfaction among the district’s Democratic Party voters with Beyer — and I do not see any — it is going to be especially difficult in this case.”

— Mark Rozell, dean of the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University

that his portfolio recently outperformed the Standard & Poor 500 index, which she says should raise red flags given his access to information as a member of Congress. She says she would also support publicly financed election campaigns, and she says she supports the Biden administration’s controversial proposal to end the Trump administration’s use of Title 42 of the Public Health Service Act of 1944 to turn away undocumented immigrants arriving at the southern border. She says it’s time for “a new type of leadership” and “it’s time to pass the torch.”

“We don’t have legislators who understand what the challenges are,” she said, adding that Beyer and others fit that description. “They don’t understand the basic fundamentals of the ways in which technology is influencing our economy.”

DON BEYER is serving his fourth term in the House of Representatives. He is a former lieutenant governor who ran an unsuccessful campaign as the Democratic candidate for governor in 1997, when Republican Jim Gilmore was elected. He has a bachelor’s degree in economics from Williams College in Massachusetts, and during the Obama administration he served as ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein. If elected to a fifth term to a party in the minority, he says,

he will be able to work with friends across the aisle on issues like regulating space traffic management of satellites orbiting Earth.

“This really gets into the meaning of life, you know, why are we here? I long ago figured out that I was happiest when I was trying to

make other people’s lives better,” he said. “We all have to try to make sense of the story of our own lives, and this is the way I do it.”

During his time in office, he says, he’s been focused on tackling the problem of climate change, pressing for a carbon tax and expansion of fusion energy to replace fossil fuels. Congress is currently considering seven of his climate change proposals as part of the long-delayed Build Back Better plan. He says he agrees with Virasinh that members of Congress should be prohibited from buying and selling stocks, and in February he moved all his investments from the stock market to mutual funds. He also agrees with Virasinh about public financing of elections, although he says he’s not yet sure whether he supports the Biden administration’s plans to lift Title 42 restrictions and allowing undocumented immigrants to seek asylum at the southern border.

“I think it might be the right thing to do legally, that there may be no legal merit to keeping it in place. Politically I think it’s very difficult,” said Beyer, who says he wants to hear all the arguments on both sides. “Generally I hate picking a political consideration over a policy consideration. I always want to do the right thing, not necessarily the smart thing.”

NEWS



Virginia Department of Environmental Quality staff showed youngsters how runoff enters and pollutes waterways.



Supervisor Storck's staffers, Stephanie Robinson, Shirley Short and Maddie Carcamo, greeted attendees.

Mount Vernon Environmental Expo Draws a Crowd

FROM PAGE 3

tional, pedal-only bikes, because they ride more than they would on a traditional bike.

Human and Animal Action Too

High-spirited youngsters wiggled, jumped, danced and pranced on the stage with Billy B, the Natural Science Song and Dance Guy, waving their arms like tree limbs. Singing "It happened today, it happened today in the Chesapeake Bay," Billy B gave the children a music lesson in watersheds, singing that water goes from toilets into rivers and then the sea.

Crowds circled around Brian Crystal at the Reptile Wonders tent where he deftly introduced live reptiles, including a tegu, monitor lizard, tortoise and boa. How can you tell if a tegu is a male? He has puffy cheeks, Crystal explained, and the dutiful tegu inflated his triangular "cheeks." Youngsters gingerly touched the tegu's skin which "felt like a basketball," one commented. An African savannah monitor lizard eats eggs, bugs and more, Crystal said, holding up Skittles whose tongue flashed in and out. Dahlia Bober, Tauxemont resident, delighted in touching a tortoise, lizard and boa.

County urban foresters explained that the spotted lanternfly, though beautiful, is invasive and can harm certain trees, including fruit trees. Wastewater management staffers distributed flyers asking people to avoid flushing wipes, medicines and grease down toilets or putting them in drains because they clog up the system and harm animal and plant life.

Other county staffers offered information on home energy efficiency. Danielle Wynne, with the stormwater office, explained that the caddis fly presence helps measure water quality.

Kris Rosenthal with the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions was an exhibitor there because she believes, "We have a moral imperative to tackle the planet's problems and make it a more livable planet." She helped expo-goers make reusable bags out of t-shirts.



Rhys Moretti, from Hollin Hall, loved "driving" the police car and turning on blue flashing lights



Kris Rosenthal with Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions, made reusable bags from t-shirts.



The Expo had 36 exhibitors covering a wide range of conservation topics

pandemic restrictions, Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT) representatives welcomed the opportunity to meet and talk to people in person. NVCT has conserved 150 northern Virginia properties, totaling over 8,000 acres.

Aaron LaRocca, GWMP Chief of Staff, said, "The event provided the public information on how they can preserve parks and practice conservation in their neighborhoods." At the Parkway's table, people could feel the fur of wild animals, like foxes, squirrels and skunks, animals that had been killed accidentally.

Hillary Clawson, President of the Friends of Mason Neck State Park, was there to help educate people about Northern Virginia's natural areas and said, "Now is the time to save the planet. We won't get a second chance."

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OPINION

The 'Veto' Session

BY DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK

As provided by the Constitution of Virginia, "The General Assembly shall reconvene on the sixth Wednesday after adjournment of each regular or special session for the purpose of considering bills which may have been returned by the Governor with recommendations for their amendment and bills and items of appropriation bills which may have been returned by the Governor with his objections". As such, I am preparing to return to Richmond on Wednesday, April 27th for the Reconvened Session, also known colloquially as the "veto session".

We will have much work to accomplish in just one day: the Governor vetoed 26 bills and recommended amendments to 116 bills passed by the 2022 Session of the General Assembly. Of those bills, 10 of the vetoed bills and 59 of the amended bills are House Bills. Included in these amended bills are my HB 763, HB 766, and HB 1136. Each of these bills must be reviewed by their respective chambers of origin. The Governor did not veto any of my bills.

I have been asked by several constituents over the past few weeks about the General Assembly's role in considering vetoes and amendments. So, when the General Assembly is presented with Governor vetoes and amendments, what options are available to the body?

In all cases, the first step is for the vetoed or amended bill to return to its chamber of origin.

If vetoed by the Governor:

The chamber of origin may override the veto by a two-thirds vote of the members present. If the chamber of origin successfully overrides the Governor's veto, then it sends the bill and Governor's objections to the other chamber where the bill shall be reconsidered. The sec-



ond chamber may override the Governor's veto by a two-thirds vote of the members present. If both houses successfully override the Governor's veto, the bill shall become law without the Governor's signature. If either chamber fails to override the Governor's veto, the veto shall stand and the bill will not become law.

If amended by the Governor:

The chamber of origin can vote to accept the entirety of the Governor's amendments by the majority of members present. The bill is then sent to the other chamber for consideration. If both houses agree to the Governor's entire recommendation, the bill, in its amended form, becomes law.

The chamber of origin, by a two-thirds vote, may accept one or more of the Governor's amendments. The second chamber may also agree to one or more of the Governor's amendments. If both houses agree to one or more amendments but not to the entire recommendation of the Governor, the bill shall be reenrolled with the Governor's amendments agreed to by both chambers and shall be returned to the Governor. The Governor then can either

Bills Returned by the Governor (2003-2022)

Session	Governor	Amendments	Vetoed*	Total Sent to Governor
2003	Warner	87	4	1,046
2004		60	2	1,035
2005		45	1	949
2006	Kaine	123	7	958
2007		106	10	958
2008		36	1	889
2009		101	12	886
2010	McDonnell	102	0	871
2011		132	5	892
2012		113	7	855
2013		85	6	812
2014	McAuliffe	57	5	834
2015		68	17	800
2016		57	29	811
2017		83	40	880
2018	Northam	30	10	874
2019		47	17	883
2020		102	1	1,291
2021 Special I		37	0	552
2022	Youngkin	116	26	843

sign or veto the bill returned to them. If the Governor vetoes the bill, the veto shall stand and the bill will not become law.

Both chambers may agree to the bill in the form originally sent to the Governor by a two-thirds vote of all members present in each house. In this case, the original bill shall become law.

In the past, the Governor once had the power to offer "counter-amendments" if the General Assembly opposed the first round of amendments sent down to them. As of January 1, 1995, this power was removed, leaving only one chance for the Governor to make amendments to any bill. The General Assembly gained considerable power from this shift, earning the ability to consider the Governor's amendments individually or en bloc. With my three amended bills, I plan to ask the body to accept the Governor's amendments, even though I am not supportive of all of them. I would prefer to not send them back to the Governor and risk a veto, especially since the underlying bills are not adversely affected.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Short Reply to Sen. Ebbin's Rant

Both parties play petty politics. State Senator Ebbin's column catalogs the most recent installment, reading all sorts of ill intent (partisan payback) and ineptitude (inexperienced staff not having enough time to review bills) into Governor Glenn Youngkin's vetoes. A simpler explanation might be that Youngkin's vetoes of 25 bills constitute merely 3 percent of the 728 bills the legislature passed. Youngkin is merely throwing a bone to those of us who believe that 728 new laws is legislative overkill and that the public would benefit from laws being repealed rather than new ones being piled on. So Youngkin chose to veto bills which duplicate other bills, bills which involve studies,

etc. What bona fide purpose do two bills to do the same thing serve but to cause confusion and costly court cases to sort out the implications of slightly different phrasing which the legislature should have cleared up and merged into a single bill before sending them to the governor? The governor can start reducing the backlog at the Virginia Employment Commission more efficiently by executive action than by legislative mandate which allows for less administrative flexibility. Moreover, the executive action can start now, not wait for the July 1 effective date of most legislation.

Dino Drudi
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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Mary Kimm
Editor and Publisher
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Jeanne Theismann
[@TheismannMedia](mailto:jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com)

Mercia Hobson
Staff Reporter
mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com

Mike Salmon
Contributing Writer
msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com

Ken Moore
Contributing Writer
kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com

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

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

Helen Walutes
Display Advertising, 703-778-9410
hwalutes@connectionnewspapers.com

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

Classified & Employment
Advertising
703-778-9431

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

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
[@MaryKimm](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)

Art/Design:
Laurence Foong
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
Circulation Manager:
Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

A Connection Newspaper



NEWS

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION



Lee District Supervisor Rodney Lusk recognized Kincannon's achievements.

United Community Honors Reverend Dr. Keary Kincannon

FROM PAGE 1

17 years prior to his retirement in 2015. United Community worked together with Kincannon and continues today, even with Kincannon retired from his position as pastor of Rising Hope Mission Church.

Hyland was at the ceremony too, via a video monitor, and he acknowledged the efforts of Kincannon. "No words can really express my thanks to him," Hyland said. "Thank you for your selflessness which is an inspiration to us all," Hyland said.

Others were in line with those thoughts. "His main strength is love for all mankind," said Ellen McClure, who puts in many hours with the United Community effort.

"He led our community in prayer and action," added Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D-Lee). "Pastor Kincannon has dedicated his life to helping others."

"We are just 'one,'" said Eva Webb who leads a group of volunteers from a part of the community that includes Jenna Lee Avenue, an area that Kincannon worked on. "He's open minded, we're all inclusive," she added.

Gala of all Galas

The morning started out with tables of food in the hall of Woodlawn Faith United Methodist Church and lots of smiles around the church. Then there were speeches, dancing and poems to set the mood. Tom Curcio, the chairman at UC, was the master of ceremonies and he reflected back on the volunteer efforts with the



The art on the table cards was a product of some students in Hybla Valley.

food distribution which picked up after Covid hit. In 2021, they recorded 3,500 volunteer hours "and we were able to feed 6,000 families," Curcio said.

Niema Knight from the Sacramento Community Center did the poetry reading followed by a dance performance led by Bethany Barber, an eighth grader at Carl Sandburg Middle School. Other participants included Candace Brown, Rev. Dr. Brian K. Brown and Carla Cloure who spoke in her native language which was a factor she overcame when she immigrated to Mount Vernon from South America. Blanca Vasquez translated through the event.



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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 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond VA, 23219.

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VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer Fairfax Names 2022 Service Award Winners and Community Champions

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Volunteer Fairfax, together with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, celebrated 149 service award nominees, 11 winners, and 10 Community Champions, honoring their volunteerism achievements during 2021 in a virtual awards ceremony on April 20th. Founded in 1992, The organization mobilizes

people and resources to meet regional community needs, running well known events, such as Stuff the Bus and the MLK Weekend of Service. Now celebrating its 30th year, their awards ceremony highlights remarkable achievements in volunteerism in several distinct award categories.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay congratulated the volunteers, thanking them for their service. "I have witnessed

the great work from a wide range of volunteers serving our community. They seek to shine a light, not on themselves, but on the needs of others and the issues that face our community. Volunteers serve at our local libraries, and our food banks; they are counselors and translators. They tutor children and drive our neighbors to doctors appointments. They plant gardens at our parks and schools. They clean up our streams and waterways and care for the most vulnerable

among us, animals included, and I have seen how volunteers have helped this community through a changing and unprecedented crisis during the COVID 19 pandemic. Volunteers do all of this work and more, because they share a desire for all to live in a vibrant, safe, and healthy community."

Speaking to the award winners and the nominees, he added, "Thank you for stepping forward to support this great community that we share."

Loren Zander, Education & Literacy Award Winner

Since 2015, an integral part of the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia's positive impact on the lives of English learners in Fairfax County. Serving learners from many different nationalities, cultures, and backgrounds, Loren created a supportive community by strengthening students' sense of belonging and confidence to engage with wider society.



Mary Lee DiSpirito, Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

A mainstay of the Annandale Christian Community for Action, a church-related volunteer organization providing rental assistance, day care, food, furniture, and other services to low-income families in the Annandale/Bailey's Crossroads area. She devoted countless hours to the organization over the past 35 years, including 1,500 this year.



John O'Connor, County Volunteer Award Winner

A volunteer at the Fairfax County Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court for more than eight years and skillful intake officer teaching clients about the complex court process, while displaying empathy, particularly for those with limited English proficiency.



Maria Lewan, RSVP Northern Virginia Award Winner

A registered nurse who used her clinical nursing skills to help those who face health issues, providing a community connection.



Meet the 2022 Service Award Winners



Fairfax Medical Reserve Corps, Volunteer Group Award Winner

A group of more than 3,550 members with a passion for helping to keep their communities healthy and safe provided thousands of volunteer service hours during public health emergencies, such as measles, TB outbreaks and the Coronavirus Pandemic, responding to public health implications of severe weather incidents, and conducting educational and outreach activities.

tion and resource for the social workers at Capital Caring Health. Each week, Maria made calls to patients to provide a touch-point check-in, targeting any health needs and providing emotional support to them and their caregivers.

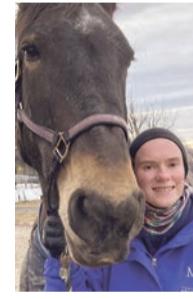
Amini Bonane, Social Justice Winner

A community builder, organizer, and advocate used her titles of Miss Black DC 2020 and Miss Fairfax City 2021 to speak up for marginalized commu-

nities. During her time at George Mason University, was a founding board member of the COVID Student Safety Corps; also founded the Student Safety Advocacy Board, the Conflict-Free Campus Initiative, and GMU's first-ever delegation of the Model African Union.

Kirsten Mikolashek, Youth Leadership Winner

A volunteer for Northern Virginia Therapeutic Riding Program for more than



Fairfax Master Naturalists, Environmental Sustainability Award Winner

Throughout the pandemic, offered refuge, for volunteers and citizens alike, who were seeking "outdoor relief" by developing volunteers to assist with the beneficial management and preservation of natural resources and natural areas in the County, widening opportunities for residents to enjoy the great outdoors.

four years with over 350 hours of service providing equine-assisted activities to people with disabilities, youth-at-risk, recovering military personnel, and others in need of an inclusive, community setting to help each individual realize their highest potential.



Laurie Manning, Quality of Life Winner

Changed the face of Capital Caring Health's volunteer pediatric program and enticed many community members to join the volunteer workforce.



Frank Pappas, Hunger Hero

The key volunteer leader of 65 large-scale emergency food distribution events in Fairfax County, organized to ease the economic and food insecurity impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, forming the initial response structure in May 2020 and ensured its success over the next year.



Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, County Volunteer Program Award Winner

During the months in 2021 that volunteers had access to facilities, program members volunteered 3,868 hours providing 1,353 visits; helped ensure that 2,737 residents receiving long-term care services needs were addressed, and advocated for systemic changes. Since the program's founding in 1985, Ombudsman volunteers have contributed 261,547 lifetime hours, representing a total value of \$7,621,473.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer Fairfax 2022 Service Awards

Meet the 2022 Community Champions

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors each selected an individual to be recognized for their commitment to promoting volunteerism within their community while addressing specific needs. Meet those selected for each district.



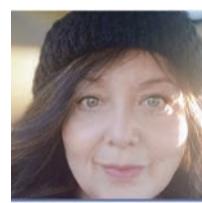
**Chairman/At-Large:
Paul Berry**

Lead the Redistricting Advisory Committee, amplifying the One Fairfax policy of diversity, equity, and fairness.



**Hunter Mill District: Gloria Runyon and
Sylvia Taylor**

Compiled a history of the town of Vienna's African American community revealing history that would have otherwise been unknown by many.



**Braddock District:
Javelin Soriano Lake**

As the parent liaison for Braddock Elementary, developed strong ties to families in the Annandale area.



**Lee District:
Carla Claire**

Provided leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic to help LatinX community members with vital basic needs such as food, vaccines, and more.



**Dranesville District:
Wade Smith**

Provided valuable advice on transportation, pedestrian, and development activities that impact his immediate neighborhood as well the broader community.



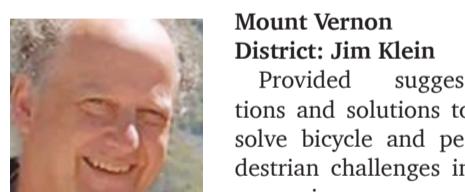
**Mason District:
Annandale
Greenway Team**

The greenway conceptualized by the team connected existing sidewalk and trail segments to connect neighbors, families, and friends building community and appreciation for the outdoors.



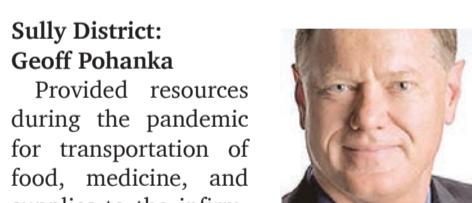
**Springfield District:
Jenne Lindner**

Preserved our rich historical legacy as a volunteer for Friends of Historic Fairfax Court House and to preserve the historic African American Jermantown Cemetery.



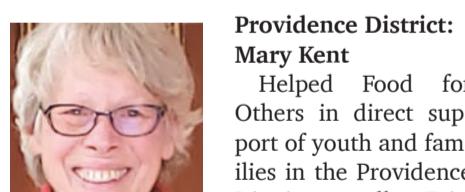
**Mount Vernon
District: Jim Klein**

Provided suggestions and solutions to solve bicycle and pedestrian challenges in our region.



**Sully District:
Geoff Pohanka**

Provided resources during the pandemic for transportation of food, medicine, and supplies to the infirm, invalid, and elderly population, as well as front-line workers and first-responders; provided vaccine to an underserved area community; and new winter coats to Title 1 elementary schools in the district.



**Providence District:
Mary Kent**

Helped Food for Others in direct support of youth and families in the Providence District as well as Fairfax County.



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NEWS



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(D-At Large)



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(R-Springfield)



Supervisor Dahlia A. Palchik
(D-Providence)



Supervisor James R. Walkinshaw
(D-Braddock)



Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk
(D-Lee)



Supervisor John W. Foust
(D-Dranesville)



Supervisor Kathy L. Smith
(D-Sully)



Supervisor Daniel G. Stork
(D-Mount Vernon)



Supervisor Walter Alcorn
(D-Hunter Mill)



Vice Chairman Penny Gross
(D-Mason)

Affordable Housing, Education and Pay Raises Top Priorities

Budget real estate and personal property tax hikes.

By MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

Following a three-day public hearing on the FY 2023 Budget, on April 26, 2022, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved, by a vote of 9-1, changes in the FY 2023 Budget mark-up package. Supervisor Pat Herrity cast the dissenting vote. With the changes, the county has a balanced FY 2023 budget. The Board adopts the final FY 2023 Budget on May 10.

"We also fully funded the schools' request, added millions for affordable housing, boosted funding for our parks, and increased the compensation package for our deserving county employees, including our brave public safety officers," Chairman Jeffrey McKay (D) said.

The Board made tax rate adjustments to the FY 2023 Advertised Budget. More than \$199 million in revenue reductions are included in the budget to support tax rate reductions, although taxes paid will still increase. The Board reduced the real estate tax rate by three cents, from \$1.14 to \$1.11 per \$100 of assessed value. With the rate cut, the average real estate tax bill still increase 6.7 percent from last year.

The Board decided to assess vehicles at 85 percent of the vehicle's market value rather than 100 percent. That will help lessen the impact of sharply rising used car prices on taxpayers. The value of used cars has gone up an average of 33 percent.

The package, McKay said, includes a reduction in the Machinery and Tools Tax and phased reduction going forward to help the county compete with surrounding jurisdictions to attract and keep vibrant local businesses like craft breweries and other small-scale producers in Fairfax.

Affordable housing took center stage. In keeping with their newly doubled goal of 10,000 net new affordable housing units by 2034, the Board committed additional funding. That including a \$2 million balance from the FY 2022 third quarter, and added \$10 million to the \$5 million increase in FY 2023 for affordable housing.

The Board approved pay raises for county uniformed public safety employees averaging 7.86 percent, and non-uniformed employees, averaging 6.16 percent. But McKay

said, "The Board recognizes that recruitment and retention challenges remain ... especially true for our public safety agencies who are struggling to fill the positions required to meet minimum staffing requirements."

When new employees come on board, they are hired at the same level as more tenured staff, contributing to turnover, McKay said. Thus, the Board included \$6.1 million to advance eligible uniformed employees in the Police Department, Fire and Rescue Department, and Office of the Sheriff, one additional step on their respective pay plans.

For parks, the county executive's proposal included funding for a pilot equity program and recommendations to adjust the upcoming bond referendum scheduled for parks and other county agencies to address a backlog of unsold bonds. The county provided funding for debt service payments for Park bonds and fringe benefit costs for general fund employees, and for environmental and capital maintenance budgets. McKay added that the Board is committed to working with the Park Authority Board to address needs and provide necessary funding of \$751,954 for new positions to support the Parks' natural resources sustainability efforts to help maintain the system's actively managed acres.

The Board listened to the nonprofits and added \$825,000 to the proposed budget for contract rate increases for direct service providers and health and human services, representing a 50 percent increase over the funds included in the proposed budget. The package also provided \$180,000 and one new position for the Department of Economic Initiatives to develop a platform to assist small businesses.

The package removed an additional six positions initially proposed to expand staffing at the Office of Commonwealth Attorney.

"Additional resources will be provided to support the office in future years to continue to address workload concerns," he said.

Finally, McKay said that \$250,000 is provided in the package for Arts Fairfax to supplement the organization's existing grant program for the arts.

In their own words: Comments by the members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield): "I think we need to be clear that while the budget on the table contains a three-cent reduction in the tax rate, it also contains the most significant increase in real estate taxes since 2006 ... It represents a tax increase of 6.7 percent for the average taxpayer, and for many, much, much more at a time when they're dealing with the impacts of the pandemic, high gas prices, rising inflation, interest rates, and uncertainty caused by a war in Europe. This is not a budget I can support, given the very realistic options to bring down the rate much further. We could have achieved a flat tax rate if we were willing to make the same tough choices our residents have to make every day, especially given the growth of 40 percent over the last ten years of the county budget...We are taxing our residents out of their homes, making it unaffordable for our children to stay here."

Supervisor Dahlia A. Palchik (D-Providence): "We have reached the historic milestone of surpassing one penny of the tax rate dedicated to its baseline funding for housing. We have started passing two pennies, including federal and other one-time funds. We are committed to reaching the two pennies of our baseline funding, a penny being about \$30 million, in the next one to two years to help us reach our goal of 10,000 units by 2034. We need to continue to ensure housing types, location, access to transit, and public-private partnerships ... (so) we do not have a community, our employees, our workforce that is continually priced out."

Supervisor James R. Walkinshaw (D-Braddock): "We have an opportunity here to take the next step and codify this Board's commitment to the expansion of senior tax relief ... We asked (the) police chief to tell us what you need to address recruitment and retention What do you need this Board to do? And he came to us and told us we need a 25-year longevity step... We have an opportunity here today to give him what he said he needed to address recruitment and retention, or we can vote no and turn our back on that really important issue that we all agree is valuable and important. I think we should listen to him."

Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk (D-Lee): "With regard to the Public Defender's Office,

... I recognize the ongoing struggle to create parity between their office and the Commonwealth Attorney's Office. I am proud of the resources and commitments that Fairfax County has made to that office, but I do confess that I'm a bit frustrated that it does not appear that the state has matched our level of commitment in this regard. So, understand that there is an inequity. I want to be crystal clear that we must find more sustainable pathways to work with the state to fund the Public Defender's Office."

Supervisor Kathy L. Smith (D-Sully): "I think one of our biggest priorities has to be our employees and affordable housing. Affordable housing is so vital to being able to attract people here for jobs. We can support both things and still reduce the tax rate by three cents ... I know the next thing on the agenda is an adaptation of changes to the principles of sound financial management. I was really happy that we could work in the joint Capital Improvement Committee with the schools to come up with changes that will be beneficial by changing the annual bond limit from \$300 million to \$400 million over time."

Supervisor Daniel G. Stork (D-Mount Vernon): "People around the state are just saying, 'Richmond, pay your bills. ... Treat the residents of Northern Virginia fairly, treat our needs fairly. Fund our schools fairly. Fund mental health services fairly. Fund our criminal justice system and supports fairly.' I think those are our keys. We know when we get 23 cents back on the dollar, it's incredibly difficult to do that. Even just a little bit more, we can make a huge difference in tax relief for our residents. ... If you don't ask, you don't get. So, we've got to keep asking and keep challenging folks to do more."

Vice Chairman Penny Gross (D-Mason): "I know that others paid for my children to go to school, and I'm happy to pay for other children to go to school through my taxes. That is part of the social compact. I firmly believe that, and I wish we could get more of that out to the public to understand why we were all in this together. ... At some point, I think we need to look at our 20 Year Environmental Vision and figure out what next steps we need to do for the environment if we're going to meet our challenges and our promises for the future."

ENTERTAINMENT

4 Dates to Circle in May

BY HOPE NELSON
THE GAZETTE

Celebrate Mom, pair your cider with chocolates, test your heat tolerance with a wing-eating competition and wash it all down with some wine – it's a busy month in Alexandria's food and drink scene! Here are some of your best bets.

Mother-Daughter Brunch at Whiskey and Oyster, May 7

Let's raise a toast to Mom! Whiskey and Oyster will offer up a special brunch menu for the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend and invites all to come join in the celebration. Along with the food, lift a glass with a mimosa and then peruse the woman-owned pop-up shops that will be featured on the patio. Stick around long enough and you may even be eligible for a prize. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 301 John Carlyle St.

Chocolate and Cider Pairing at Lost Boy Cider, May 7

Kingsbury Chocolates is joining forces with Lost Boy Cider for the next in the cidery's pairing events – this time, featuring an array of delectable sweets. Your ticket grants you access to a flight of ciders with two chocolates per drink. With a variety of bonbons and bars ranging from fruit cordial



Whiskey and Oyster will offer up a special brunch menu for the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend, plus woman-owned pop-up shops will be featured on the patio.

to lavender pistachio truffle, you're sure to find something to light up the taste buds. \$50. 11 a.m. 317 Hooffs Run Drive.

Spring Wing Fest at Del Ray Pizzeria, May 14

Join Del Ray Pizzeria and the Bradshaw Hot Sauce Company to celebrate all things wings. Looking for a little competition? Sign up for the "Wings of Doom" competition, which begins at 5 p.m. A word of warning: You'll need to sign a waiver. May the hot-sauce gods be with you. 3-7 p.m. 2218 Mount Vernon Ave.

VIP Rose Wine Dinner at Lena's, May 23-24

Rose season is here again! The rosy-cheeked wine varietal is the perfect accompaniment to these warmer days. In honor of National Wine Day, Lena's is sponsoring a Rose Wine Dinner to celebrate the beverage – and pair it with a four-course tasting menu. The accompanying drink pairings include a rose cocktail and three glasses of rose wine. Reservations required. \$85. 6-8:30 p.m. 401 E. Braddock Road.

Hope Nelson is the author of "Classic Restaurants of Alexandria" and owns the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.

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Obituary

Obituary

Taylor, Danna Lee

Danna was born in Loyal, Wisconsin on Nov. 23rd, 1948. She died with her devoted husband, Brian, at her bedside, after a 2 1/2 year battle with breast cancer at Good Shepherd Hospice in Lakeland, Florida on Nov. 2nd, 2021. Danna worked for Allegheny, Piedmont, USAir and retired as an Administrative Assistant from SAIC in Tysons Corner, Va. Danna was always willing to share her beliefs and her opinion, whether you liked it or not. Danna was an active member of the Front Royal Elks Club. In addition, she was a volunteer for the Meals on Wheels program in Front Royal. She was an avid gardener and was very happy to share the fruits and vegetables she grew on the family farm with her many friends in Front Royal.

While living in Florida, Danna started taking Bridge lessons and spent many hours studying and learning the game. She participated in several Bridge groups and spent many hours on the computer playing and learning about the game. She met many of her Florida friends through her participation in Bridge. She loved the challenge and was always striving to get better at the game. She was married for 40 years to her loving husband, Brian Taylor of Alexandria, Va., Strasburg, Va. and currently, Lakeland, Fl. Danna was the scorekeeper for the Mount Vernon High School Wrestling Team where her husband was the head coach for 15 years. She was the head scorekeeper for many District, Regional and Va. State Wrestling Tournaments.

She is also survived by her brother and sister-in-law Verland and Debra Hammer of Rockford, Illinois, sister and brother-in-law, Marggo and Ray Reinart of Granton, Wisconsin, sister and brother-in-law Pamela Mitchell and Larry Wood of Middletown, Va., brother and sister-in-law Butch and Lucia Houpt of Marshfield, Wisconsin, sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Mary Ellen and Danny Varela of Warrenton, Va. Cousin Donna Heslop of Pilot Mound, Iowa.

She is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews too numerous to mention.

Danna's ashes will be interred at Mount Comfort Cemetery in Alexandria, Va. On Saturday, June 25th at 10 AM. 6600 S. Kings Hwy, Alex. Va. 22306
In Lieu of flowers, send donations to Good Shepherd Hospice, 3470 Lakeland Hills Blvd. Lakeland, Fl. 33805

Obituary

Obituary



Rev. Roger Lee McGee, 65, of Alexandria, Va., passed away unexpectedly on April 19, 2022 at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital after injuries sustained in an accident.

For the last 27 years, Roger has served as Pastor for Music and Worship at First Baptist Church of Alexandria. Over the years, he has led tens of thousands of people in worshiping Jesus every Sunday, and impacted thousands more through his music ministry. Roger was responsible for leading more than 400 people from toddlers to seniors in choirs, an orchestra, bands, and a technology team. He led mission trips to nearly every continent, as well as hundreds of concerts and community events more locally. He previously served at Ashley River Baptist Church in Charleston, S.C. for 10 years, and at Forest Hills Baptist Church in Anderson, S.C. for five years.

Roger lived an extraordinary life that was shaped by his devotion to God. Born in Heidelberg, Germany on Oct. 25, 1956, he was adopted and raised by Ollie James and Flora Belle McGee in Selma, Ala. He attended Southside High School and Shiloh Baptist Church in Selma before going on to pursue a Bachelor of Music Education at Samford University ('79).

While pursuing his Master's degree in Church Music (Conducting/Ministry) from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., he met his beloved wife Suzanne (née South). Roger and Suzanne were married for 36 years before she preceded him into heaven in 2017.

Roger is survived by his sister, Rhonda Mobley (David); his two sons, Corey (Liz) and Casey (Aislyn) McGee; and his granddaughter, Avery McGee.

Roger's fun-loving nature, selflessness, kindness, patience, warmth and passion for Christ can never be replaced. His family, friends, and church community will miss him more than words can say.

A visitation will be held on Friday, April 29 from 4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary of First Baptist Church of Alexandria at 2932 King St in Alexandria, Va. A memorial service will be held the following day, on Saturday, April 30 at the same location at 11:00 a.m., followed by a reception in the church's Faith Activities Center at 1:00 p.m. For those who cannot attend Roger's memorial service in person, it will be live-streamed at <https://www.facebook.com/firstbaptistalexandria/live>
<https://fbcalexandria.org/live-stream>

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the First Baptist of Alexandria Foundation: Suzanne McGee Fund, or to First Baptist Church of Alexandria.

CALENDAR

NOW THRU MAY 5

Solo Art Exhibition. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Art & Framing, 694 N. St. Asaph St., Alexandria. Art & Framing will be home to the exhibition "Works from Nature's Jewel Tones: Paintings by Kathleen Callery. The show features 20 of Callery's works. The jewel tones found in nature have been the main inspiration for these paintings--Kathleen Callery.

NOW THRU JUNE 5

"SeeWorthy" Exhibit. At Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, Studio #9, Alexandria. View ship construction through the eyes of maritime archaeologists in SeeWorthy, a new exhibit from Alexandria Archaeology highlighting the technology used to digitally reconstruct historic vessels. Recent development along the waterfront has led to significant discoveries by archaeologists, including the remains of four historic ships. These remnants have been laser scanned to create models showing what they would have looked like in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

NOW THRU MAY 1

Cherry Blossom Exhibition. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. Art lovers are encouraged to stop by the Torpedo Factory Art Center throughout April to view floral art displayed on all three floors. Participating artists will display their most colorful spring and cherry-blossom-inspired works in their studios from Saturday, April 2 until Sunday, May 1. Torpedo Factory Art Center is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Visit torpedofactory.org.

NOW THRU JUNE 12

MVUC Greenhouse Plant Sale. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Weekends only. At Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. The Annual Spring Plant Sale at the MVUC Greenhouse opens April 2 and 3, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., weekends only. They have a variety of vegetables and flowers for sale again this year. Lots of regular and heirloom tomatoes and not-too-hot peppers (more than 20 different varieties) as well as some of your favorite perennials, annuals, and herbs. Visit the lovely, old greenhouse and buy some new plants for your spring garden.

NOW THRU MAY 28 (SATURDAYS)

Washington Whiskey Tasting. 2-5 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy, Mount Vernon. At this outdoor event, sample George Washington's whiskey and other distilled spirits made at Washington's Distillery.

Enjoy a rare opportunity to taste Mount Vernon's one-of-a-kind distilled Spirits. Sample 3 distilled spirits, made using 18th-century distilling methods and techniques. Hear from Mount Vernon's Historic Trades team about the history of distilling spirits, and tour George Washington's Distillery. This event is held at George Washington's Distillery & Gristmill which is located 2.7 miles from the main estate entrance.

NOW THRU MAY 29

Canvas Meets Curve. At the Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria.



"Beauty and the Beast" will take place May 7-8 at George Washington Masonic Temple in Alexandria.

Sabiha Iqbal and Paul Cunningham have been painting, critiquing, and exhibiting with a group of local artists since they met at the Corcoran School of Art and Design seven years ago. The Athenaeum show is the first joint exhibition for the two artists. While the formal aspects of their work appear very different, they have always been struck by the ways in which their bodies of work echo each other. At times their color palettes converge serendipitously, while the abstract figurations in Sabiha's canvases play off the bends and curves of Paul's three-dimensional pieces. Visit www.nvfaa.org.

NOW THRU MAY 4

Screen Dream and Life is Fragile Exhibit. At The Art League, 105 North Union Street, in Alexandria. Lights! Camera! Action! Screen Dream takes its cue from the big and small screen. Member artists created works—drawings, paintings, glass, mixed media, sculpture, and photography—inspired by the stories, images, writers, actors, directors, and musical scores from popular movies and television. Browning-Dill will be in conversation about her exhibit and artistry in The Art League Gallery on Thursday, April 21, from 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. RSVP here. Both Screen Dream and Life is Fragile: Handle With Care are on view through May 4. Visit www.theartleague.org.

THURSDAY/APRIL 28

Art Exhibition Fundraiser. 5:30-7:30 p.m. At Lorien Hotel and Spa, 1600 King Street, Alexandria. An art exhibition featuring local Made in ALX artists and a one-hour performance by Tik Tok Star & Cellist Andrew Savoia. A \$20 entry fee and a portion of all art

purchases will be donated to the Ukrainian Crisis Fund via Care.org. The \$20 entry fee includes: the art exhibition (with option to purchase art), complimentary wine, classical music entertainment and the opportunity to win a \$300 gift card to the spa.

SATURDAY/APRIL 30

Native Plant Sale. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. At 1701 N. Quaker Lane Parking Lot, Alexandria. Largest native plant sale in DC Metro Area hosts 10 vendors from 3 states and DC selling native perennials, shrubs, and trees for sun or shade. This event is free. Call 571-232-0375 or www.NorthernAlexandriaNative-PlantSale.org.

SATURDAY/APRIL 30

Carrie Newcomer. 7 p.m. At St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road, Alexandria. Carrie Newcomer is a songwriter, recording artist, performer and educator. She has been described as a "prairie mystic" by the Boston Globe and one who "asks all the right questions" by Rolling Stone Magazine. Tickets are \$35 in advance (\$35 at the door to members, \$40 at the door to non-members, virtual tickets purchased day-of are also \$40). COVID protocols, details and tickets at www.focusmusic.org.

SATURDAY/APRIL 30

Community Pet Event. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. At Stevenson Park, 300 Stultz Road, Alexandria. Join the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria for a Pets and People Community Wellness Event. Read more at AlexandriaAnimals.org/Pets-and-People. Visit the website: AlexandriaAnimals.org/Pets-and-People

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www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

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 to 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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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 12

SATURDAY/APRIL 30

Laughter in Recovery. 7:30-9 p.m. Virtual. The Alumni Association at Recovery Centers of America is honored to present comedian, author and social media star Tiffany Jenkins to speak about how she found life and laughter in recovery from addiction. Jenkins will speak about addiction, motherhood, marriage, and mental health. RSVP here: <https://help.recoverycentersofamerica.com/WEBINARAF2022-04TiffanyJenkins.html>

SATURDAY/APRIL 30

Raptor Rapture. 10 a.m. to noon. At Belle Haven Park, GW Memorial Parkway, Alexandria. See live raptors like owls and hawks. Sponsored by the Friends of Dyke Marsh, the National Park Service, Secret Gardens Birds and Bees and the Monarch Teacher Network. Look for the tents near the restrooms. Free. Visit www.fodm.org.

APRIL 30 TO JULY 9

Retrospective Art Deco Exhibition. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. At George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive in Alexandria. The first retrospective on the work of Art Deco designer Edgard Sforzina will open April 30th at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial during the Art Deco Society of Washington's 39th annual Washington Modernism Show. Discount tickets are available at www.washingtonmodernismshow.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 30

May Day Soiree. 4:30-6 p.m. At Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Join the Alexandria-Caen Sister City Committee to celebrate the tradition of "La Fête du Muguet" during a celebration of France's May Day! Join us at the King Street Farmers Market to purchase your very own lily of the valley, followed by a free garden party with a champagne fête and family friendly activities at the Carlyle House. Visit <https://alexandriacaen.wordpress.com>.

SATURDAY/APRIL 30

Historic Hose Carriage Returns. 1 p.m. At Friendship Firehouse Museum, 107 S. Alfred Street, Alexandria. The Friendship Fire Company's ornate hose-reel carriage, purchased in 1858, has been off-site for much-needed conservation treatment. At the welcome-back event Conservator Josiah Wagener will discuss the conservation treatment, how he determined the historic appearance of the apparatus, and the techniques he used. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/museums/location/visit-friendship-firehouse..., or call 703-746-4994.

SUNDAY/MAY 1

Mendelssohn's Elijah. 4 p.m. At Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria. Featuring Mandy Brown, soprano; Heather Johnson, mezzo soprano;

Benjamin Warschawski, tenor; and baritone Timothy LeFebvre as Elijah. Also featured will be the choir of Saint Catherine of Siena Church, Great Falls, Virginia, with Jerry Kavinski, Director. Now celebrating its 31st year, New Dominion Chorale and orchestra will be conducted by Artistic Director Thomas Beveridge. Tickets are \$25 for general admission, open seating. Visit: www.newdominion.org.

SUNDAY/MAY 1

Gadsby's Anniversary Party. 4-6 p.m. At Gadsby's Tavern Museum Ballroom, 134 North Royal Street, Alexandria. Join GTMS as it celebrates its 30th Anniversary with prosecco and cake. Registration is free, although a \$30 donation would be appreciated in honor of the 30th birthday. To register and donate, visit gadsbystavernmuseum.us/events/anniversary

TUESDAY/MAY 3

Haydn's "Joke" for Strings. 5 and 6:30 p.m. At the Rectory on Princess Street, 711 Princess Street, Alexandria. At Haydn's "Joke" for Strings, string musicians from the National Symphony play Haydn's witty String Quartet in E-flat – nicknamed "The Joke" – and "Southern Harmony" by composer Jennifer Higdon. Then, hilarious duo "The String Thing" (Heather LeDoux Green, Paul DeNola) leads a Guess the Composer Challenge.

THURSDAY/MAY 5

Mary Sarah Bilder Female Genius: Eliza Harriet and George Washington at the Dawn of the Constitution. 7 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon. Eliza Harriet was a path-breaking female educator and the first public female lecturer; her courageous performance likely inspired the gender-neutral language of the Constitution. Cost is \$60 individual lecture/\$175 series. Discount for members. Visit mountvernon.org/michellesmith

THURSDAY/MAY 5

Making Art Splash. 6-9 p.m. At Colasanto Park, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. For "First Thursday", come create a "Washington Color Rule-the-School" canvas in Colasanto Park outside the Del Ray Artisans gallery, and recreate a Gene Davis Stripe Sidewalk Painting. Details: <https://delrayartisans.org/calendar/#event=first-thursday-2022>

MAY 6-28

The "Drips, Lines, Splatters, and Splash: A Celebration of the Washington Color School" exhibit channels art spotlighting this movement. Juror Barbara Januszkiwicz selected artwork exhibiting remarkable use of color, movement, line, and sense of space, both representational and abstract. View at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

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