

# CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station

## Asian Festival On Main

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Potomac Banks,  
Explore Fairfax South

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Driver Arrested  
In Fatal Crash

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Middle School  
Library Renamed

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The Choy Wun Lion Dance Troupe thrills the crowd at Fairfax City's 2nd annual Asian Festival on Main, Sunday, May 15.

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MAY 19-25, 2022

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Local leaders and elected officials gather after announcing the new tourism branding initiative and unveiling its logo.

Jeffrey C. McKay (D), chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.



Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Stork (D).



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

## Fairfax County Officials Announce New Tourism Brand for South County

**Connect, reconnect to the treasures.**

MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The Gazette presstime occurred as the announcement was underway. Look for more next week.

**A**t a media briefing held Wednesday, May 17, against the backdrop of George Washington's Mount Vernon, local leaders, and elected officials announced a new brand, unveiled its logo, and a visitors saving pass to cross-pollinate and drive tourism to the southeastern portion of Fairfax County.

The new brand, "Potomac Banks: Explore Fairfax South," creates synergy between the historical, recreational, cultural, and ecological venues in the region.

Doug Bradburn is President and CEO of George Washington's Mount Vernon. Bradburn said that the new brand would make people more aware of the different ways to have fun and learn in South County. The South County Tourism Task Force conducted a multi-year evaluation organized by Supervisor Dan Stork in partnership with Visit Fairfax and other tourism sites and attractions.

"Tourism is one of the top drivers of Fairfax South's economy, which is a major contributor to Fairfax County's overall tourism impact of more than \$3 billion (2019), so the devel-

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Tourists line up to view George Washington's Mount Vernon.



opment of an exclusive brand was a natural next step," said Barry Biggar of Visit Fairfax.

The southeastern area of Fairfax County is a destination for visitors to the region and locals alike. It provides many opportunities that tell the history and culture of America through museums, natural resources, and other attractions. George Mason's Gunston Hall, the National Museum of the U.S. Army, the Workhouse Arts Center, and Mason Neck State Park are just a few of the many things to do near Mount Vernon.

According to the chairman of the Fairfax

County Board of Supervisors, Jeffrey C. McKay (D), the branding was important not only to tourism but to people who live in Fairfax County to "thread these sites together in a compact way for people to understand."

Potomac Banks is the first joint destination-focused tourism brand in the county. Stock (D-Mount Vernon) welcomed all to come and explore South County. "Meet your history. Meet your community. Make a difference," he said.

Visit Fairfax is the official tourism organization for Fairfax County, Virginia. It is



The new logo for the brand, Potomac Banks: Explore Fairfax South.

charged with destination marketing and tourism promotion and is directed by many of the county's top tourism and hospitality leaders. [www.FXVA.com](http://www.FXVA.com)



# Driver Charged with DUI in Single-Vehicle Fatal Crash In Franconia

By MIKE SALMON  
THE CONNECTION

**A** 20-year-old woman has died from injuries sustained in a crash that occurred just before 12:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 12, the Fairfax County Police said.

Officers were called to the area of Manchester Boulevard and Beulah Street for a single-vehicle crash. Sara Flores, 20, of Lorton, was the driver of a 2005 Toyota Solara and was traveling east on Manchester Boulevard near Silver Lakes Boulevard. The Toyota left the roadway and struck a telephone pole before coming to a stop. The front passenger, Danight Girmay, 20, of Lorton, was pronounced dead at the scene. Flores and the two rear male passengers were taken to the hospital with injuries later considered not to be life threatening.

A Go Fund Me page for Danight Girmay had raised more than \$11,000 and was not accepting more donations as of May 18. "If you knew Danight, you'd know she was a sweet, caring person who always looked out for her friends and family. She was a jokester



VIA GO FUND ME

**A Go Fund Me page for Danight Girmay had raised more than \$11,000 and was not accepting more donations as of May 18.**

and loved to share laughs. She would always wear a smile on her face and somehow be able to make you smile, even if you didn't want to. Lastly, she was so passionate and devoted to everything she participated in whether it was for her education, sports, or the Hayfield community," the Go Fund Me said.

According to a LinkedIn listing, Danight was a student at Virginia Tech.

A warrant for Flores was issued for driving



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON

under the influence and will be served upon her release from the hospital, FCPD said. Detectives from the Crash Reconstruction Unit determined speed was also a factor in the crash. Additional charges are pending. Details of the investigation will be presented to the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney for review.

Victim advocates from the Major Crimes Bureau's Victim Services Division have been assigned to this case to ensure the victim's

family is receiving appropriate resources and assistance.

This is the third non-pedestrian related fatality in the County in 2022. In 2021 there was one non-pedestrian related fatality.

Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact the FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone -1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

# Officials Examine Southern Beltway Section for Express Lanes

## Plan calls for express lanes to cross Woodrow Wilson Bridge.

By MIKE SALMON  
THE CONNECTION

**W**ith an EZ-Pass, drivers can bypass traffic on express lanes in certain sections of the beltway, I-66 and I-95 and now officials are looking at one final stretch of interstate I-495 from Springfield across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge into Maryland.

This new idea planners have named "I-495 Southside Express Lanes," is an 11-mile stretch from the Springfield interchange in Fairfax County, across the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge, to the MD 210 interchange in Prince George's County, Maryland. As with the other express lanes locations, the trip is toll-free to vehicles with three or more passengers, but an EZ-Pass Flex is needed to get the toll-free option with a switch on it. A regular EZ-Pass will work but it will charge a toll no matter how many passengers are in the vehicle. Motorcycles are free.

When the rebuilt Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge opened to traffic in May 2008 it included additional space for future transportation needs which included transit across the bridge. This study is being coordinated with surrounding stakeholders including localities and the Maryland Department



MAP BY VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### I-495 Southside Express Lanes proposal reaches into Maryland

of Transportation's State Highway Administration. The study also will be informed by a Transit and Transportation Demand Management Study to be initiated by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and coordinated with the Maryland Transit Administration.

VDOT says the goals and objectives of

the study are to evaluate transportation improvements that extend and provide continuity of the Express Lanes system on I-95/I-495 (Capital Beltway), provide additional travel choices, reduce congestion, improve travel reliability, improve safety, and provide consistency with local and regional plans.

But without three people in the car, the tolls can get very expensive, as many in this area have seen from the express lanes on I-495. In the morning, when traffic is heavy, the cost for riding in the express lanes from a point just south of Braddock Road past the Dulles Toll Road can run \$25 or more. The toll lane operators are using a congestion management system to keep the traffic flowing, so the higher tolls are meant to discourage some drivers at that time, and this keeps the traffic on the toll lanes moving. Nevertheless, it can be a costly alternative for someone in a hurry.

The first express lanes were built on I-495 and this was a big project because many of the bridges across I-495 had to be rebuilt, and that included a bike lane bridge north of I-66 as well. The I-95 Express Lanes came next, and these were partially built on a portion of High Occupancy Lanes that had been paid for with taxpayers money, and now the tolls are going to a private operator. At the same time, these lanes were extended down to Garrisonville, and are now being extended to Fredericksburg. Next on the list were the I-66 Express Lanes, and these are still under construction out to Haymarket.

To weigh in on these plans:



# Express Lanes Plan To Cross Woodrow Wilson Bridge

FROM PAGE 4

## Meeting Details:

### Virtual Meeting

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2022**  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m. (presentation at 7 p.m.)  
Visit [www.virginia.gov/495southside](http://www.virginia.gov/495southside) or call 703-691-6715 for details on how to join the meeting.

### In-person Meetings

6:30 - 8:30 p.m. (presentation at 7 p.m.)

### THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2022

Oxon Hill High School  
6701 Leyte Drive  
Oxon Hill, MD 20745

### MONDAY, MAY 23, 2022

John R. Lewis High School 6540 Franconia Road Springfield, VA 22150

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2022

Nannie J. Lee Memorial Recreation Center  
1108 Jefferson Street Alexandria, VA 22314

All four meetings will provide the same study information, and will include a formal presentation, question and answer session, and opportunities to provide input and comments on the study. The in-person meetings will also include an open house period allowing attendees the chance to view exhibit boards and interact with staff individually to learn about the study.


Study information is available at [www.virginia.gov/495southside](http://www.virginia.gov/495southside). Meeting materials including a public opinion survey/comment form, informational boards and brochure will also be available at this study website. This information can also be reviewed at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office (4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030), or obtained by calling 703-691-6715 for assistance.

### How to Provide Input:

Input on the 495 Southside Study can be provided to VDOT in the following ways:

- ❖ Completing a public opinion survey/comment form at [www.virginia.gov/495southside](http://www.virginia.gov/495southside) or at the in-person public information meetings
- ❖ Providing comments orally or in writing at the virtual or in-person public information meetings
- ❖ Submitting comments by email to [495southside-expresslanes@vdot.virginia.gov](mailto:495southside-expresslanes@vdot.virginia.gov)
- ❖ Submitting comments by mail to Nick Nies, AICP, VDOT 495 Southside Express Lanes Study Project Manager, 9030 Stony Point Parkway, Suite 220, Richmond, VA 23235
- ❖ Calling VDOT at 703-691-6715

All comments must be received by June 6, 2022, to be included in this public involvement process.

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2021 PRESIDENTS AWARD

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# Middle School Library Will be Renamed

**K**atherine Johnson Middle School's library will soon be renamed in honor of Fairfax City Schools Superintendent Phyllis Pajardo. The City School Board made the unanimous decision at its May 2 meeting.

The new name will be the Dr. Phyllis C. Pajardo Library, and the official renaming ceremony will happen sometime in June, prior to Pajardo's retirement on June 30. During Pajardo's tenure, she oversaw the school's name change from Lanier Middle to Katherine Johnson Middle.

She also spearheaded the expansion of the advanced academic programs at Fairfax

City's two elementary schools and middle school, plus the opening of partnerships with the four City schools and George Mason University. And she oversaw the establishment of the Superintendent Advisory Team and assisted the with hiring of four principals.

Pajardo was named Educator of the Year by Leadership Fairfax in 2017, and she's the author of "The Principal Influence: A Framework for Developing Leadership Capacity in Principals."

"Dr. Pajardo has changed the face of City of Fairfax schools," said School Board Chair Carolyn Pitches. "She was instrumental in guiding us through the Katherine Johnson

Middle School name change, and through this [library] naming, we would like to recognize her work."

After School Board member Toby Sorensen read the resolution about the renaming, Pajardo expressed her appreciation. "I would like to offer a heartfelt thank you to each of you for this honor," she said. "Katherine Johnson is a woman who I have admired for many years. She was an active member of my sorority, and I am so honored by this. I was an active reader as a student, and this means so much to me."



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

— BONNIE HOBBS **Phyllis Pajardo**



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Year-Four Puffs cheering on their leader and star Puff during a challenge in Fairfax's play.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Having fun onstage during Woodson's musical are (from left) Hannah Fidler, George Sullivan and Ava Acosta.

## Fairfax, Woodson High Score Cappies Nominations

**C**ontinuing the tradition of outstanding, local, high-school theater, Fairfax and Woodson last week received a total of 10 Cappies nominations. Under Director Chris Whitney, Fairfax High's six nods were for its play, "Puffs." And under Director Chris Rushing, Woodson High's four nods were for

"The SpongeBob Musical."

The Cappies Gala will be held at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., on Monday, June 6, at which time the winners will be revealed. Chantilly and Westfield students are competing for these awards against students from many other schools in the National Capital Area.

### FAIRFAX'S NOMINATIONS:

- Best Play – Puffs;
- Comic Actor in a Female Role in a Play – Isabella Jackson;
- Comic Actor in a Male Role in a Play – Logan Baker;
- Supporting Actor in a Male Role in a Play – Daniel Todd;
- Ensemble in a Play – Puffs Ensemble;
- Returning Critic – Isabella Jackson.

### WOODSON'S NOMINATIONS:

- Lead Actor in a Male Role in a Musical – Noah Tajudeen;
- Supporting Actor in a Male Role in a Musical – George Sullivan;
- Female Dancer – Hannah Fidler;
- Returning Critic – Charley Braceland.

— BONNIE HOBBS



# NEWS

## Felon in Possession of Firearm

A Fairfax County man pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm.

According to court documents, throughout 2020, Babak Safavi, 59, used false names and the internet to acquire and assemble an armory of assault weapons, including at least one with no serial number, while being a convicted felon. Safavi acquired firearms, ammunition, silencers that could be affixed to firearms, suppressor tubes and adapters to manufacture his own firearms suppressors, AR-15 accessories, gun-building kits and other firearm components.

On March 15, during a court-authorized search at Safavi's residence, law enforcement recovered an AM-15 rifle; an AR style rifle with no serial number; a

Stag Arms Stag 15 rifle; a Smith and Wesson M&P 9 Pro; over 2000 rounds of ammunition; 3 silencers; and other firearm components. All four firearms had threaded barrels, meaning they were able to receive a silencer, and the handgun had an illegal silencer attached. The magazines for the weapons were loaded.

Safavi is scheduled to be sentenced on September 1. He faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. Actual sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after taking into account the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Ron Walutes is prosecuting the case.

### BULLETIN BOARD

#### SHEPHERD'S CENTER OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA SPRING 2022 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia continues to offer educational, health and wellness and entertaining programming to our Senior Community. The programming includes Adventures In Learning, Active Wellness Classes, Great Discussions Book Club, Caregivers' Support Group and much more.

The Adventures In Learning program began in April and repeats every Thursday for 8 weeks. There is ongoing AIL programming all year long. Topics this session include Health & Wellness, Arts & Entertainment & Travel as well as World Affairs Past & Present.

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

**The Active Aging and Wellness Program** is an Exercise Class to improve strength, balance and mobility for older adults. This class is held on Wednesdays (via Zoom) from 10:45-11:45 a.m. for eight week schedules. The cost is \$50/session and you can learn more about it and register on the website.

**The Great Decisions Book Club** is held the 3rd Friday of every month from February – November. Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. This program is designed by the Foreign Policy Association to bring people together in study groups to discuss, debate and learn about important global challenges of our time.

The Caregivers' Support Group, started in 2002, is for caregivers of adult family members. Most of the care receivers have dementia, but that condition is not a requirement. Some are cared for at home, some in local assisted living facilities, and some are out of state. Meetings are gently facilitated and encourage sharing of feelings, problems, helpful information, and bright spots. These sessions are held the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month from 10:00-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. For more information, contact Jack Tarr, 703-821-6838, [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net); or Lynn Rafferty, 703-508-1365, [radmom8992@gmail.com](mailto:radmom8992@gmail.com).

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

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# ASIAN FESTIVAL

## Celebrating Cultural Diversity via Food and Fun

Fairfax City's 2nd annual Asian Festival on Main was Sunday, May 15.



More than 18,000 people filled Fairfax's Main Street during the Asian Festival.



From left, Kevin Jung and Kevin Tsai, of Rice Culture, prepare fish-shaped Japanese waffles to fill with red bean, ube and matcha custard.



From left, Molly Liss, Emmie Vannaseng and Shurou Pu, of Toimoi Bakery, selling pastries with Asian-inspired fillings.



The Choy Wun Lion Dance Troupe thrills the crowd.



Audrey Liu, 8, of the Fairfax Chinese Dance Troupe, performs a Goldfish Dance. (The fans represent the fins).



Performers with the Fairfax Chinese Dance Troupe do the ribbon dance.



Selling festival T-shirts, stickers and beer glasses are (from left) Georgina Chigaru and her mom, Cherryl.



Colorful, orange lanterns adorn the main-stage and beer-garden area.



Picnicking on a cherry blossom moon cake and Thai crepes are (from left) Gina Chong, Thuan Tran and Stephanie Chong (Gina's sister).



Serving up bubble drinks are (from left) Roger Arangorin, Ivan Urcia and Maurice Mendoza of District Boba.



Fairfax High sophomore Katie West eating a strawberry-banana-Nutella crepe from Kindi Thai Crepe.



Jeff Domigpe of Tres M Cuisine prepares to serve a Philippine-inspired, marinated chicken skewer.



From left are vendor Jeannette Kang, of Adopted Imaginations Jewelry, and customer Jonni Scott.



Giving a thumbs up from his modern-Vietnamese food truck is Tuan Vo of PhoWheels.



Frederick Corder serving up a Filipino treat of deep-fried watermelon with vanilla icing.



# Virginia Legislators Join In Call for Research Dog Adoptions

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

Several Virginia legislators this week signed their names to an appeal to save 80 beagles used in toxicity tests by two out-of-state pharmaceutical companies. The dogs were slated for euthanasia at Inotiv's Mount Vernon, Indiana laboratory after tests commissioned by Crinetics Pharmaceuticals of San Diego California. In their letter of appeal to the top executives of the companies, Virginia legislators were among 160 legislators from 32 states requesting the dogs be given an opportunity for adoption.

Such adoption is already a matter of law in Virginia. In 2021, Virginia Code (§3.2-6593.1) was amended to add a requirement that any animal testing facility that no longer has need for a dog or cat in its possession shall offer the release of the animal for adoption. In this year's General Assembly session, the section was amended by Senate Bill 90, sponsored by Senator Bill Stanley (R-20th), to make breeders of research dogs and cats subject to the same requirement as testing facilities. The bill was one of five bills known collectively as "the Beagle bills" which sought better protections for "companion" animals bred for or used in research.

The "Beagle bills" engendered a rare show of bipartisanship in the often divided General Assembly. In a statement at a signing ceremony for the bills on April 4, Gov. Glenn Youngkin said, "Today, I'll sign five bills, and those five pieces of legislation, on all of them, every single voting member of the General Assembly voted for them. Today's remarkable achievement brought every single Republican and Democrat together to protect our four-legged constituents. This historic package of bills I signed today clarifies that dogs and cats bred and sold for experimental purposes are protected by Virginia's cruelty-to-animals law, will help ensure welfare standards and save lives, and will give Virginia the authority to take action when welfare violations occur." (See "Governor Signs Bills to Protect Research Dogs & Cats," Connection, Springfield, May 7-13, pg. 5, 15)

The five beagle bills were inspired by the repeated animal welfare violations uncovered at the Envigo beagle breeding facility in Cumberland, Virginia.

The poor conditions were discovered in an undercover operation by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and later confirmed by inspectors from U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) which formally cited the company. Envigo was cited for multiple critical violations in multiple inspections.

Similarly, treatment of beagles at Inotiv, Envigo's sister company in Indiana, was revealed in April, after a seven-month long undercover operation by the Human Society of the United States (HSUS). Their under-



Beagles released from Envigo research breeding facility on their way to adoptions in March this year in accordance with Virginia's revised law.



Senators Boysko and Stanley who sponsored the VA bill to give research dogs an opportunity for adoption before euthanasia celebrate with rescued beagle.

cover operation discovered potential violations of the Animal Welfare Act, including failure to provide adequate veterinary care, failure to minimize animal pain and distress,



PHOTO BY ROSS KORY

Del. Kaye Kory (D-38th), co-chair of the General Assembly Animal Caucus shares a moment with Lulubelle, her foster beagle released by Envigo following investigation of the Envigo research breeding facility.



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Delegate Rob Bell at April signing ceremony for his bill clarifying that cruelty standards apply to dogs and cats bred for research.

and failure to ensure proper staffing. In one example of many cited by HSUS, one beagle was used to test a substance so toxic that it brought him near death after only two days of dosing. Although in obvious pain and unable to stand, he was left to suffer overnight because the veterinarian was unavailable on a weekend evening; the beagle was euthanized the following day.

While acknowledging pharmaceutical companies and the Food and Drug Administration have a responsibility to ensure drugs are safe for humans, animal welfare groups, and increasingly legislatures, are calling for changes to animal testing for more humane treatment of all animals. HSUS notes "nearly 90% of drugs tested in animals ultimately fail in human trials, and a large proportion of these failures is attributable to unexpected toxicity in humans... even after animal tests." Groups point to alternatives to animal testing, including in vitro tests using cell lines, tissue samples, alternative organisms such as bacteria, three-dimensional modeling and bioprinting, in silicon tests, computer modeling and in-human microdosing trials.

While the discussion of animal welfare in laboratory testing will no doubt continue, Virginia legislators, Delegates Irene Shin (D-86), Kathy Tran (D-42), Rob Bell (R-58), Kaye Kory (D-38), Patrick Hope (D-47), Shelly Simonds (D-94), and Senators Jennifer Boysko (D-33) and William Stanley, Jr (R-20), with their signature say, for now, the 80 test beagles at Invivo "should be given an opportunity to live in loving homes."



# BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

## SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthy-minds/fairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthy-minds/fairfax) or [www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html](http://www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html).

Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke sponsors a monthly meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, noon-1:30 p.m., for caregivers to learn and to share with others experiencing similar challenges. Before attending, contact the facilitator, Eileen Thompson at 703-451-8626 or [eileen.thompson1@gmail.com](mailto:eileen.thompson1@gmail.com).

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

## ONGOING

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assis-

tance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email [info@alnv.org](mailto:info@alnv.org), or visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org).

STEM Professionals Needed. Volunteers are needed to assist K-12 STEM teachers in northern Virginia as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, [stemvolunteers.org](http://stemvolunteers.org), during the 2019-20 school year, beginning in September. Please contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488 or [donaldrea@aol.com](mailto:donaldrea@aol.com).

Docents Needed. Sundays 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Greet museum visitors and tell them about the exhibits, the museum and its railroad and Civil War history. Ideal for those interested in railroads, the Civil War and Northern Virginia history. Training and orientation provided. Other volunteer opportunities are gardening, publicity and exhibit planning. Call 703-945-7483.

Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed. Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil at [Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-324-4547.

Volunteers needed at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Museum offers a variety of exciting volunteer opportunities in Museum events, programs and administration. Contact [volunteers@fairfax-station.org](mailto:volunteers@fairfax-station.org) or 703-945-7483 to explore services that will fit your schedule and interests. Visit [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org), or call 703-425-9225 for more.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at [chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org) or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit [www.rsvpnova.org](http://www.rsvpnova.org).

Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke serves those 50 and older who no longer drive. Volunteer drivers are needed for trips (Monday-Friday) to medical appointments and companion shopping within the Fairfax/Burke area. Office workers are needed to answer phones in the SCFB office (Monday-Friday) to match drivers and those who need rides. Call 703-323-4788.

Positive Parenting Strategies Course. At PHILLIPS, 7010 Braddock Road,

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 13

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Beekeeper Andrew Garavito monitors hive colonies and takes honey made predominantly from foraged Black Locust and Tulip Poplars from early Spring to mid July, leaving a significant portion in the hives to feed the bees.



Every stack is an independent hive with one queen, with boxes added to the stack to provide more space as hive member numbers grow.



Hive frame shows a mix of raw pollen, honey, and larvae

# George Mason Brings Bee Studies to Laurel Hill Park

## Honey Bees - the newest forensic tool, helping to find the missing?

By SUSAN LAUME  
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

**T**ucked into a less visited spot in the park, George Mason University's Honey Bee Initiative's latest collaboration with Fairfax County Park Authority, is off the ground ... and flying. The new site in Lorton park is one of five now maintained by the University. The dozen new hives there make a total of approximately 80 hives now in the program managed by George Mason's professional beekeeper Andrew Garavito.

In describing the Honey Bee Initiative, the University says it "works on honey bee sustainability by providing an innovative education, conducting collaborative research, and establishing community partnerships in our local Northern Virginia region. The HBI supports education in beekeeping, research, and entrepreneurship, and develops novel ways to improve the security and sustainability of the Northern Virginia ecosystem."

Co-founder of the initiative, and an associate professor in University's School of Business, Dr. Lisa Gring-Pemble outlined a few of the programs involving honey bees at the university, which now engage the business, science-tech, and forensic campus-



PHOTO COURTESY GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
**Dr. Lisa Gring-Pemble, "the bulk of these 80 hives are going to be used to try to develop a sustainable beekeeping operation in Northern Virginia"**

es. A recent grant, from the O'Shaughnessy Hurst Memorial Foundation, which started this Spring, will help expand the number of

hives over about three years, so that "we can become a self sustainable operation through the sale of honey and related products, such as cosmetics and the creation of mead."

Gring-Pemble also mentions their College of Science has a 300 seat pollination lab. Every Fall and Spring, it becomes a teaching apiary for those students. The College of Education and Human Development uses the apiary to assist teachers in the area to learn about creating pollinator friendly lessons with which to engage their math and science students.

Another project with the Colleges of Education and Human Development, and of Computing, collaborates with the National Science Foundation Future of Work program in a grant that investigates ways to use the bees to spur people to study science and beekeeping.

Likely the most intriguing Honey Bee Initiative project, and the one slightly off-putting for some, is the use of bees in forensic science crime investigation. Just established in November 2021 and opening for use this Spring, the University's Forensic Science Research and Training Laboratory of the Sci-Tech Campus will manage a five-acre body farm in a quiet field in Manassas. Only the eighth of its kind in the United States, hu-

man bodies will be laid to rest on the open field there, not buried. Monitoring their decomposition will allow development of information to contribute to forensic science. Security measures assure the privacy and environmental integrity of the site.

The honey bees will play a role in a project related to the body farm. Four hives will be moved there to see if the honey produced by bees after feeding on flowers near the bodies can help investigators locate missing persons. Explains Gring-Pemble, "the goal is to see if genetic material from the bodies present in the plants growing there can be traced in the bee colony after the pollen is collected." Employing bees is significant because they can only fly a two to two-and-a-half mile radius.

Mary Ellen O'Toole, director of George Mason's forensic science program notes, "The hope is that bees can help find missing persons; ultimately help spare grieving families long-term uncertainty, while also saving investigators thousands of hours and resources in the search for a missing person. In this case, the bees are our new partners in crime fighting, and that's amazing science."

Of course, while the University will use their honey production at other sites to offset program costs, honey from hives used in the forensic study will not have honey

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PHOTO BY JUDY GALLAGHER

Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*) visits a flower

# Helping to Find the Missing Honey Bees

FROM PAGE 12

extracted except for testing of the DNA components.

George Mason's Honey Bee Initiative got its official start in 2013 with just four hives funded from the Patriot Green Fund for sustainability. Beginning in June 2017, Covanta Waste Company hosted a bee sanctuary on the grounds of the Lorton landfill. The five acre site with its flourishing ecosystem of wild flowers and native grasses became a top honey producer after the company created a pollinator friendly habitat designed with plants with root systems above the landfill's soil cap.

University beekeeper Andrew Garavito hopes the second Lorton site will be equally productive.

How was the site chosen? Fairfax County Park Authority provided a list of suggested sites with GPS coordinates which Garavito scouted out to select the best. With the recent decision to consider adding new community garden plots close by next year, will there be an impact to the apiary? Dr. Gring-Pem-

ble sees a mutual benefit for the bees and the gardens. The bees can enjoy a ready source of pollen and the gardeners have close-by bee workers to pollinate their crops.

Is the public in danger with having an apiary in the park? Gring-Pemble, who is allergic to bee stings, is comfortable being near the bee colonies, only suiting up in beekeeper gear if she plans to work directly with the hive frames. She explains that honey bees are not very aggressive. Bees on flowers are usually more interested in the food they're collecting than people around them and are busy bringing pollen back to the hive at the colony site. Unfortunately, bees often 'take the wrap' for the stings of their more aggressive wasp and yellow jacket cousins. Bees sting only when they feel threatened. Don't walk in clover flowers in bare feet. Experts suggest when you see bees, move slowly and avoid sudden movements, such as swatting or waving your arms and hands. And of course Garavito recommends keeping a respectful distance from the hive colony.

## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 11

Annandale. A series of classes and in home consultations taught by PHILLIPS' counselors. Open to all local families. Call Stacy Stryjewski at 703-658-9054.

Thermal Camera Loan Program. Learn where the energy is leaking out of the home with a special attachment for the iPhone or Android. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/energy](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/energy) or call 703-324-5955 for more.

Master Gardener Training. The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit [fairfaxgardening.org](http://fairfaxgardening.org) or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

Fairfax Rotary Club Meeting 12:15-  
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1:30 p.m. Mondays. American Legion, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. Meetings with luncheon and program. [fairfaxrotary.org](http://fairfaxrotary.org).

Civil War Research scholarship to a public or private high school senior who resides in Fairfax, Fairfax City, Prince William County, Manassas City, or Manassas Park from the Bull Run Civil War Roundtable in Centreville, Va. Visit [bullrunrcwrt.org](http://bullrunrcwrt.org) for more.

Fairfax-based non-profit Britepaths offers free Financial Education Classes Sessions at various locations in the Fairfax County area to low- and middle-income adults who reside throughout Northern Virginia. The offerings are free and open to the public, but reservations are required. [britepaths.org/news/](http://britepaths.org/news/)

get-financially-fit-new-year Volunteers Needed. PRS is looking for empathetic and caring volunteers to make phone calls to older adults who may be feeling socially isolated. The commitment is one 3-hour shift per week for one year. Located in Arlington. Ages 21 & up. Intensive training provided. Learn more and apply: [prsinc.org/caring-volunteering](http://prsinc.org/caring-volunteering). Questions? Email [lpadgett@prsinc.org](mailto:lpadgett@prsinc.org).

Burke Lake Seniors Golf League seeks members. Interested golfers are invited to join the Burke Lake Seniors Golf League. Must be 55 and older, enjoy playing golf, meeting new people and having an all-around good time. Reserved tee times on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at the Par 3 Burke Lake

Golf Course on Ox Road. Annual dues for the season – April 1 through Oct. 31 – are \$20 plus green fees. For more information, call Charlie Ryan 703-690-4227.

The Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email [Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov). Also visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltcombudsman](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltcombudsman).

Fairfax County needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltcombudsman](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltcombudsman).

[ty.gov/olderadults](http://ty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Respite Care volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Volunteer Fairfax provides opportunities for individuals, families, youth and corporate groups for service opportunities at a variety of nonprofit agencies. One-time special events or ongoing activities

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The Fairfax Muster Fife will take place on Thursday, May 19 in Fairfax.

## CALENDAR

### NOW THRU MAY 30

Hope for the Warriors Fitness Challenge. Participants can now register for the Hope For The Warriors Memorial Day 30x30 Virtual Fitness Challenge. Kicking off May 1 and running through May 30, individuals can participate in the free virtual fitness challenge from anywhere in the world. The challenge is designed to get people moving by incorporating any type of physical activity for a minimum of 30 minutes for 30 days. Any activity counts — walking, running, hiking, swimming, lifting, etc. The goal for this challenge is to support individuals reaching their fitness goals while honoring and remembering fallen service members. Visit [hopeforthewarriors.org](http://hopeforthewarriors.org).

### NOW THRU JUNE 11

"Xanadu." Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. At The Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. This is a hilarious, roller skating, musical adventure about following your dreams despite the limitations others set for you.. Tickets are \$20-30. Visit <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/xanadu>

### NOW THRU JUNE 12

Art Blossoms 2022. At Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic, 2905 District Ave. #105, Fairfax. A new exhibit at the Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic gallery in Fairfax offers its own interpretation of the beauty of nature in a show titled Art Blossoms 2022, featuring artists from the

highly acclaimed Torpedo Factory Artists' Association. This is the third year hosting a floral inspired show and it's one of the favorites of gallery visitors. This exhibit by Torpedo Factory Artists' Association members includes paintings, fine art photography, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics and exquisite jewelry.

### MAY 19-22

Annandale Book Sale. 10:30-5:30 p.m. At George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. A wide selection of high-quality books, CDs, and DVDs in various categories will be available at the 4-day long George Mason Friends Spring Book Sale. Visit the website: [georgemason-friends.blogspot.com](http://georgemason-friends.blogspot.com)

### THURSDAY/MAY 19

Burke Toastmasters. 7:30-9 p.m. At Burke Oaks Community Center, 5708 Leather Drive, Burke. Burke Toastmasters allows you to practice your speaking in a friendly, diverse environment. They welcome guests. First and third Thursdays. Come check us out. [www.Burke-Toastmasters.org](http://www.Burke-Toastmasters.org)

### THURSDAY/MAY 19

Fairfax Muster Fife. 7-8:30 p.m. At Veterans Amphitheater, 10455 Armstrong Street, Fairfax. Enjoy the Stony Creek Fife and Drum Corps (Connecticut), the Patriots Fife and Drum Corps (Mason), the Old Guard (US Army), and the 8th Green Machine Regiment Band (Mason). Visit the website: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event>

### THURSDAY/MAY 19

Britepaths' Artful Living. 7-10 p.m. At Country Club of Fairfax, 5110 Ox Road, Fairfax. Britepaths' Artful Living event is a joyful celebration of art and our community that also raises critical funds to help our struggling neighbors receive vital supports while they work with staff and volunteers to build brighter futures. Join them for an evening of fun: <https://e.givesmart.com/events/pUl/>

### MAY 20-21

Art Show. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. May 20 from 7-9 p.m. with a reception; May 21 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. "Looking For the Lighter Side" is an art exhibition featuring three artists, mixed media collage, acrylic paintings, wire sculpture, jewelry, and photography. Come to look, come to shop. Visit the website: [www.cmshawstudios.blogspot.com](http://www.cmshawstudios.blogspot.com)

### SATURDAY/MAY 21

Housing Open House. 10 a.m. to 12 noon. At Fairfax Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 10723 Main Street, Fairfax. Speakers from Fairfax Presbyterian Church, HabitatNOVA, HomeAid, and Homestretch will discuss their proposal to build ten affordable townhouses on church property. Learn about our plans and ask questions. Visit the website: <https://fairfaxpresbyterian.org/fpc/affordable-housing>

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 15



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**Announcements**

In accordance with New York law, the National Rifle Association of America announces that its Annual Meeting of Members will be held May 28, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. in Houston, Texas in the General Assembly Theater at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

**CALENDAR**

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# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 12

## SATURDAY/MAY 21

"Labyrinth" Movie. At Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Join the Fairfax Library Foundation for free outdoor movie screenings and food trucks. Refreshments will be available for purchase from on-site food trucks. Food trucks will open one hour prior to each movie. Contact Cheryl Ann Lee at 703-324-8300 or events@fairfaxlibraryfoundation.org.

## MAY 21-22

Girls on the Run Spring Registration. GOTR NOVA will be offering an in-person 10-week curriculum for the Spring 2022 season. Two in-person 5Ks presented by Cigna will be held on May 21st and 22nd in Sterling and Ballston, respectively. Teams will continue to be school and community-based to further our outreach efforts in being accessible to

every girl across Northern Virginia. Currently, 105 teams throughout Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, Loudoun, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William are open for Spring 2022 registration through March 1, 2022. For more information about spring registration and sites for Girls on the Run of NOVA, visit [www.gotrnova.org](http://www.gotrnova.org).

## SUNDAY/MAY 22

Air Force Singing Sergeants. 4-5:30 p.m. At St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. The Singing Sergeants' is the official chorus of the United States Air Force. The Singing Sergeants have appeared before every chief executive of the United States since President Truman and tours the nation twice yearly with the Concert Band. You don't want to miss this exciting performance! Masks are required along with proof of vaccination. Visit the website: [www.standrews.net](http://www.standrews.net)

## National Kids to Parks Day is May 21

Virginia State Parks will feature kid-friendly programming in celebration of National Kids to Parks Day on May 21 to encourage kids to discover science, history, nature and adventure by exploring the outdoors.

National Kids to Parks Day is sponsored by National Parks Trust <https://parktrust.org/kids-to-parks-day/> and is celebrated annually on the third Saturday of May. This event helps kids and families develop more active, healthy lifestyles and create lifelong memories while offering educational opportunities.

Park programs include numerous activities such as fishing, archery, hiking, paddling, scavenger hunts, and arts and crafts. Events vary by park location and each event focuses on the natural and cultural features of the park. You can view a list of programs by park and start planning your outdoor adventures today. <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/kids-to-parks-day>

Participate in the national photo contest by submitting photos using #MyPark-OurFuture on social media and share



what your favorite park means to you. <http://parktrust.org/myparkourfuture/>

Be sure to visit to a participating local library and check out a Nature Backpack. In addition to supplies and ideas to enhance your park visit, you will have a parking pass for free entrance to the Virginia State Park of your choice.

For more information about Virginia State Parks' activities and amenities or to make reservations in one of the more than 1,800 campsites or 300 climate-controlled cabins, call the Virginia State Parks Reservation Center at 800-933-PARK or visit [www.virginiastateparks.gov](http://www.virginiastateparks.gov)

## BULLETIN BOARD

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are available at [www.volunteerfairfax.org](http://www.volunteerfairfax.org) or call 703-246-3460.

Singers Wanted for the Celebration Singers. The women's show choir is interested in new talent to perform at various Northern Virginia community sites. Practices are Wednesdays 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at the Burke United Methodist Church, 6300 Burke Center Parkway. Contact either Barbara Male (barbmdmale@yahoo.com) or Gayle Parsons, gparsons3@cox.net for more information.

Ambassadors Wanted. Visit Fairfax welcomes those interested to become "citizen ambassadors" to the county (those informed on fun, creative weekend outings in the area). Visit [www.fxva.com/online-ambassador](http://www.fxva.com/online-ambassador).

American Red Cross CPR, First Aid and AED. Various times, at 2720 State Route 699, Suite 200, Fairfax. One-year certification, digital or print materials and continued education on Mondays through Thursday and Saturday. \$90-110. [www.redcrossnca.org](http://www.redcrossnca.org).

Volunteers Needed for Driving & Administrative Assistance Shepherd's Center of Fairfax Burke Volunteer drivers are needed for trips Monday - Friday to medical appointments and companion shopping within the Fairfax/

Burke area. Office Workers are needed to answer phones in the SCFB office Monday - Friday to assist individuals requesting rides and to match an available driver for each request. If you can volunteer your time or if someone you know is unable to get out and needs weekly calls and visits, or you would like to be a caller or visitor, please contact the SCFB office at 703-323-4788. <https://www.scfbva.org/>

Volunteer with CASA and Lift Up a Child's Voice. Become a Court Appointed Special Advocate and provide an abused and neglected child with a voice within the confusing child welfare system. Fairfax CASA is a 501(c)3 public charity that provides every child who has an open abuse and neglect case in the Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court with a voice. Our goal is to find every child a safe and loving home by reporting to the courts on the "best interest" of the child. While many children have social workers, foster parents, therapists and teachers which change over time, the CASA volunteer is often the only stable adult presence in their life. Join Fairfax CASA in raising awareness about the volunteering opportunities within our organization. Visit [www.fairfaxcasa.org](http://www.fairfaxcasa.org) for more information about Fairfax CASA.

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## A Little Perspective



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Last week's column addressed the issue of uncertainty which, as a long-surviving and still-undergoing-treatment cancer patient, I am very familiar. In fact, 'uncertainty' becomes my daily bread whether I'm hungry or not. I learned early on in my cancer life that there are no guarantees. Instead, there are ups and downs all-around. If life in the cancer lane were an amusement ride, it would be the most feared, gut-wrenching, life-altering roller coaster you ever had the misfortune of experiencing. The significant difference being that roller coasters don't kill you. They scare you certainly, but, when the ride is finished so too is your involvement. Unfortunately, for a cancer patient, the ride is never over.

And it's some ride, too. A ride where your life really is at risk, and one that constantly changes direction and takes you places emotionally and spiritually you likely never imagined. Moreover, nothing really prepares you for the diagnosis and it's only the prognosis that might provide a little relief if you're lucky. Many cancers are survivable now compared to the previous generation. Nevertheless, cancer remains the most feared word in any conversation, especially when it's directed at you by an oncologist with whom an appointment has been set after you have taken multiple diagnostic steps to confirm your diagnosis.

For me, the process took about six weeks from when I first went to an emergency room complaining of migrating pain in my right rib cage area (after it being on the left side a few days earlier) and having difficulty breathing and catching my breath to two sets of chest X-Rays, one CT scan, one PET scan and finally a surgical biopsy. I visited multiple doctors in multiple locations until the diagnosis was confirmed and the initial appointment with an oncologist was arranged.

A week or so prior to meeting the oncologist, my internal medicine doctor had called me at work with the results of the previous week's biopsy. When he asked me if I wanted to meet at his office to discuss the results, I figured the news was bad, but I never imagined how bad it would be: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. How bad you ask? "13 month to two years" prognosis, that's how. I was age 54 and half.

Much has changed in the past 13-plus years since that late February 2009 shock. For one thing, and most significantly, my diagnosis. I am now a papillary thyroid cancer patient and have had a thyroidectomy to surgically remove both my thyroid glands. My prognosis however is not exactly "terminal" as it was when I was diagnosed with lung cancer, but it's precarious nonetheless as previous columns have explained (the one medication that's effective has a three-year window: I'm nearing the end of year two) and at present, there's no new options. Still, I can't worry about things for which I have no control (another lesson). As concerns what happens to my life when the 10 mg lenvima is no longer effective? To invoke Scarlett O'Hara at the end of "Gone with the Wind:" "I'll worry about that tomorrow."

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



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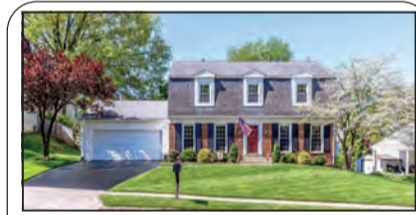
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