

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

MAY 19, 2022



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 Storck (D).



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/GAZETTE PACKET

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

**Connect, reconnect to the treasures.**

MERCIA HOBSON  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

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 Storck 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-



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



COURTESY OF VISIT FAIRFAX

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)

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#WeAreAlexandria



**Windsor Oaks | \$2,995,000**

Elegant Georgian style home with 5 beds, 6 full renovated baths, 2 half baths. The home is located on a quiet cul-de-sac in the heart of Alexandria with approximately 6000 square feet of living space. The house has been extensively renovated is light and airy with views over the rear garden and gunite pool. The house is presented in exceptional condition. Elevator access to all floors, zoned heat and cooling controlled by smart technology, automatic house generator and 5 fireplaces. 504 Richards Ln  
**Margaret Benghauser 703.989.6961**  
**Sarah E. King 703.864.5050**



**OPEN SAT 5/21, 11-1 & SUN 5/22, 2-4**

**Old Town | \$575,000**

Welcome to Marina Towers! Beautifully renovated 2-bed condo with panoramic views of the DC skyline and colorful sunsets! This home has been freshly painted and has new luxury wide-plank flooring throughout. 501 Slaters Ln #1111  
**Melissa Rosario 919.518.7288**  
**EnjoyLivingHere.com**



**OPEN SUN 5/22, 1-4**

**Fort Hunt | \$1,200,000**

Gorgeous and spacious, almost 4700 finished sq ft, with 5 beds and 3.5 baths, built on a lovely corner lot, elegant 2 story entryway with a grand staircase. Fantastic family room with vaulted ceilings and tons of windows. 1802 Rampart Dr  
**Kim Peele 703.244.5852**  
**Hope Peele 703.244.6115**



**OPEN SAT 5/21 & SUN 5/22, 2-4**

**Hollin Hall Village | \$699,000**

Quintessential Hollin Hall expanded one-level living. Impeccably maintained, this 3-bed, 2-bath home boasts: a thoughtful addition that transforms the original floorplan, renovated and expanded kitchen, and a gorgeous yard. 1702 Jamestown Rd  
**Heidi Burkhardt 703.217.6009**  
**RealtorHeidiB.com**



**OPEN SAT 5/21 & SUN 5/22, 1-4**

**Villamay | \$1,260,000**

Stunning all-brick, fully upgraded 2-level rambler with 4 beds and 3 baths. The home has 2,828 finished sq ft of living area, a 2-car garage, and sits on a professionally landscaped lot, that backs-up to National Park land. 7401 Park Terrace Dr  
**Jud Burke 703.966.8343**  
**JudBurke.com**



**OPEN SAT 5/21 & SUN 5/22, 2-4**

**Beverly Hills | \$1,155,000**

Fully upgraded 2-level, 3-bed, 3-full bath, Craftsman conversion with exceptional custom millwork & light interior. Eat-in gourmet kitchen. Fully landscaped, irrigated lot with tall trees and year-round blooms. 3307 Circle Hill Rd  
**Barbara Cousens 703.966.4180**  
**BarbaraCousens.com**



**OPEN SAT 5/21 & SUN 5/22, 12-2**

**Seminary Hill Estates | \$949,900**

4-bed, 3-bath home on a quiet cul-de-sac, 14,000 square foot lot. Features include a walkout basement to huge covered porch and 2-car garage. Ideally situated off of Seminary Rd and minutes to 395, shops and restaurants. 4301 Ivanhoe Pl  
**Jennifer Walker 703.675.1566**  
**JenWalker.com**



**OPEN SUN 5/22, 2-4**

**Old Town \$849,900**

Beautiful 2-bed, 2.5-bath brick townhouse. Features wood floors and recessed lighting throughout, a private terrace off the owners' suite,

an updated kitchen with granite counters and stainless steel appliances, two en-suite full baths and underground assigned parking for 1 car. 1052 N. Royal St

**Wendy Santantonio 703.625.8802**  
**WendySantantonio.com**



**OPEN SAT 5/21, 12-2**

**Del Ray \$849,900**

3-bed, 2.5-bath duplex. Bright open floor plan boasts hardwoods on main and upper levels. Amazing, renovated chef's kitchen. Private loft. Outdoor living

space, patio and fenced in yard. Walk to shops and restaurants on "The Avenue." Easy access to National Airport, and much more! 329-A Clifford Ave

**Jennifer Walker 703.675.1566**  
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Volunteers pulled more than 5,000 pounds of trash and junk out of Little Hunting Creek.

## Annual Little Hunting Creek Cleanup

**239 shopping carts have been pulled from the creek bed in the past 10 years of cleanups.**

Sen. Scott Surovell, Del. Paul Krizek and Supervisor Rodney Lusk hosted the annual Little Hunting Creek Cleanup near U.S. 1 in Lee District on Saturday, April 30.

Dubbed “Fairfax County’s Trashiest Stream” in 2007 by Fairfax County Government, the creek collects volumes of trash, litter, and foreign objects due to an outdated stormwater system coupled with significant uncontrolled litter.

Little Hunting Creek’s trashiest section runs through Hybla Valley before it crosses U.S. 1 and passes

George Washington’s Mount Vernon Estate on its way to the Potomac River.

In coordination with the Friends of Little Hunting Creek, Krizek, Lusk and Maranatha Bible Church, Surovell hosted three cleanup sites in the Hybla Valley area at Janna Lee Avenue Bridge, on Grackle Court in Audubon Estates, and at the Mount Vernon Shopping Plaza behind the Shoppers Food Warehouse.

Volunteers included Boy Scout Troop 654, students from West Potomac and Mount Vernon high schools, congregants from Maranatha Bible Church as well as residents of Fairfax and Prince William County.

With the assistance of Robert O’Hanlon’s Tree Service, cleanup volunteers were also able to extract 11 grocery carts, bringing the overall total to 239 shopping carts pulled from the creek bed in the past 10 years.

“The shopping carts are especially disappointing given that I have

repeatedly brought this issue to the attention of retailers,” Surovell said. “I also warned Costco about this problem before they built their store and asked them to install an electronic cart control system after Fairfax County refused to mandate it through a proffer and they refused, insisting that they had ‘different customers’ than Wal-Mart. Two years ago, we finally passed legislation that would allow Fairfax County to go after the companies that let their carts wander off and I urge the county to implement that program, but the County has refused to take action.

“We also passed a bill to ban styrofoam which will go fully into effect over the next four years and eventually eliminate that waste from the stream. I am very pleased that we found no Wal-Mart carts in the creek for the second time so at least there has been progress there.”

More than 80 volunteers turned out to collect an estimated 5,000 pounds of trash in 129 bags. This

adds up to over 24,000 pounds of trash collected since Surovell, the Friends of Little Hunting Creek and the Alice Ferguson Foundation began organizing the annual event 12 years ago.

Volunteers collected plastic beverage containers, discarded food containers, and plastic bags. This year’s trove also included odd items including:

- 11 shopping carts from Costco, Target, TJ Maxx, Shoppers, Walgreens, Home Depot, and Aldi

- Thousands of single-use disposable bottles

- Thousands of plastic shopping bags

- An oxygen tank
- 9 tires
- 4 bikes and 3 child-sized dirt bikes

- 2 street signs
- A fence
- A guard rail
- Mattress springs
- A DSL cable
- A radiator

See more photos at [www.facebook.com/Surovell](http://www.facebook.com/Surovell)

[book.com/Surovell](http://www.facebook.com/Surovell)

Volunteers also observed frogs, turtles and ducks swimming in the trash, along with a large dead turtle. The wildlife presence in this region underscores the importance of cleaning our natural environment so that life can thrive.

“I am grateful for the many volunteers that gave up their Saturday to help clean up their community,” Surovell said. “Little Hunting Creek is still full of trash, but if we can remove a ton of trash one weekend, that’s a ton of trash that does not make it to the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. U.S. 1’s retailers continue to show a lack of interest in controlling shopping cart removal, minimizing plastic bag consumption, or disposable containers in the corridor. We are also continuing to raise awareness about the Lee District trash and litter problem in Hybla Valley. If we continue to push this message, I hope we eventually see a reduction in plastic bottles, bags and overall waste in our streams.”



# Driver Charged with DUI in Single-Vehicle Fatal Crash

By MIKE SALMON  
GAZETTE PACKET

**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 and loved to share laughs. She would always wear a smile on her face and somehow be



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.**

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 under the influence and will be served upon her release from the hospital, FCPD said. De-



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON

tectives 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  
GAZETTE PACKET

**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.virginiadot.org/495southside](http://www.virginiadot.org/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.virginiadot.org/495southside](http://www.virginiadot.org/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.virginiadot.org/495southside](http://www.virginiadot.org/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.

## BULLETIN BOARD

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

### COASTAL STORM RISK MANAGEMENT

#### FEASIBILITY STUDY

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments are working together on the Metropolitan Washington District of Columbia Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study. The purpose of the study is to investigate coastal flooding in Northern Virginia and evaluate

potential measures to reduce coastal flood risk to vulnerable populations, properties, infrastructure and resources to support resilient communities. The study includes flood mitigation measures for the Belle Haven watershed. That project is being considered as part of the study for further design.

The Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment for the study will be released for public review on May 27, 2022. The report will be available online on the project website ([https://www.nab.usace.army.mil/DC\\_Coastal\\_Study/](https://www.nab.usace.army.mil/DC_Coastal_Study/)) for a 30 day review period. Public meetings will be held to engage the local communities in early to mid-June. Meeting information

will be posted on the project website and details included in the June Newsletter.

Public comments will be compiled, shared and evaluated by the entire USACE team. The comments and suggestions from residents are greatly valued and are an integral part of the process. USACE will coordinate with Fairfax County to plan and prepare for at least one public meeting, to be held early in the public review period.

### MT. VERNON FARMERS MARKET IS NOW OPEN

The market is located at the Sher-

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9



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[rex.reiley@rmxtalk.com](mailto:rex.reiley@rmxtalk.com)

OPEN SUNDAY 1-4



**Riverside Estates \$789,900**  
8319 Cherry Valley Lane

Welcome to this lovely 3 level Colonial in the popular & sought-after community of Riverside Estates located about half a mile North of Mt. Vernon Estate, bordered on our East by Little Hunting Creek, our slice of paradise. This home has been meticulously maintained w/numerous updates to include: roof, baths, furnace, double pane windows, resurfaced drive way, privacy fence, interior & exterior painted, etc., etc. 4BRs, 3.5BAs, 2 wood burning FPLS & beautiful hardwood floors throughout the main & upper levels. The lower level is finished w/a Recreation room, den, 3rd full bath, utility room & a large bonus room, 20x11, perfect for storage or a workshop. A large fenced backyard has a screen porch, deck & large beautiful gazebo, great for entertaining or just relaxing w/family.

SOLD



**Woodland Park \$1,100,000**  
3400 Woodland Lane

Welcome to Woodland Park, one of the most Rustic & Coveted Waterfront Communities in Northern Virginia. Among many other things it offers a private picnic area & a boat launch for those who wish to enjoy boating along Little Hunting Creek & the Potomac River. Entering Woodland Park (Note: This is the sole entry & exit point, which dramatically reduces traffic within the neighborhood), you can't help but notice the 3rd house on the left, perched on top of a knoll, a large, beautiful 3 level brick Colonial. Built in 1996, this home has been updated & kept in pristine condition. The main level offers a 2-story entry foyer, living rm, dining rm, large custom & open kitchen, breakfast nook, family rm w/PPL, half bath & last but not least, a large In-Law Suite complete w/a separate living rm, bed rm & full bath. Ideal for a 3-generation family. The upper level has a huge primary bedroom on the right, & a primary bath w/separate Jacuzzi tub & shower, plus an expansive walk-in closet. On the far left is a huge 3rd bedroom adjacent to the laundry rm & bed rms 4 & 5 w/a 2nd full bath. The lower level is spacious, w/a large recreation rm complete w/a beautiful pool table (conveys), perfect for your teenagers & their friends. A 4th full bath & finally just over 900sf of unfinished basement. The backyard is large & just prior to January's heavy snow storm, bamboo provided a huge natural privacy fence. It will grow back, if buyers wish or it can be removed to suit other designs for the property. Phenomenal Location: 5 minutes to Ft. Belvoir (South), & 15 minutes to Old Town (North) along the scenic GW Pkwy, this is a beautiful home that doesn't come along very often!!

UNDER CONTRACT



**Wyngate \$619,900**  
8562 Wyngate Manor Court

Stunning 3 level brick townhome (end unit), totally updated throughout & immaculately maintained with a ground level patio and an upper-level deck off of the kitchen and family room. Ground level offers a jaw dropping garage w/bar, extra refrigerator, & TV that conveys. Also, a lovely rec room w/gas fireplace & half bath. Upper level 1 has a stunning kitchen w/granite, stainless steel appliances and opens to the TV room, dining room & living rm. Upper level 2 has newer carpet throughout, a beautiful owner's suite w/separate shower & soaking tub, as well as two other bedrooms and a second full bath. I cannot overstate the beauty & quality of this townhome - this home is a gem!! Wonderful Mt. Vernon location: 5 mins (S) to Ft. Belvoir, 15 mins (N) to Old Town Alexandria.



For more information: [www.RexReiley.com](http://www.RexReiley.com)

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# Westfields Sprint Triathlon Draws Hundreds

## Splash & Dash for kids.

The eighth annual Westfields Triathlon took place on April 24 at the Cub Run RECenter in Chantilly. The event was hosted by the Westfields Business Owners Association and put on by Revolution3 Tri-

athlon. The sprint distances included a 250-yard pool swim, a 12-mile bike ride, and a 3.1-mile run. Todd Burns, 42 from Arlington, placed first overall with a time of 54:47.81.

New for this year was a sprint distance duathlon option with a 1 mile run. There were also two shorter Splash & Dash swimming and running distances for the kids. The Westfields Triathlon kicked off the triathlon season in the DC Metro area.



Ed Warren, 34 from Springfield, as he crosses the finish line in 1:24:37.



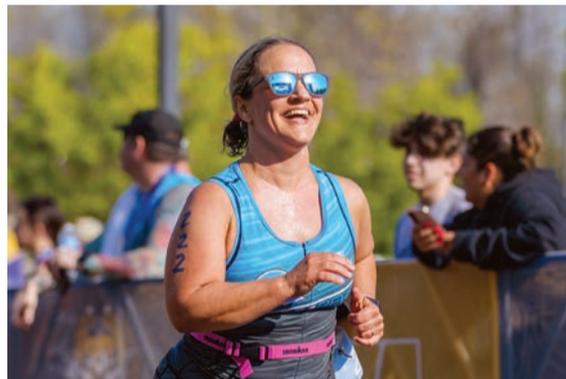
Brian Wie, 41 from Fairfax, cycles his way uphill.



Adre Phillips, 44 from Fairfax, is focused during his bike ride.



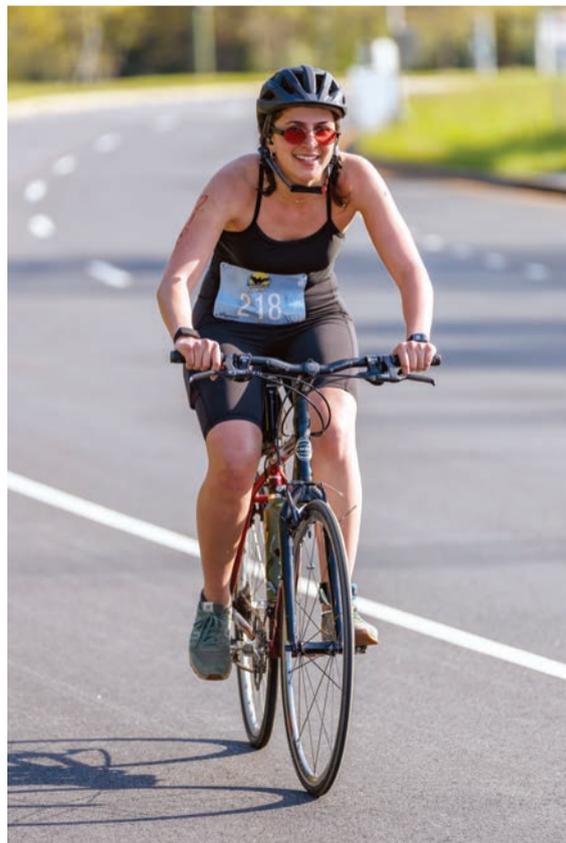
The Westfields Triathlon begins a little after 7 a.m. with the elite competitors.



Julie Upham, 43 from Alexandria, is happy to cross the finish line in 1:35:35.



Rose Andriatsitabason, 54 from Alexandria, competed in her first Westfield Triathlon and third sprint triathlon overall.



Setareh Motamedi, 26 from Alexandria, during the bike leg.



Tim Libeau, 44 from Springfield, sprints to the triathlon finish.

PHOTOS BY TOM MANNING/THE CONNECTION

# Mount Vernon Gazette

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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  
GAZETTE PACKET

**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

SEE BEES. PAGE 9

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# Helping to Find the Missing Honey Bees

FROM PAGE 8

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-Pemble 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.



PHOTO BY JUDY GALLAGHER

Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*) visits a flower

## 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 #MyParkOurFuture 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)

**National Kids to Parks Day is May 21.**

### BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

wood Hall Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. From 8 a.m. to noon every Wednesday (through December 21), 18 farmers and local food producers will sell fresh, locally grown vegetables and fruits; meats; Chesapeake Bay seafood; breads and pastries; honey, jams and jellies; milk, cheese and eggs; herbs and plants; and more. This year's vendors are: Arnest Seafood - crab cakes, scallops, shrimp, rockfish, oysters and more. The Fermented Pig- charcuterie and gourmet bacons. Grace's Pastries - cakes, pastries and breads, with a Caribbean touch. Great Harvest Bread - breads and pastries

Honey Brook Farms - meats and vegetables raised with no chemicals, gluten-free baked goods. House of Empanadas - variety of empanadas. King Mushrooms - variety of locally grown mushrooms. Layla's Lebanese Restaurant - Lebanese hummus, eggplant dip, garlic sauce and more. Linda Vista Farm - fruits and vegetables, specializing in Asian and Latin produce. Memis - gluten-free paellas, quiches and more. Misty Meadow Farm Creamery - milk, ice cream, cheese and eggs. Ochoa Produce - vegetables, herbs and flowers. Salsa Las Glorias - fresh salsas, guacamole and chips. Sharkawi Farm - herbs, spices, teas, plants and flowers. Three Way Farms - vegetables, melons and herbs

Traveling Shepherd Coffee Co. - variety of freshly roasted coffee. Twin Springs Orchard - fruits, vegetables, cheese and more. Valentine's Bakery & Meats - meats and baked goods. All of the items sold at the market are grown or produced by the vendors and come from within a radius of 125 miles. The McCutcheon/Mt. Vernon market is one of 10 farmers markets run by the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA); for more information, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets).

#### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

STEM VOLUNTEERS. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) needs scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and physicians to assist K-12 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) teachers in the

Northern Virginia Area, during the 2016-17 school year. In the 2015-16 school year, the numbers of STEM volunteers in Northern Virginia were: Fairfax County - 40, Arlington - 20, and Alexandria - one. Details of the collaboration are worked out between the teacher and the volunteer, and may involve giving demonstrations, assisting in lab experiments, lecturing on special topics, assisting with homework, etc. The hours are flexible, and volunteers attend a one-day training in September before being assigned to schools. To see how volunteers are assisting their teachers, view the video clips at [www.seniorscientist.org](http://www.seniorscientist.org). To volunteer, contact [donaldrea@aol.com](mailto:donaldrea@aol.com).

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. Assistance 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). United Community (formerly UCM), 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, seeks volunteers for Food Pantry assistance, Early Learning Center teacher aides, basic needs counselors, youth tutors and mentors, office administration/data entry, and community outreach. Flexible hours and schedules. Opportunities for all ages to serve, SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 14

# Portside in Old Town Summer Festival

Expanding to two days and returning to the Old Town Alexandria waterfront for the first time since 2019, the Portside in Old Town Summer Festival kicks off summer on Friday, June 17, and Saturday, June 18, 2022. This free festival features an array of live music, local craft beer from Port City Brewing Company and fun for the whole family at Waterfront Park.

<https://visitaalexandria.com/events/portside-festival/>

New this year, on Friday from 6 to 9 p.m., the Portside Festival merges with the 44th Annual Alexandria Jazz Fest to showcase jazz performances and readings by Alexandria poets. Festival-goers will be treated to jazz from Cubano Groove, VERONNEAU and the Eric Byrd Trio plus interludes of poetry by Zeina Azzam, the City of Alexandria's newest Poet Laureate; KaNikki Jakarta, the City's Poet Laureate from 2019 to 2022; and an up-and-coming Alexandria youth poet.

Saturday from 1 to 9 p.m., the Portside Festival continues with an eclectic musical lineup, featuring Eli Lev (folk rock), La Unica (Irish Latin rock); ilyAIMY (folk rock), Rob Curto's Forró for All (Brazilian forró); Ras Band (Ethi-



Sam-Kittner for Visit Alexandria

opian reggae, jazz and funk) and Pablo Antonio y La Firma (salsa, merengue and bachata). Alexandria-based musicians and founders of the Yellow Door Concert Series, Vaughn and Robyn Ambrose, are guest musical curators and emcees

for Saturday's performances.

Saturday afternoon from 1 to 5 p.m., family-friendly offerings include hands-on art and history activities and more. The City of Alexandria's Office of the Arts pres-

ents a screen-printing activity by Patrick Sargent inspired by I Love You, the 2022 Site See temporary public art installation by R & R STUDIOS. Guests can further their creativity with art activities from The Art League, the Torpedo Facto-

ry Art Center and UpCycle Creative Reuse Center. Intertribal Creatives offers a pop-up version of their Old Town gallery selling Native-made art and other goods. Safe Space NOVA brings friendship bracelets, games and more to the day's riverfront revelry. Archaeologists from the Office of Historic Alexandria will reveal new information about four recently excavated historic ships while presenting a display of artifacts and STEM-based activities for all ages. Families can try out musical instruments from around the world and spark a jam session with Bill Jenkins' World of Music.

Both days of the festival feature local craft beer from Port City Brewing Company along with a selection of food and drinks from Alexandria-based small businesses Borinquen Lunch Box, Chalkboard Wings & BBQ, Dolci Gelati and The Italian Place.

Friday and Saturday,  
June 17 - 18, 2022  
Time: 6 to 9 p.m.,  
Fri., June 17; 1 to 9 p.m.,  
Sat., June 18  
Admission: Free  
Waterfront Park, 1A Prince St.,  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
[PortsideFestival.com](http://PortsideFestival.com)

## CALENDAR

### NOW THRU MAY 29

Canvas Meets Curve. At the Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, 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](http://www.nvfaa.org).

### 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 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 JUNE 17

Vietnam Memorial Traveling Exhibit. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund's traveling exhibit Panel 44: 8 Days in March will be on display at the National Museum of the United States Army through June 17, 2022, as a part of the 40th anniversary commemoration of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The centerpiece of the exhibit is the Memorial's original Panel 44, produced in 1982 but not placed in the Memorial because of a crack in the upper-right edge. It is inscribed with the names of 337 American service members who died between March 9-16, 1968. Two hundred fifteen of the inscribed names were Army Soldiers, ranging in age from 18 to 46. All those remembered by the panel represent 44 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto



The Speed & Style Festival will take place Sunday, May 22 in Alexandria.

Rico. Visit <https://www.thenmusa.org/visit/#get-tickets>,

### NOW THRU 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](http://www.washingtonmodernismshow.com).

[washingtonmodernismshow.com](http://washingtonmodernismshow.com).

### THURSDAY/MAY 19

Outdoor Piano Concert. 5 p.m. At The Rectory on Princess Street, 711 Princess Street, Alexandria. Hailed

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)

# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

for “effortless technical command and authority with a sense of poetry,” award-winning pianist Vijay Venkatesh plays a program of Romantic piano music by Clara Schumann, Johannes Brahms, Frederic Chopin and Beethoven’s famous “Moonlight” Sonata. Website:

<https://www.classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts/>

## THURSDAY/MAY 19

Old Town Art Walk. 5-8 p.m. Various locations in Old Town, Alexandria. Enjoy a self-guided tour of Old Town Alexandria and explore the fine art and studio crafts found in art galleries and boutique shops on the third Thursday of each month, May to October. The stroll is a great activity after an early dinner, or before enjoying a meal at one of Old Town Alexandria’s restaurants. The Old Town Art Walk is presented by the Old Town Business Association.

## THURSDAY/MAY 19

Friends of Dyke Marsh Member Meeting on Plastic Pollution Crisis. At Mt. Vernon Government Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria. Sarah Kollar, Ocean Conservancy Outreach Manager of the International Coastal Cleanup, will discuss the plastic pollution crisis, impacts on communities, wildlife and other natural resources and solutions to plastic proliferation. Kurt Moser will briefly discuss the microplastic pollution study of Four Mile Run. The program is free and open to the public. Visit [www.fodm.org](http://www.fodm.org) to register.

## SATURDAY/MAY 21

Speakeasy Fundraiser. At Lee Fendall House, Alexandria. Bathing gin, flapper dresses, and jazz music – all delights of the Roaring Twenties, and all best enjoyed in person! What you might not realize, however, is that the fast-paced, hard-partying culture of the 1920s came on the heels of a difficult time in history, as the world recovered from the ravages of a war, an economic depression, and a pandemic by popping the champagne and putting on some music. Get tickets at [SipsAndSecrets2022.eventbrite.com](http://SipsAndSecrets2022.eventbrite.com).

## MAY 21, 28

Pillars to Pavers. 10 a.m. At Lee-Fendall House & Gardens, Alexandria. Since the 1960s, the City of Alexandria has seen older buildings and spaces being restored, preserved, and reused in different ways. In honor of National Historic Preservation Month, explore the streets of Alexandria with stops inside several historic buildings to highlight how they have been preserved and adapted for future generations to enjoy. Call 703-548-1789 or email [contact@leefendallhouse.org](mailto:contact@leefendallhouse.org).

## SUNDAY/MAY 22

Speed & Style Festival. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At King Street near Old Town Waterfront and Market Square, Alexandria. The Old Town Festival of Speed & Style brings together exquisite cars and motorcycles, with enthusiasts of fashion, art, music, and style, to create a one-day festival of good energy and fun. It celebrates the heart and spirit of the Alexandria community and highlights the elegance and style of Old Town. Visit the website: <https://www.connectionnewspapers.com>

[www.festivalspeedstylealex.com/](http://www.festivalspeedstylealex.com/)

## THURSDAY/MAY 26

The Golden Age of Gypsy Jazz. 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. At The Rectory on Princess Street, 711 Princess Street, Alexandria. The Golden Age of Gypsy Jazz Myriam Phiro with Nuage Rhythm Chanteuse Myriam Phiro and her band Nuage Rhythm celebrate the golden age of jazz across the Atlantic, from the salons of Manhattan to Paris and the Mediterranean with a transatlantic flair and distinctive blend of Parisian and American Jazz from New York City to the Secret Garden. Inspired by the stylings of Edith Piaf and Nat King Cole, experience your favorite jazz classics in French, English, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish, reimagined through the unmistakable flavor of gypsy jazz.

## THE BIRCHMERE

At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. All shows are at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at [Ticketmaster.com](http://Ticketmaster.com). Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or [www.Birchmere.com](http://www.Birchmere.com).

## MAY

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 Fri. May 20: Rodney Crowell \$59.50  
 Sat. May 21: Kathy Mattea & Suzy Bogguss: Together At Last \$55.00  
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# Fairfax County Considers PPPs for Sports Tourism

Could fields of dreams for sports tourism mean lower taxes for residents?

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
GAZETTE PACKET

The Economic Advisory Commission last month affirmed the Sports Tourism Task Force's recommendation that the Board of Supervisors pursue public-private partnership opportunities for sports tourism facilities in Fairfax County.

Supervisor Pat Herry is the Task Force's chairman. He said that the Task Force's initial objective was to evaluate the growing national sports tourism market and its potential benefits for Fairfax County. Herry cited a Sports Events and Tourism Association study published in "SportsTravel" on September 1, 2020. The study found that "travel to amateur and collegiate sports events in 2019 accounted for \$45.1 billion in spending in the United States, an increase of over 5 percent from the previous year." Additionally, that spending resulted in \$103.3 billion in direct, indirect, and induced business sales and the generation of 69 million hotel room nights.

New and enhanced sports venues in Fairfax County could provide opportunities to position the county as a destination for larger regional and national sports-tourism-related activities, generating significant economic benefits and other benefits. "Other jurisdictions in Virginia and across the country are further ahead than we are," Herry said.

The Fairfax County Park Authority retained Conventions, Sports & Leisure International in conjunction with CHA Consulting, Inc. to

conduct a two-phased study of the potential for new/enhanced sports complexes in Fairfax County. According to findings in the document, "Study of Sports Tourism Facility Opportunities in Fairfax County" August 31, 2020, "based on estimates, assumptions, and other information developed from industry research, data provided by study stakeholders, surveys of potential facility users, and discussions with industry participants, and analysis of competitive/comparable facilities and communities... of late 2019 and early 2020 conditions in Fairfax County."



Supervisor Pat Herry (R-Springfield)

Herry referenced the pending Alpine X as an example of a public-private partnership bid. The facility would be located on leased county-owned land, privately built, and funded. It is proposed to be a 450,000- to 500,000-square-foot facility with a 1,500-foot ski slope, a sky bar, an event space, a 100-plus-room hotel, and multiple dining and drinking establishments.

Alpine X would provide not only recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, including the possibility of high school ski teams and a venue for premier national competitions, but also financial benefits to Fairfax County through the land lease, sales tax, and hotel tax revenue streams.

The Sports Tourism Task Force is enthusiastic about the opportunity and other PPP proposals because increased tourism revenues could help diversify the county's tax base, Herry said. Sports venues could fill hotels with room-tax paying visitors on weekends while also providing county residents with high-quality venues financed by sports tourism dollars.

As for turf fields, Herry said that while Fairfax County likely has more rectangle and diamond turf fields than anywhere else on the East Coast other than New York City, the challenge and disadvantage is that they are not clustered. The fields are geographically dispersed across the county's 406 square miles.



PHOTOS SCREENSHOTS

A rendering of Fairfax Peak, a sports entertainment and active lifestyle proposal for the Lorton Area Development, as viewed on the Unsolicited PPEA proposal from Alpine-X LLC, a Virginia-based company.

"Sports tourism venues want a minimum of 10 rectangles at the same spot so they can host tournaments without having people at ten different locations," Herry said. "Fairfax County doesn't have a concentration of either rectangle for soccer, football, and rugby fields or diamond for baseball and softball fields. We don't have a concentration of them anywhere."

The Patriot Park North Athletic Complex in Fairfax results from more than a decade of planning and effort. It is funded by a bond referendum. Herry said Patriot Park North has reached critical mass, with six synthetic turf fields, four 90-foot diamond fields, full-sized and two 60-foot diamond fields, youth-sized, all on one site.

The new Patriot North Athletic Complex will cost more than \$10 million. It is funded as part of the 2016 FCPA \$100 million bond referendum that upgrades parks and fields across the county. "Basically, our bonding capacity through the Parks is pretty much spoken for," Herry said.

"We are going to try to jumpstart this thing by going public-private partnerships since we don't have the bonding capacity," Herry said.

The county, according to Herry, would

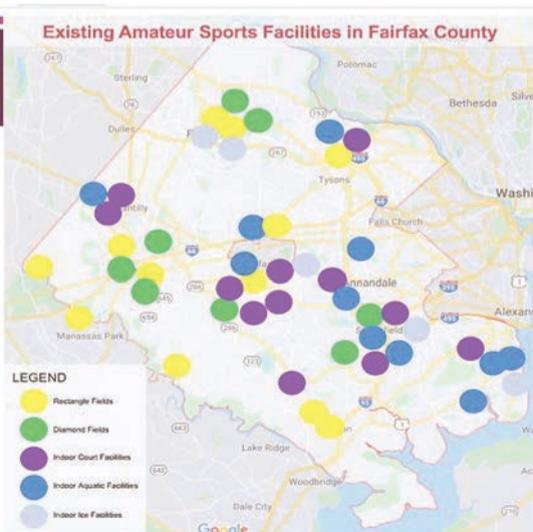
solicit proposals. "They (private sectors) provide the capital. The payback is there," Herry said. He added that according to the consultant's calculations, the county would generate more tax revenue, and the debt service could be borne by others.

ACCORDING TO THE COUNTY'S WEBSITE, the EAC's members represent a cross-section of public and private stakeholders, with seats for 70. Membership includes but is not limited to 12 Fairfax County residents, one from each district, The NOVA Technology Council, the President of the Fairfax County Convention & Visitors Bureau, a representative from the Small Business Commission, members of the Board of Supervisors, and more. A complete list of EAC members is available online.

A county spokesperson said no April 17 EAC meeting video is available. The Sports Tourism Task Force Update Presentation presented by Supervisor Pat Herry, chairman of the Sports Tourism Task Force, at EAC's April 17 meeting is available at [https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/sites/economic-initiatives/files/assets/eac\\_materials/eac-sports-tourism-update-april-2022.psh\\_.pdf](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/sites/economic-initiatives/files/assets/eac_materials/eac-sports-tourism-update-april-2022.psh_.pdf)

## EXISTING CHALLENGES

- Fragmented Facility Support
- Lack of Prioritization of Sports Tourism
- Need for Coordinated Market Efforts



**SPORTS TOURISM TASK FORCE UPDATE**  
SUPERVISOR PAT HERRY, SPORTS TOURISM TASK FORCE CHAIRMAN  
SLIDES COURTESY OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



See Sports Tourism Task Force Update Presentation by Supervisor Pat Herry, Sports Tourism Task Force chairman at EAC's April 17 meeting, [https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/sites/economic-initiatives/files/assets/eac\\_materials/eac-sports-tourism-update-april-2022.psh\\_.pdf](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/sites/economic-initiatives/files/assets/eac_materials/eac-sports-tourism-update-april-2022.psh_.pdf)

More information: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/springfield/sports-tourism-task-force>

Amateur sports facilities are spread across Fairfax County, rather than being in one location, limiting desirability by national and regional competition organizers.

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## Questions?

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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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## NEWS

# County Supervisors Approve FY2023 Budget

## Lone Republican voices concerns.

By MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved the FY 2023 budget by a vote of 9 to 1, decreasing the tax rate by three cents from the current rate but still resulting in a 6.7 percent tax increase for the typical taxpayer.

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) voted against the budget because property tax increases make living in the county unaffordable for some.

"A 6.7 percent increase in taxes on average is a huge disappointment for our residents, particularly those on fixed incomes, as we are facing record inflation, record gas prices, and the uncertainty of a war in Europe. With over \$1 billion in federal stimulus and COVID funding between the county and schools, make no mistake, we had the flexibility to make this a true flat tax for our residents," Herrity said in a release later that day.

Herrity proposed the Board create a Citizen Task Force on Tax Revenue and Expenditures. The Board did not support the motion "Unfortunately, it is clear that this Board is not interested in making Fairfax County an affordable place to live," Herrity said.

The FY 2023 budget provides \$199.4 million in tax relief. The Board reduced the personal property automobile tax by 15 percent and reduced the tax rate and depreciation schedule for business equipment and tools.

Working with the school board, the Board added an extra \$10 million to the budget for affordable housing.

The Board fully funded the transfer request to Fairfax County Public Schools, allowing capital improvements, increasing staff pay, and adding support staff, including school nurses. The amount contributed to the FCPS Operating Fund increased for the

12th year in a row.

Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay (D) said that this budget fully funds FCPS and provides public county teachers and school staff with a well-deserved pay raise. "Fairfax County is home to the best public schools in the nation... Investing in our public schools is an investment into our future community."

### Issue of Panhandling?

In a separate agenda item, the Board voted 9 to 1 in favor of directing staff to investigate panhandling in the county with Supervisor Herrity opposed. Staff is to provide a set of data-driven recommendations on effectively addressing panhandling.

Chairman Jeff McKay said support for an ordinance that regulates right-of-way activities to keep residents safe must balance free expression rights.

He added that the state sets VDOT right of way rules, complicating efforts to regulate panhandling. According to McKay, drivers should avoid giving panhandlers money but consider offering a brochure about county services or donating to a county nonprofit partner.

The Board did not approve Supervisor Herrity's motion to pick up on the issue of panhandling where the Board left off during the pandemic. Herrity urged the Board to move forward with the signage installation, drafting of an ordinance, and a public relations campaign.

"I have been working for the last three years to have the County address panhandling with the solutions the Board committed to in 2019. For us to move forward so far, only to start back at square one is a disservice to our residents and to every motorist and panhandler whose life is in danger in our medians each day we delay. We live in an increasingly urban suburb with very busy intersections where it isn't safe for anyone to be interacting with motorists. The county has great resources to connect with people who are in need, which is a much safer and more sustainable way to help those in need than to give from your car," Herrity said.



SCREENSHOT PHOTO  
Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay (D)



SCREENSHOT PHOTO  
Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield)

## BULLETIN BOARD

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including community service hours. More info at [ucmagency.org/volunteer-opportunities](http://ucmagency.org/volunteer-opportunities) or email [volunteer@ucmagency.org](mailto:volunteer@ucmagency.org).

Operation Paws for Homes, a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See [www.ophrescue.org](http://www.ophrescue.org) for information and all volunteer opportunities.

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).

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).

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