

CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station

Breaking the Record for Titanic (Lego)

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PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

FACETS Works to Reduce Hunger, Homelessness

PAGE 3

Poison Hemlock Found in Park

PAGE 8

Pushing the third and final section of the model together with only the name plate left to complete is Sebastian Haworth who went on to break the Guinness Record for time to complete the Titanic Lego by more than two hours. The results are still unofficial.

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NEWS

Business Breakfast with Lt. Gov. Winsome Sears

Get a report of the last session of the General Assembly from the President of the Virginia Senate, Lt. Governor Winsome Sears.

The Lt. Governor will update Chamber members on major legislation passed in the last Session and share her insights on the legislative process.

This is a joint event of the Mount Vernon Lee Chamber and the Greater Springfield Chamber and members of both Chambers receive special member pricing. Thursday, June 9, 2022 8 a.m. thru 09:30 a.m. at The Fairfax at Fort Belvoir Retirement Community 9140 Belvoir Woods Parkway Ft Belvoir, VA 22060. Park in the parking lot to the left past the guard house. Walk to the community center.

After the breakfast we will take a short walk to the newly renovated Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center at The Fairfax for a ribbon cutting.

Winsome Earle-Sears, a native of Kingston, Jamaica, immigrated to the United States at the age of



Lt. Gov. Winsome Sears

six. She is proud to have served in the United States Marine Corps. In addition to her various appointments, she has served as the Vice President of the Virginia State Board of Education; and as a presidential appointee to the US Census Bureau, as co-chair of the African American Committee; and the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

<https://cca.mountvernonlee-chamber.org/EvtListing.aspx?class=E&evtid=5115580>

BRIEFS

Fairfax's Rock the Block Returns Friday

Live music, a beer garden, food vendors and fun are on tap this Friday, May 27, when Rock the Block returns to Fairfax City for 2022. On the fourth Fridays of the month, from May-October, Old Town Square at 10415 North St. is the place to be for outdoor, family-friendly entertainment.

Kicking off the first Rock the Block of the season, from 6:30-9:30 p.m., will be 70s Flashback, a tribute band playing popular songs from the 1970s. The high-energy performers play everything from the Eagles to Fleetwood Mac, Led Zepelin and Queen.

Attendees should bring chairs and blankets to sit on, and the only pets allowed are service animals. Note: The Old Town Square splash pad will be off that day, starting at 3 p.m., but will be turned back on following that night's event.

Fairfax City Memorial Day Ceremony

Fairfax City's annual Memorial Day ceremony will be held Monday, May 30, at 10:30 a.m., at Old Town Square, 10415 North St. Participants will include state and local dignitaries, elected officials and members of both American Legion Post 177 and VFW Post 8469. The public is invited to attend.

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.

The Active Aging and Wellness Program is an Exercise Class to improve

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

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 demen-

tia, 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; or Lynn Rafferty, 703-508-1365, radmom8992@gmail.com.

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/healthymindsfairfax or www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia Caregivers' Support Group takes place the first and third Tuesdays of each month, 10-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. This group is for caregivers of family members with dementia. Meetings are gently facilitated. For more information and to get the Zoom link, contact Jack Tarr at jtarr5@verizon.net or 703-821-6838.

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. 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, or visit www.alnv.org.

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NEWS

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



FACETS Executive Director Joe Fay discusses hunger and homelessness.



The Rev. Elijah Mwitanti of Christ Lutheran Church



Awais Sheik



Joe Angelini

‘Together, We Can Build a Better, Stronger Future’

FACETS celebrates efforts to reduce hunger, homelessness.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Since 1988, FACETS has helped the poor, the homeless and the hungry in Fairfax County. But like all non-profits, it can't carry out its mission without the help of the community.

So last Friday, May 20, it held an outdoor fundraiser on the grounds of Christ Lutheran Church in Fairfax. Attended by FACETS members, volunteers, donors and dignitaries – including U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11th), Sen. George Barker (D-39th) and Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill), it also celebrated FACETS' many achievements.

"It's been a hard couple of years, with the pandemic," said FACETS Executive Director Joe Fay. "So we took on a lot more, in addition to our regular programs, because there was a lot of need in the community. And some of our volunteers were older and at risk for COVID, so staff had to fill in."

"You don't distribute food or operate hypothermia programs or group homes remotely. Our staff really stepped up and kept delivering hot food at our three stops, every night, seven days a week – and that was our original program when we started in 1988."

At the peak of the pandemic, said Fay, the need for food more than doubled, from 80 meals/night to more than 250. FACETS' after-school programs providing homework help and recreation had to be done remotely and then virtually. And their physical sites in affordable-housing communities were turned into places to connect families with FACETS' services they now needed even more.

"The poor and vulnerable were disproportionately affected by the pandemic," said Fay. "So they had an even greater need for rent relief, financial assistance, mental-health services and help finding jobs, plus food and cleaning products."

Since it began, he said, "Partnering with Food for Others, we've given out hundreds of thousands of pounds of food. So this evening's event – with free food and beverages – is a thank you to the volunteers, as well as a fundraiser, with people donating whatever they can."

Called a "Stronger Futures Celebration," it recognized Fairfax County's dedication to creating brighter futures for its most marginalized and at-risk neighbors. And several speakers talked about FACETS' work to alleviate the suffering of those experiencing homelessness, poverty and hunger in the county.

Christ Lutheran Church is a partner in FACETS' Hypothermia Prevention, Hot Meals and Permanent Supportive Housing programs. Several other places of worship also help FACETS provide services to people in need.

Gail Calabrese, of Church of the Good Shepherd in Burke, said her church participates in the Hot Meals program. "We have five teams that make and deliver hot meals to the different sites," she said. "We were one of FACETS' founding churches."

"I do it because I feel like my life is fairly easy, and I believe it's incumbent on those who are privileged to help those who are struggling," Calabrese continued. "It's not a level playing field. Besides dinners, other FACETS churches provide Sunday breakfasts. And



"FACETS epitomizes faith in action," said U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly.

our church also holds an annual, baby-supplies drive and supports FACETS monetarily."

Giving back to the community impacts the volunteers, as well. "When you deliver the food and meet the clients face-to-face, it makes you want to do it more," said Peter Gaiser, also of Church of the Good Shepherd. "They appreciate it, and you see the need in person."

His wife Cathy noted that, every May, FACETS gives their church a list of the most-needed baby items, such as pacifiers, diapers, wipes, bottles, bibs, training pants, new baby furniture, plus gift cards to grocery stores, Target and Walmart.

"I gather it all up, put it in the back of my minivan and deliver it to FACETS for distribution," she said. "I like it because it's hands-on, and you get the satisfaction of giving something tangible and seeing the generosity of the people in the parish."

"It makes your heart feel happy," Cathy Gaiser added. "Everybody participates, getting things whenever they go to the store. And our Knit & Purl Club makes beautiful, homemade bonnets, bibs, blankets and layettes."

Firsthand Examples of How FACETS' Helps

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

During FACETS' fundraising event last Friday, two people the organization told attendees the difference FACETS has made in their lives. The first, Awais Sheik, came to the U.S. from Pakistan in August 2021 with his wife, then pregnant with their second child, plus their 1-year-old son.

"We moved to an apartment in Alexandria that September; and in October, our daughter was born," he said. "But my landlord was giving me a hard time about the rent; and in November, I was directed to FACETS. I was only working part time, and we had no friends or family here. And we were paying \$1,000/month for a one-bedroom apartment with no kitchen."

So FACETS got Sheik and his family into a hotel room for a few months, and then his case manager, Anita Collins, helped them obtain a new place to live in Lorton. "She encouraged me and helped me find a job," he said. "And I'm now working full time in behavioral-health care as a clinical aide, helping others facing homelessness."

Fittingly, giving the invocation at the outset of last week's celebration, the Rev. Elijah Mwitanti, of Christ Lutheran Church, prayed that every volunteer "continues to enjoy the blessing of helping others."

Fay then came to the podium as the first speaker. He thanked the FACETS team and Board for everything they've done and acknowledged the federal, state and county funding that enabled the

Then Joe Angelini shared his journey from homeless to housed. "In 2016, I was homeless and went to the hypothermia shelter for the winter," he said. "I'd always worked in carpentry, but I became ill with pneumonia – which damaged my lungs and led to COPD – and I couldn't do carpentry work anymore."

In 2017, he signed up with FACETS for housing assistance and was accepted into its permanent-housing program. "During the pandemic, my caseworker delivered cleaning supplies, sanitizer, food and letters of reference for medical care and to a food bank," said Angelini. "And I'm currently hoping to get into Section 8 housing."

After they spoke, Allen Griffith, of Christ Lutheran Church in Fairfax, said their stories were but a small sample of the important work FACETS does, all year 'round, to give hope and help to people in need throughout Fairfax County.

"Until you've been in it, you don't really understand what's going on," he explained. "But it hit me one cold, winter night when I handed two meals to a homeless man on a bicycle, and he said, 'You're going to heaven.' So it's a powerful thing we do."

organization to meet the community's needs during the pandemic.

"There were significant jumps in the need for rental and financial assistance as restaurants and retail shut down and people lost their jobs," he said. "We had to figure out how to provide it safely, and we did it as we went." Fay also stressed that people here still need help.

SEE FACETS, PAGE 12

GUINNESS WORLD RECORD

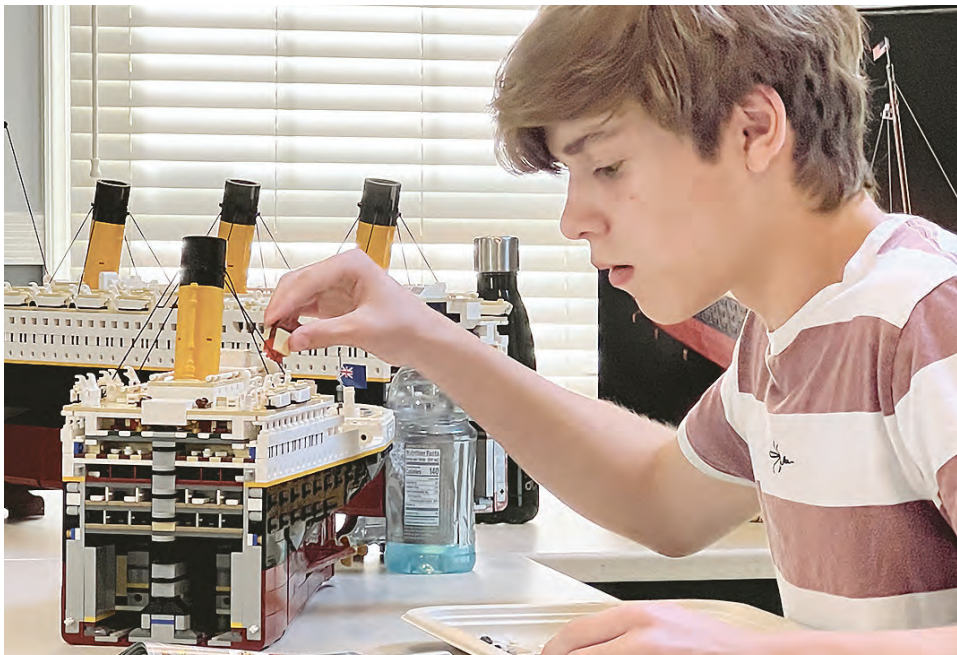


PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Sebastian Haworth laser focused on his task during his Guinness World Record attempt



IMAGE LEGO

Lego's Titanic kit, one of its largest and most costly, a project for the Lego builder willing to invest hours for completion.

West Springfield Freshman Sets Guinness World Record

Results for building Lego Titanic model unofficial for now.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

West Springfield freshman Sebastian Haworth set out to build a scale model of the Titanic from Lego blocks on Sunday, May 22 and secure a Guinness World Record.

The kit with 9,090 pieces recreates the legendary ship at a 1:200 scale, according to the company; measuring just over 4.5 feet long and 17.5 inches high when fully assembled. The world record and fastest time to build the Lego Titanic was previously 10 hours 46 minutes 31 seconds, held by Mike Wimmer of Salisbury, North Carolina, set on March 23, 2022. Haworth's Sunday assembly achievement, recorded at 8 hours 42 minutes 12 seconds, sets an impressive new world record, lopping more than two hours off the previous record.

Haworth has long been a Lego fan and had his mind set on a Lego building record attempt. He originally considered Lego's Coliseum or Millennium Falcon kits for the effort. For those who are extreme Lego fans, called AFOLs or TFOLs (Adult or Teen Fans of Legos), building the kits can be an expensive hobby. Earning money by doing lawn services and saving money collected from his parent's gifts at birthdays and Christmas, he had enough money saved for the Titanic kit. Purchasing the Falcon would have been a bigger dollar stretch. Once he decided on the Titanic, he and his dad kept a watch on the Lego site waiting for the kit to come back in stock. The kits with thousands of pieces, like the Titanic, can hit an upper range cost of \$800. The model ship set Haworth back an amount that could have purchased two



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Pushing the third and final section of the model together with only the name plate left to complete.

real full sized kayaks. But Haworth finds Legos hard to resist as a TFOL with a bedroom filled with completed kits.

The Titanic kit, completed in three sections, allows viewing of the interior grand staircase, boiler and engine rooms, and on the exterior, the ship's bridge, promenade deck and swimming pool. Moving parts turn the propellers, piston engines, and allow raising the anchor and mast adjustments.

Haworth's record effort required recruiting an independent set of dual adult witnesses for each hour who, by Guinness rules, could not be related, involved with staging the event, or have anything to gain from the outcome. Well organized, supporting parents, Pedro and Michelle Haworth, helped by publicizing their need for witnesses and



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Team Haworth, Michelle, Sebastian, and Pedro after their successful record try.

establishing a sign-up, then assuring the attempt was electronically recorded for verification, keeping track of the required paperwork, and seeing that their contestant was fed, hydrated, and cheered on by invited friends and supporters.

Haworth had a high level of organization for his part as well. As permitted under the rules, he opened the kit in advance, preparing by reading the instructions well, and organizing the related pieces into several numbered trays by section. It was smooth but taxing sailing for the freshman until the fortieth of forty-one trays of pieces. That's when the audience of a couple dozen let out a collective gasp as Haworth announced a piece was missing. Fortunately Team Haworth had had the foresight to bring all boxes and bags for the kit to the assembly venue. Dad Pedro rummaged through bags and the crowd let up a cheer when he announced, "I have it."

Only then to have Haworth report another piece missing, from tray forty-one a few minutes later, then also found, adding a bit of drama to the final minutes of the attempt.

Although with sore fingers from pushing over 9,000 pieces into place, in the end all

pieces were found and assembled, allowing Haworth to raise both hands signifying his completion of the ship at about 4:40 p.m. in the attempt that began at 8 a.m.

Once the clock stopped, Sebastian moved quickly across the room, with a high-five for his dad and a hug for his mom, before heading for relief in the restroom.

The real R.M.S. Titanic was built 110 years ago in a three year construction effort involving the work of 15,000 people in Belfast. At the time it was the largest moving object ever built and the most luxurious liner of the era. Its construction encompassed many firsts, including using the largest slipway, and the heaviest anchor ever forged at 16 tons. Her infamous first and last voyage from Southampton took more than 1,500 people to their death in April 1912.

The Hollywood movie of the same title brought the story of the ship's sinking due to iceberg damage to the movie screen in 1997, winning Academy Awards for Best Picture and Best Music.

What will become of Sebastian Haworth's completed ship?

There is no award money that comes with this achievement. Haworth expects a certificate from Guinness in a few weeks after his attempt is reviewed and verified. His record remains unofficial until then. Instead of a trophy the ship will hold a place of significance in Haworth's already Lego-filled bedroom.

His mom thinks there may be just enough space following the reorganization Haworth did in anticipation of completion of his new acquisition.

Guinness World Records are always open to challenges. There is no way to know how long Sebastian Haworth will hold his record until another challenger might have success. One factor in his corner for record longevity — the Titanic kit is currently out of stock. Other hopeful challengers will be forced to wait for restock, just as Haworth did.

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SCHOOL ART SHOWS



PHOTO BY WORKHOUSE ARTIST

Student pictures were featured in the Workhouse all year round.

School Art Shows at the Workhouse

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Throughout the school year, the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton has been featuring artwork from various school pyramids in the county.

Coming up, the South County Pyramid Show will be on view starting May 26 until June 5. It features the artwork of six schools – South County High School, South County Middle School, Silverbrook ES, Newington Forest ES, Halley ES and Laurel Hill ES.

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BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK
MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT

Richmond Highway is the beating heart of our region. It is OUR MAIN STREET. While Richmond Highway is already our main street, the promise of its potential is not yet complete. The Embark Plan envisions replacing the existing commercial strips with an organized series of “villages.” In everything ranging from speeding cars to the number of lanes and reliable bus service, we know that physical and design changes to the roadway are the best way to encourage the behaviors we want. For that reason, I’d like to take a moment to share with you some of the progress we have already made, as well as the

progress we are working on, and need your help to complete.

State and County staff have been working on the highway’s design and new “The One” Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) for years. Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) recently held two public meetings to share the latest design updates based on traffic modeling, North Kings Highway improvements and information on the turn lanes along the corridor. If you missed the meeting, you can view all the materials here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/richmond-hwy-brt>.

A third meeting on how each station can reflect the history and personality of the community is coming in June, with more information to come.

FCDOT also released a survey on the turn lane plans which is open until May 31. Please take the time to review the meeting materials and complete the sur-

vey so we can take everyone’s perspectives into consideration. Link here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RHBRT11>. This is YOUR MAIN STREET and you can make a difference.

In addition to building our infrastructure along the roadway, our goal must also be to ensure that ALL travelers — drivers, “The One” riders, pedestrians and cyclists — are safe and comfortable. To that end, the Board recently endorsed “Safe Streets for All,” an important new County program in light of the recent increase in bicycle and pedestrian deaths in the region. The program aims to create a safe transportation network for people walking, biking and using other forms of active transportation facilities through the creation of “Complete Streets” throughout the County. The adopted recommendations provide a framework of education, policy, planning, and programmatic and

design strategies. I am highly supportive of this new program and see it as an opportunity to really make a difference for the safety of all who use our roadways and trails.

Finally, I’d like to thank the Gum Springs Community and the MVCCA for raising their voices (and a coffin!) to bring attention to the plans the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) brought to us last year suggesting Richmond Highway be 13 lanes wide at some locations. Your advocacy is bringing significant improvements to these plans.

Our vision, and its implementation, will result in new placemaking, investments and economic vibrancy for our community. These efforts will greatly influence the future economic success of our corridor, our residents and our businesses, and are essential to fulfilling the promise and potential of our Main Street.

The Reason for Memorial Day

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

This upcoming weekend is sure to be a fun and busy one for many of us as we kick off the summer with the three-day Memorial Day weekend. After two years of canceled plans due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us are now resuming our vacation traveling, albeit safely, and monitoring local conditions and protocols at our destinations. My family and I have just returned from a visit to upstate New York to pick up our daughter from college and take a tour of the St. Regis Indian Reservation (Akwasne Mohawk) and meet with tribal leaders. It was a beautiful time and full of much-needed relaxation!

Whether you plan to travel abroad, to another state, or to relax at home, as you dive into the weekend, remember to pause and think about the true meaning of the Memorial Day holiday. Let us reflect on and honor the memory of our loved ones, ancestors, relatives, friends, and neighbors who gave their lives in service to our country. We should all share deep gratitude for the ultimate sacrifice of our fallen heroes. Our nation wouldn’t be the great country it is today, a shining light of democracy, a beacon of hope for refugees and asylum seekers, were it not for the sacrifices of our heroic

predecessors, including our allies, especially in the two World Wars. My English mother’s father is buried in Le Havre, France. He was a private in the Royal Army Medical Corps and died in battle in 1940. My other grandfather was an immigrant to America from Bohemia who organized fellow Czech and Slovak immigrants to become Legionnaires to join the French Army to fight against the Austro-Hungarian Empire, an ally of Germany, in what was then the “Great War,” which was renamed World War I after World War II occurred. Most Americans can point to similar stories of sacrifice to our great nation.

This holiday has deep roots here in Virginia. According to the Richmond-Times Dispatch, Warrenton, Virginia was the location of the first Civil War soldier’s grave ever to be decorated on June 3rd, 1861. In addition to decorating graves, there were earlier celebrations in the South that were solemn occasions that included families and veterans honoring the dead and tending to local cemeteries.

Memorial Day was established by General John Logan (see his equestrian statue in Washington D.C. at Logan Circle) and occurred



Krizek

on May 30, 1868 at Arlington National Cemetery, where both Confederate and Union soldiers were buried. While this day began as one to honor the almost half a million soldiers who died during the Civil War, by the turn of the 20th Century, the holiday was extended to honor all Americans who died while in the U.S. military service.

In 1971, Memorial Day became a federal holiday.

Every year, a wreath is placed

on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and small American flags are placed at each of the over 260,000 gravestones in Arlington National Cemetery, including my parents, uncle and other relatives. Thank you to the many volunteers, especially the Scouts and soldiers, who have taken part in this solemn recognition.

So, enjoy a wonderful and safe long weekend. But, as we celebrate the start of the summer season, take a moment to remember those many courageous souls who paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country.

Let Us Know Your View

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National Museum of the United States Army Observes First Memorial Day Open to Public

The National Museum of the United States Army is inviting the public to observe this Memorial Day by learning about the service and sacrifices of the 30 million Americans who have served in the U.S. Army. This Memorial Day will be the first that the Museum is open to the public due to last year's temporary closure in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"While the National Army Museum stands for every person who has served in the U.S. Army, we believe Memorial Day is a time for all of us to honor and remember the lives, courage, legacy, and service of those who made the ultimate sacrifice," said Tammy E. Call, director of the museum. "Our Museum is proud to offer Americans a fitting venue to learn, reflect, and pay homage to those who died while serving our nation."

Located on the Fairfax County Parkway, the Museum is the first to tell the comprehensive history of the nation's oldest military service. The museum is promoted as part part of the newly announced tourism initiative, Potomac Banks — Explore Fairfax South.

Over Memorial Day weekend, the Museum and its nonprofit partner, The Army Historical Foundation, will host special events, including:

- ❖ Poppy flower-making activity, which will give visitors the opportunity to learn about the symbolism of the poppy on this



FILE PHOTO

The National Museum of the United States Army at Fort Belvoir is open for the first time on Memorial Day. The museum is packed with equipment and information about the Army.

holiday while making paper poppy flowers for a special Memorial Day display. Activity runs May 27 – 30, during Museum hours. Free to Museum visitors.

- ❖ Screening of the documentary *Sunken Roads: Three Generations After D-Day*, which follows a group of WWII veterans returning to Normandy for the 70th anniversary of D-Day. Screenings of the 90-minute documentary are free with admission. Showtimes: May 27, 10 a.m. (followed by Q&A with filmmakers); May 28, 10 a.m., 12 p.m., 2 p.m. (Q&A with filmmakers follows 10 a.m. showing); May 29, 10 a.m., 2 p.m. (Q&A with filmmakers follows 2 p.m. showing); May 29, 2 p.m. (followed by Q&A with

filmmakers)

- ❖ Memorial Day Remembrance and Moment of Silence will take place in the Museum Lobby and include a playing of taps. takes place on May 30, 10 a.m. The Museum will also pause for a National Moment of Silence at 3 p.m.
- ❖ On Memorial Day weekend, the Museum will open to families (with advance registration) Operation Safe Passage, a simulated humanitarian mission where participants learn geography, science, technology, engineering, and math to respond to an earthquake. This free opportunity is usually only available to groups. Advance registration is required. Families reserving Museum admission tickets for May 28 – 30, between 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m., will be offered the chance to sign-up.



All weekend, the Museum will also host a hands-on showcase, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. – 3 p.m., giving visitors an up-close look at Army uniforms and equipment from different eras of Army history. The Army Historical Foundation Book Sale of new and used military books will also take place May 27 – 29, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

The Museum is open every day of the year except Dec. 25. Free, timed-entry tickets are required and available by request through the Museum's website at theNMUSA.org.

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County Invasive Management Area Program manager Patricia Greenberg and intern Linnea Stewart assess an area of poison hemlock plants to develop a treatment plan



Early Christian's attributed the redish purple streak on the plant's stem to the blood of Jesus

Poison Hemlock Plants Found in Park

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Hearing the name of some plants alone can engender hosts of images. Roses evoke romance, Mistletoe impromptu holiday kisses, and poison hemlock the infamous death of ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates. Those plants can grow in our area of Virginia; and while we happily gaze on roses in summer and mistletoe in the winter, spotting poisonous hemlock in Spring can be cause for concern. Particularly since that plant looks very much like several other less harmful, edible plants growing locally. So when multiple patches of poison hemlock were recently spotted in Laurel Hill Park in Lorton by a Virginia Master Naturalist, Fairfax County's Invasive Management Area Program was alerted and quick to respond.

Known as Hemlock, Poison Hemlock, or Wild Hemlock, (*Conium maculatum*) is a highly poisonous biennial flowering plant in the carrot family. It is not native here but, as a climate hardy invasive, although not common, has a massive range in North America.

The plant can be easily mistaken for five other plants, making certain identification difficult and dangerous, and leading the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to advise, "Don't touch these plants," referring to Poison hemlock, Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), Spotted water hemlock (*Cicada maculata*), Cow parsnip (*Heracleum maxi-*

mum) and Wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*).

All parts of the Poison hemlock plant are toxic to humans and most mammals, especially the seeds and roots, and especially when ingested; the leaves are most toxic during the Spring. Some people also are sensitive to the oils if they touch the plant. The plant grows rapidly with a long penetrating root and has a distinctive unpleasant odor. Its hollow stems, which can grow from three to eight feet, are usually streaked with a dark maroon or red color toward the base.

"Hemlocks are among the few plants that can cause life-threatening toxicity," according to guidance in Medscape. But no human deaths from hemlock ingestion have been reported to U.S. Poison Control Centers during the past 10 years.

Similar in appearance are the edible wildflowers, Queen Anne's Lace and Cow parsley, which are feral carrot plants in the Umbellifer family. The edible plants lack the purple mottling of hemlock on their stems, which, in the case of Queen Anne's lace, is also more hairy. Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*) was used as a sweetener by American colonists and by the Irish, who boiled the taproot as a treat. The more invasive Cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) tastes like carrot and chervil, and was used by Native Americans for food, medicine and as a mosquito repellent.

According to Christian mythology, hemlock grew on the hill where Jesus was cruci-

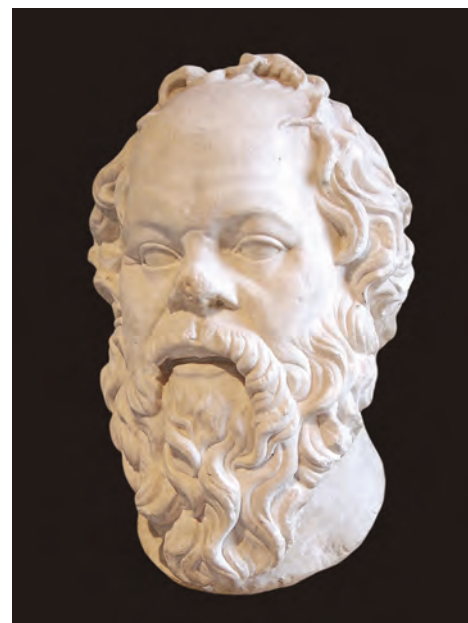


PHOTO THE LOUVRE MUSEUM

Bust of Socrates

fied and became toxic when touched by his blood, still bearing the blood streaks on its stem today.

The most infamous poisoning by hemlock was likely that of Socrates, who chose a hemlock drink to enact his sentence of death for being found guilty of impiety and corrupting the minds of young men of Athens in 399 BC. Shakespeare, who often used poisons in his plots, included "root of hemlock" in the three witches' cauldron brew, noting that when dug at night it was a "charm of powerful trouble." He likely, instead, had *Atropa Belladonna*, a deadly nightshade, in mind for "Romeo and Juliet." In modern times, Agatha Christie's character, Hercule

"Scale of dragon,
tooth of wolf /
Witches' mummy,
maw and gulf /
Of the ravined
salt-sea shark, /
Root of hemlock
dugged i'th' dark."

— MacBeth

Poirot, solves a hemlock murder in "Five Little Pigs" published in 1942.

How does the poison work? Poison hemlock contains the chemical compound coniine, a poisonous alkaloid. Although mentioned in Anglo-Saxon medicine as early as the 10th century, overdose produces paralysis causing respiratory functions to cease and death from asphyxia. Taking 48 to 72 hours for the full toxic effect, the unfortunate being that ingests the substance remains mentally alert and can only be saved by ventilation. Ingesting just six to eight leaves can be fatal for adult humans. Though any who are

SEE POISON HEMLOCK, PAGE 9
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Bike To Work Day, Month of May Tradition

An upbeat activity for an upbeat month heading into summer.

By Mike Salmon
THE CONNECTION

The sun was out, no rain and the area's bicycle enthusiasts forged their way to work from all corners of the area, including Springfield where the pit stop at Metro Park ran short of t-shirts but not enthusiasm. For some reason, there weren't as many delivered, but the riders still got exercise, fresh air, water and comradery with fellow bicyclists at the pit stop. "We ran out of t-shirts around 7:30 a.m. But everyone that missed out on the t-shirts were good sports about it," said pit stop manager Jennifer Brown.

There were about 40 people at the Springfield Metro Park pit stop, which is right off Beulah Street and for those that work in Fort Belvoir, it's on the way. One rider came from Vienna to Fort Belvoir and a bunch of riders were on the way to other locations in the office park. The pit stop was right outside Kingstowne, a family friendly area, so a few families stopped in too.

"We also had several families come in together with their kids, often with one spouse then heading off to work on their bike," Brown said.

According to Ursula Sandstrom, Trail Ranger and Outreach Director at Washington Area Bicyclists Association, there were 14,000 registrants and nearly 100 pit stops throughout the region for this year's event. The pandemic put a damper on the ride in 2020 and 2021 but certain stops this year were still crowded, added Bruce Wright, president of the Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling. In particular, there were a lot of riders at the stop in Reston. "Compared to before Covid, the numbers were probably down a little but it was good to see so many people out on bikes," he said.

Bigger BTW Picture

This year was the 21st anniversary of the official Bike To Work Day as it is known, but the League of American Bicyclists began a Bike to Work Day as part of Bike Month in

SEE BIKE TO WORK, PAGE 10



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/GAZETTE
This rider in the Island Creek area took advantage of the on-road bike trails on Beulah Street at Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 20.



Biker comradery at the Springfield stop Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 20.



At the Mount Vernon RECenter pit stop, one rider looks at the bigger picture for Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 20.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED
FABB's table in Vienna at Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 20.



Mayor Wilson at a Carlyle Square Park pitstop in Alexandria for Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 20.

Poison Hemlock

FROM PAGE 8

fortunate to survive have no long term health effects.

The plants in Laurel Hill Park were recognized by a Virginia Master Naturalist, a volunteer at the park.

President of the Fairfax chapter, Marilyn Parks, explains, "The Virginia Master Naturalist Program is a statewide corps of more than 2,100 volunteers providing

natural resource education, citizen science, and stewardship in their communities." Volunteers contributed over 178,000 service hours in 2021.

"There are real concerns with the toxicity of poison hemlock, as the entire plant is toxic to mammals, including humans," says IMA's program manager Patricia Greenberg. "However, it is illegal to take or remove plants from Park Authority property without the permission of the Park Authority. This rule is meant to protect people and the parkland."

The county will work to remove the plants soon, in part due to its invasive tendencies. Says Greenberg, "Poison hemlock acts as a pioneer species, quickly colonizing sites and displacing native species, especially in previously disturbed soils. Like all invasive species, without management it will continue to spread and become harder to eradicate once it dominates more land."

She and her staff have already assessed the growth area, mapping out and calculating the space to develop their treatment plan. Greenberg commented that the plant's

spread has likely been helped by water in one area, seeing the plants grow on a small ridge, then along a water ditch below. Since the number of plants is too large for the staff to dig out manually, encompassing about an acre, a herbicide will be used to kill the plants.

Meanwhile, let illegal foragers, deer, and rabbits beware.

The author is a certified Virginia Master Naturalist and member of the county Invasive Management and park volunteer teams.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

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Polly Trottenberg, Deputy Secretary of Transportation, takes part in the Bike to Work Day activities in downtown DC.

Bike To Work Day, Month of May Tradition

FROM PAGE 9

1956. Over the years, Bike to Work Day has grown into a widespread event in an effort to get commuters to try bicycling to work as a healthy and safe alternative to driving alone. In the Metropolitan Washington region, Bike To Work Day has grown from a few hundred in 2001 to an all-time high of 18,700 partic-

ipants in 2017. The event is sponsored by Commuter Connections and WABA.

Advantages of commuting by bike include cost, health, reliability and the environmental advantages. BTW officials cite the Clean Air Partners research data that each year cars and trucks travel more than 38 billion miles on the roads, accounting for 30-40% of the ozone-causing pollutants.



The pit stop in Vienna at Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 20.

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SENIOR LIVING

Seniors Explore Photography in Retirement

Partnership between George Mason University's School of Theater and Photography Club retirees extends beyond intergenerational relationships.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

A group of retirees with a penchant for photography are using their skills behind the lens to help students who are hoping to make a career in front of it.

Through a partnership between members of the Photography Club at George Mason University's Osler Lifelong Learning Institute's (OLLI) and the University's School of Theater (SOT), club members take headshot photographs of incoming students as well as the dress rehearsals and publicity shots for each play.

"The SOT gets a selection of pictures from various productions and the OPC photographers are supporting a good project and increasing their skills. There are wins for everyone," said George Bradshaw, a member of the photography club.

"Working with the SOT is a privilege [and] a joy. I end up with a handful of photos that I enjoy sharing with family and friends."

OLLI's Photography Club is comprised of seniors who, in retirement, have time to explore their hobbies. Retired otolaryngologist Edward D. Marion, M.D., joined OLLI in 2015 after a 39-year career as a physician in private practice. "Having been an active volunteer, a part time instructor ... it was a natural extension to continue my volunteer work as a member of the OLLI Photography Club at GMU," he said.

A family tradition led to Bradshaw's interest in the club. "After retiring I decided to follow in my father's footsteps. He was a freelance photographer in New York in the '30s and '40s," he said. "So I bought a camera ... joined the OLLI Photo Club (OPC) in early 2015, and have been having a blast with photography ever since. It's a thrill for the photographers to see their images out in the public in this fashion."

The partnership between students and the seniors extends beyond photographs. "In addition to challenges and joys is the social benefit," said Bradshaw. "I get to observe young adults who will be our future leaders, see how they



This photograph of George Mason University theater students was taken by George Bradshaw as part of a partnership between the OLLI Photography Club and Mason's School of Theater.

approach their vocations, see how they react with each other as a troupe and individually, and simply enjoy brief interactions with them."

"It's not a secret ... maintain an active mind and continued interactions and build relationships between people," added Marion.

Members appreciate the mental and physical challenges that come with theatrical photography. "Technically, photographing plays is a challenge in composition and lighting," said George. "It's also an intense workout, always looking at the actors through a lens with one eye, and over the camera with the other eye for full stage coverage, continually, for a couple of hours. The SOT's plays never let up on action, emotion, and amazing compositional opportunities. This experience has taught me more about using a camera and post-processing images than I could imagine any other photographic activity could offer."

The partnership began when representatives from the School of Theater contacted OLLI to ask Photography Club members to take shots of its students.

The partnership is consistent with institutions' mission.

"The OLLI Photography Club offers enriching experiences for our membership to share their talents and engage with the University,"



PHOTO COURTESY ED MARION

OLLI Photography Club Member Ed Marion volunteers his time to take photographs of students in George Mason University's School of Theater.

said Jennifer Disano, OLLI's Executive Director, "The OPC designs impactful program opportunities for intergenerational exchanges at the University."

Those interactions offer a glimpse into the lives of those at both ends of the age spectrum. "Once I was taking photographs, I had to crouch down to capture a certain perspective of an actor," said George. "Watching me rise slowly from that position, one student asked if I was okay. I replied that I need to replace my doctor because he can't cure old age."

Spending time with students, says Marion, affords him an opportunity to share his experiences with the budding thespians. "The life lessons for younger generations is to be curious, engage in face to face conversations," he said. "Remember that learning doesn't end with your first degree ... instead expect and plan to continue learning lifelong."

Those interested in learning more about OLLI and the Photography Club can visit https://view.flipdocs.com/?ID=10015627_172115#

Looking for resources for lifelong learning in Arlington? See <https://library.arlingtonva.libguides.com/c.php?g=1066292&p=7758981>

BY GEORGE BRADSHAW COURTESY OF OLLI

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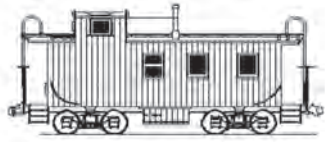
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Legals



**Proposed Ordinance Amendment for the Town of Clifton, Virginia
Regular Town Council Meeting
June 7, 2022**

Notice is hereby given that the Town Council of the Town of Clifton, Virginia will conduct an electronic meeting using Zoom teleconferencing audio and video service to consider an amendment of to the election ordinance in Sec. 2-24 as allowed by, and in conformance with, legislation passed by the General Assembly that all elections after January 2022 shall take place in November, at the regular meeting of the Town Council, to be held on Tuesday, June 7, 2022 at 7:30 PM. The proposed ordinance will be posted on the Town's website cliftonva.gov and a hardcopy will be posted at the Clifton Post Office, 12644 Chapel Road, Clifton, VA 20124. The meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Town of Clifton's Declaration of a Local Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic under Virginia Code § 44-146.21.

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NEWS

FACETS Celebrates

FROM PAGE 3

"There are nearly 1,000 in our community experiencing homelessness and 72,000 living in poverty," he said. "But we're better together – and together, we can build a better, stronger future for our community. It takes empathy and elevating people's voices to hear their needs and meet them where they are.

"During hypothermia season, 235 of our neighbors had a safe, warm place to sleep. And in the last year, we've provided 4,000 households with emergency funding and given 50,000 hot meals. But we still need you all to advocate and make sure no one's left behind. The most vulnerable need to be prioritized."

Speaking next, Rep. Connolly said FACETS "epitomizes faith in action. Its founder, Linda Wimpey, had me come with her one night to see all the homeless people in the county. Among them were men in suits who went to work, but were homeless, and a child who was traumatized by his dad's murder and was living in a shelter."

These sights had a profound effect on Connolly. "I was changed," he said. "Exposing the humanity of homelessness to a politician made all the difference. One accident, trauma or illness – and there, but for the grace of God, go I."

As a result, when he became chairman of Fairfax County's Board of Supervisors in 2003, he made affordable housing its



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION
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priority. He then had the Board dedicate one penny from the tax rate – which raised nearly \$100 million between fiscal years 2006 and 2009 – to affordable housing. And in 2005, the county began its hypothermia-prevention program.

"Empathy is putting yourself in someone else's situation and doing something about it," said Connolly. "So thank you, FACETS, for addressing a problem that could affect any one of us and for putting your faith in action."

Next, two people who overcame challenges with FACETS' help shared their stories (see sidebar). Afterward, longtime FACETS supporter Allen Griffith, of Christ Lutheran Church, urged the event attendees to donate to the nonprofit so it can keep serving the community.

"Through our 'Stronger Futures' campaign, we hope to raise \$100,000," said Fay. "And we've got a \$20,000 match that'll help us do more."

To contribute, go to FACETS-Cares.org.

**TAX NOTICE
CITY OF FAIRFAX**

REAL ESTATE TAX PAYMENTS ARE DUE

Real Estate tax bills have been mailed and are due

Tuesday, June 21, 2022

We have received a much higher than normal number of tax complaints that either no paper tax bill was received, or that mailed payments did not make it to city hall.

When paying, please consider using our 24-hour drop box located at 10455 Armstrong Street (at the front of City Hall, next to the flag poles) in lieu of the USPS. (Checks only, no Cash)

LATE PAYMENT PENALTY

To avoid incurring a 10%, \$10 minimum, late payment penalty and interest of 10% per annum, **payment in full must be received or postmarked by close-of-business on Tuesday, June 21, 2022**

Taxes may be paid online, by mail, or in-person to the City Treasurer's Office (City Hall, Suite 234) 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (excluding holidays)

IMPORTANT

Even if you do not receive a physical bill, to avoid late payment penalties you are still responsible for requesting a copy and remitting payment by Tuesday, June 21, 2022

For Additional Information, please check the City website at www.FairfaxVA.gov or call (703) 385-7900

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 2

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, during the 2019-20 school year, beginning in September. Please contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488 or 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 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 or 703-945-7483 to explore services that will fit your schedule and interests. Visit 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 sched-

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

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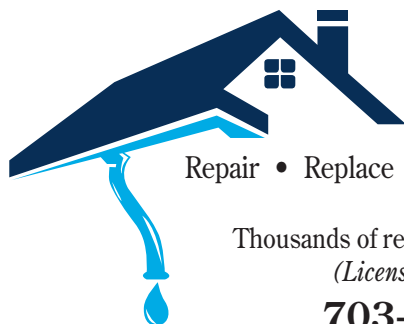
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Announcements

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.

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MusicWorks at Workhouse Arts Center

The MusicWorks concert is happening at the Workhouse Arts Center, on the Quad in the repurposed-for-the-arts, former correctional facility in Lorton, Va. June 3, boasts epic performances, food, drink and art. DC soul sensation Oh He Dead will kick off the evening followed by billboard chart topper Sierra Hull and the evening finishes up with Vulfpeck collaborator Cory Wong. Gates open at 4 and music starts at 5:30. Get your tickets now and be a part of this inaugural music event at the Workhouse as they bring live music back.

Between sets, MusicWorks attendees will have the opportunity to freely explore the Workhouse campus, including its many galleries, art installations and common spaces. Delicious food and drink offerings will accompany the music and fun atmosphere.

Workhouse Arts Foundation President and CEO Leon Scioscia shares, "MusicWorks sets the stage for many future large scale musical events featuring nationally known artists on and around our 55 acres campus. And what's really cool about this event is that our music patrons can visit with our resident visual artists in their distinctive campus studios and see some really beautiful art being made."



Sierra Hull

Tickets at \$50 (GA) and \$90 (VIP). For more pricing information, and to stay up-to-date on all things MusicWorks, visit workhousearts.org/musicworks.



Cory Wong

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.

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 Fac-

tory 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.

STARTING MAY 29

Nine and Wine Golf. Looking for a relaxing nine holes of golf after work? Golf Fairfax has Nine and Wine events across the county at courses ranging from beginner to advanced. Golfers at all levels are invited to unwind from the day, take in nature and enjoy the scenery. Price includes range balls, nine holes of golf, cart, and one wine, beer, seltzer or water.

Spring/summer schedule:

Sundays, May 29, June 19 and July 31, 2022 at 5 p.m. at Oak Marr Golf Center;
Mondays, June 20, July 18, Aug. 15, 5 p.m. at Twin Lakes Golf Course;
Thursdays, June 2, June 30, July 14, Aug. 18, 5 p.m. at Pinecrest Golf Course;
Fridays, June 3, July 1 at Laurel Hill Golf Club.
Visit the Women and Golf Fairfax website.



The Burke Historical Society meets Sunday, May 29 in Burke. Pictured: Jennie Irene Hodgers born in Ireland, a.k.a. Albert D.J. Cashier.

SUNDAY/MAY 29

Burke Historical Society. 3-5 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. In her talk "Escaping Detection: Women in the Civil War" Mary Lipsey will discuss notable women who participated actively but secretly in the American Civil War, as spies and as soldiers.

MAY 29-30

HO Gauge Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station The Potomac Module Crew will have a special Memorial Day weekend HO Gauge Model Train Show at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, Sunday, May 29, from 1-4 p.m. and Monday, May 30, 2022 from 12-4 p.m. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5 (\$6 special events); seniors and military, active and retired, \$4. www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, 703-425-9225.

JUNE 2-4

Used Book Sale. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Over 5,000 like new books in all categories, plus CDs, DVDs and special gifts. Children's books too! Lots of summer reading selections and gifts for grads and dads. Wednesday Preview Sale, June 1, 2 - 5 p.m., \$10 entry fee; Thursday, June 2, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. (free); Friday, June 3, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. (free); Saturday, June 4, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. (free); Sunday Bag Sale, June 5, 12 - 2 p.m., \$5/bag.

FRIDAY/JUNE 3

Music Works. 4-10 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Featuring performances by Vulfpeck collaborator and Grammy-nominated multi instrumentalist Cory Wong, Billboard chart-topping mandolinist Sierra Hull and DC-based indie-soul sensations Oh He Dead. Visit the website: workhousearts.org/musicworks

SATURDAY/JUNE 4

Journey into the 7 Chakras + Sound Bath. 3:30-5:30 p.m. At Honest Soul Yoga, West Springfield. The seven Chakras ("wheel"), or centers of swirling energy or Prana, run along the length of the spine and reference areas of our bodies with major organs and bundles of nerves. When balanced and flowing freely, our Chakras help to promote a healthy emotional, physical, and mental state of being. In this workshop, you will explore various methods of balancing all 7 Chakras including: Flow, Chanting/Mantra, Meditation, Mudra, and discuss exercises for you to practice OFF of your yoga mat that will continue to nurture this sense of balance in all areas of your life. Visit the website: <https://www.eventvesta.com/events/16970/t/tickets>

Lorton Man Sentenced for Distributing Fentanyl Causing Death

A Lorton man was sentenced today to 22 years in prison for distributing fentanyl that resulted in the death of a young woman.

According to court documents, Julian Velasquez, 36, distributed counterfeit Xanax containing fentanyl to E.M., which caused E.M.'s death by accidental fentanyl intoxication. On Aug. 8, 2020, E.M. flew from California to visit Velasquez and was staying with Velasquez at his residence. Sometime during the late evening hours of Aug. 8, 2020, or the morning of Aug. 9, 2020, E.M. took a pressed Xanax pill laced with fentanyl provided by Velasquez.

On Aug. 9, 2020, Velasquez found E.M. unresponsive but he did not call 911 or seek medical assistance for E.M. Velasquez instead called his friend and drug customer, Enol Comsti, 27, of Vienna, to assist in removing evidence of drug use and drug distribution from the crime scene at Velasquez's residence.

Prior to Comsti's arrival, Velasquez sold heroin to another drug customer at his residence. Velasquez collected evidence of drug use and distribution, to include drug paraphernalia and narcotics, from his residence and Comsti drove him to a storage unit so that Velasquez could conceal the evidence from authorities prior to reporting the overdose death of E.M.

Comsti's vehicle became inoperable prior to arrival at the storage unit, and Velasquez continued on foot to the storage unit prior to returning to his residence without Comsti. Velasquez distributed heroin to Comsti in ex-

change for Comsti's assistance in removing and concealing evidence of the drug overdose from the residence. After Velasquez returned to his residence, he called 911 to request medical assistance for E.M. During the 911 call, Velasquez made false statements to emergency medical services regarding E.M.'s current condition, what had transpired, and Velasquez denied the possibility of E.M. suffering from a drug overdose. Emergency medical services arrived at Velasquez's residence and found E.M. deceased in Velasquez's bedroom.

In addition to admitting to causing E.M.'s death, Velasquez also admitted to distributing narcotics to several other individuals who, after using the drugs distributed by Velasquez, suffered drug overdoses. Those additional overdoses included several non-fatal overdoses, as well as the fatal overdoses of M.S. in 2017 and K.M. in 2018. All of the other overdoses occurred prior to the distribution of fentanyl to E.M. that caused her fatal overdose.

Comsti pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting tampering with evidence and was sentenced to 21 months in prison.

Jessica D. Aber, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Wayne A. Jacobs, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Washington Field Office Criminal Division; and Kevin Davis, Fairfax County Chief of Police, made the announcement after sentencing by U.S. District Judge Rossie D. Alston.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Ryan Bredemeier and Bibeane Metsch prosecuted the case

Charged with Sexual Assault of a Juvenile

A 42-year-old man is facing charges after sexually assaulting a juvenile at Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road. Officers were called to the park on May 21 for a report of an assault. The victim was on the playground around 6 p.m. when a man approached the victim, engaged in conversation then unlawfully touched the victim's thigh, according to police. The victim left the play area to avoid the man. Later, the man followed the victim into the water where he unlawfully touched her again. The victim advised family members of the assault. When family members confronted the man, the suspect got into a vehicle and left the area. The family provided information to identify the man from cell phone footage and the vehicle's registration that he left in.

Detectives from our Major Crimes Bureau immediately assumed the investigation and obtained a warrant for aggravated sexual battery. Detectives from our Fugitive Track and Apprehension Unit along with the U.S. Marshals Service began tracking Louis C. Allen, of Lorton, after the issuance of the war-

rant and arrested him on May 24. Three additional outstanding warrants were served on Allen. The warrants included two counts of failure to appear and one count of simple assault against a family member. Allen was taken to the Adult Detention Center where he was held without bond

RECKLESS DISCHARGE: 10000 block of Old Colchester Rd, 5/18/22, 1 a.m. A community member called police after hearing several gunshots. Officers responded and found several spent cartridge cases. No injuries or property damage were reported.

ROBBERY: 6400 Springfield Mall (Macys), 5/19/22, 1:56 p.m. A man exited the store with merchandise without paying. When confronted by store employees, the man assaulted an employee and ran away. No injuries were reported.

WEST SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT STATION BURGLARY: 7700 block of Suraci Court, 5/17/22, 6:05 p.m. Someone forced entry into the home. The homeowner saw the suspect who ran away without taking anything.

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, 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 or call 703-324-5955 for more.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 12

ules, 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 or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit 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.

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A Lot of Perspective



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

If you allow it, cancer can be exhausting. However, I'm not referring to the physical toll treatment takes, which as many of you may not know, is often debilitating. Instead, I'm referring to the emotional toll: the worry, the fear, the uncertainty, the dying and of course, the premature death (although some might joke, any death is premature). It's been my intention to, as much as possible, ignore it all, and so far, I've done a pretty good job. Still, it's an anchor, figuratively speaking. It weighs you down, and sort of keeps you in the same place. If you let it, it can moderate your highs and deepen your lows. And being low (depressed) is all it's cracked up to be, and no way to fend off cancer, and/or try to live a semi normal life.

And really, trying to normalize your life despite a cancer diagnosis, with the ongoing treatment and/or the regular monitoring intervals: to scan, to complete lab work, to attend infusion appointments, et cetera, is the cost of doing business, so to speak, and hardly normal. Cancer doesn't always announce itself. Often, it appears out of nowhere with barely a symptom. And when that occurs to a lifelong non-smoker, age 54 and a half, with no family history of cancer, with both parents who lived into their mid-eighties, the absolute last thing you expect to hear from your primary care physician is: "The biopsy was malignant." So much so that when I heard it, I asked "What does that mean?" "What does that mean?" What kind of a moron am I? I know what 'malignant' means: trouble, with a capital "T." But cancer? I never imagined. Moreover, I'm not sure I even knew that an oncologist was a cancer doctor. In fact, it was my primary care doctor who set up our appointment with one for the following Thursday on this very same call. He didn't really elaborate much. He offered little information other than to suggest I bring along any family members. At that point, I began to get the message. I was not in Kansas anymore, if you know what I mean, and this initial appointment was only the beginning of what could very well be my end.

'My end?' I had just spent the last four years or so tending, along with my brother, Richard, and our family caregiver, Maria, to my father who died in early Dec. 2006, and then for another two years until early Dec. 2008, when my mother died, nearly on the exact day as my father had. I/we had been preoccupied with their lives since my father suffered his first stroke. It had been barely one month after we buried our mother, on Jan. 1st when I first experienced symptoms.

I had pain in my left rib cage which a few days later migrated to my right rib cage. That didn't seem right. And then on the weekend, when I had trouble catching my breath/inhaling, and had difficulty bending over, I had to admit that I needed to see a doctor. But cancer? No bleeping way. (I'd swear, but this is a community newspaper.)

Yet, from the depths of that initial despair, I have risen to live and breathe for another 13-plus years. I'm just glad that my parents weren't alive to hear my diagnosis. It would have been devastating for them to hear that their baby ("some baby," my mother would often say) yours truly was diagnosed with a terminal form of cancer. Hopefully, not knowing has enabled them to rest in peace. And what do I know? Cancer is bad enough on its own. You can't make it worse by giving into it. You must make peace with it or find a place for it in your life somehow. Fortunately, I'm good at compartmentalizing.

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

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