

Sisters Jean, 13, and Krista, 11, are adoptable through Kidsave, visiting the area from Colombia hoping to connect with their future family. www.kidsave.org/kids-galleries/

These Children Need You

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SCREENSHOT

Local Researchers Tackle Gun Violence

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NEWS

Local Colleges Address Gun Violence

Leaders at local colleges and universities will use research to recommend action to reduce gun violence.

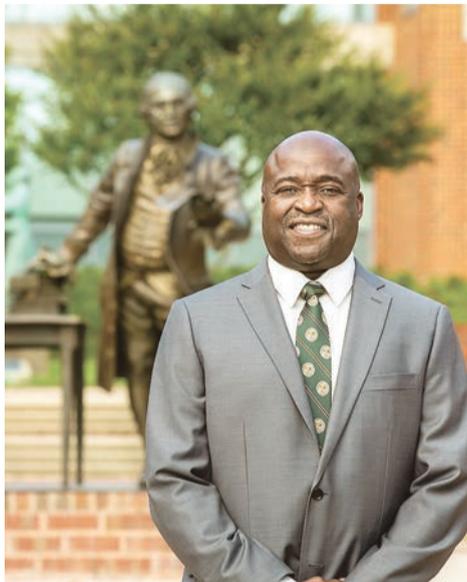
BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Washington-area colleges and universities have united to find research-based strategies to reduce gun violence. The movement comes on the heels of several devastating mass shootings, most recently the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas. Called the “120 Initiative,” the name pays homage to the more than 120 people who die on average each day from gun violence.

“George Mason University originated the idea out of its own belief that no problem — not even America’s gun violence epidemic — is unsolvable,” said Paul Allvin, vice president of strategic communications and marketing at George Mason University. “Mason President Gregory Washington approached his friend University of Maryland President

Darryll Pines to lead a new effort to bring faculty from DC-area schools together to find new ways to bring down gun violence in America.”

Faculty and researchers from disciplines that play a role in gun violence, including public health, public safety, mental health



GMU President Gregory Washington



PHOTO COURTESY OF GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

George Mason and other local colleges and universities unite to address gun violence.

“The 120 Initiative is a great opportunity for policy to be influenced by research.”

— Stephanie Foster, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Academic Affairs at Marymount University

and civil rights will work collaboratively to offer recommendations. In addition to George Mason and the University of Maryland, Marymount University, Montgomery College and Northern Virginia Community College are among the schools that will participate. The initiative will be coordinated by the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area.

“The 120 Initiative is a great opportunity for policy to be influenced by research,” said Stephanie Foster, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Academic Affairs at Marymount University. “My research focuses on violence in young adulthood. I’ve been interested in the factors that are likely to exacerbate violent behavior — more importantly, I’m interested in protective factors that insulate against the likelihood of violence.”

Erik Alda, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Marymount University added, “Part of my work examines the socioeconomic drivers of crime and violence, and this would include gun violence, too,” he said. “I have done a lot of this work in developing countries where gun violence is a perennial issue, and we can learn a lot from what those drivers are and how they

manifest themselves in different contexts. Another stream of my research assesses the impacts of programs or interventions on violence, which would include gun violence.”

Marcus Rosano, Director, Media Relations and Public Relations at Montgomery College said, “We’re still in the process of identifying our experts for the workgroup. The conversation is going on at the academic affairs and presidential office level.”

The research and analysis phase is estimated to take six months to complete and will produce recommendations designed to curtail gun violence.

“Just as smoking deaths were not reduced by legislation alone, neither will gun deaths,” said Allvin. “We just need the help of faculty to recommend effective new strategies to try as we also wait for effective legislation.”

Historically Black Church Marks 150th Anniversary

Shiloh Baptist Church in McLean, kicks off events celebrating 150 years.

Interfaith congregations from throughout the region join together to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the historically black Shiloh Baptist Church at 8310 Turning Leaf Lane in McLean. The religious center has supported area people through times of segregation, before women’s right to vote, political un-

rest and progress as Northern Virginia has grown.

“God has done so many great things throughout the life of this ministry; however, there’s so much more to be accomplished,” said the Rev. Dr. Robert F. Cheeks Jr., pastor, who celebrates 15 years of leading this congregation. “At a time when many church-

es have closed, Shiloh still stands on solid ground.”

Shiloh Baptist Church was founded and organized in 1872 by Cyrus Franklin Carter, who also organized other historic churches like First Baptist Church of Vienna and First Baptist Church Chesterbrook, Virginia.

Events kicked off with food and fellowship at a picnic on Saturday, July 16, at the church. Congregants from Lewinsville Presbyterian and First Baptist Church Chesterbrook attended the event.

The celebration continues on Aug. 20 with

“Spotlight on Shiloh” from 3- 5 p.m. at the McLean Community Center.

Michelle Spady, Anniversary team lead and Shiloh member, says, “We are proud members of a church that has sustained and thrived worship and service in the community for 150 years.”

Commemorating this historic milestone culminates in September with a brunch cruise on Sept. 17, and a special service on Sunday, Sept. 18 at the church when the restored church bell will be ceremoniously rung. The public is invited.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION
Kristina Campbell with her daughter she adopted in 2019.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED
Justin and Russell Barczyk at a game.



SCREENSHOT

Jean, 13, an active leader, says she's very proud of her sister and herself. She says, "I want to be a police officer." Krista, 11, a "girly girl" who "genuinely loves to learn," says, "I am calm, obedient, pretty, and chill." She wants to be a teacher. www.kidsave.org/kids-galleries/

These Children Need You

Colombian orphans vacation locally, dream of connections to their future families.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
 THE CONNECTION

Kidsave changed the names of the children eligible for adoption for security reasons.

Orphans from Colombia eight years old and over are frequently ignored and have little chance of growing up in a family. They need champions to change their lives or face aging out of care alone. This summer, eight families from Northern Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia, including Russell Barczyk and his wife Brigitte Miller of Alexandria, are hosting older orphans eligible for adoption from Colombia for five weeks, through Aug. 8.

They are part of the Kidsave Summer Miracles program. The youth and teens are experiencing life in a U.S. family. For some, it will be the connection to their lasting, caring family.

"My wife and I started looking into consultations with different adoption agencies and available options. We heard about Kidsave (and) the program they have with kids in Colombia," Barczyk said. He explained that 43 Colombian children are spending the summer in the United States, primarily in the Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and Chicago areas. Eight families in the greater Washington, D.C. area care for nine children, including two sisters. The profiles of all 43 children are available on the Kidsave website.

Host families provide children eligible for adoption the opportunity to spend summer vacations in the United States. While some families will adopt the children they are hosting, other families will become lifelong advocates and others will help the children find their permanent, loving families. According to the nonprofit's website, approximately 80 percent of the children who have participated in the Summer Miracles program since its inception were matched for adoption.

The Kidsave DC Summer Miracles Cookie Decorating event was held at the Jane E. Lawton Community Rec Center in Chevy Chase, Md. on Sunday, July 31. Approximately 40 people, including families interested in adoption, future hosts, current hosts, and orphans from Colombia, were present. Most children engaged in the activity, with Spanish words and much laughter filling the room. For others, especially the hosts and families who adopted years ago, and others, it was an opportunity to talk and compare experiences.

Kristina Campbell was there with her teenage daughter from Colombia, who participated in the LA Kidsave program three years ago. When asked what she liked most about her mother, Kristina's daughter said, "It is the fact that she is my mom." According to Campbell, her daughter learned she would be adopted a few days after returning to Colombia from a Kidsave Los Angeles program. Campbell said the adoption process



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Summer gallery of the Summer Miracles' Kidsave photolistings of children currently available for adoption visiting the D.C. Metro area. www.kidsave.org/kids-galleries/

takes between nine and twelve months.

Beth Dresing is a 10-year Kidsave volunteer, co-chair of the D.C. Metro Summer Miracles board of trustees, a host, and, most importantly, the mother of a son she adopted in 2011. Dresing said he was short and unable to jump hurdles during high school track and field successfully, so he tried out for dance instead. Her son is now a senior in college, majoring in dance and excelling at it.

Barczyk said Justin, age 12, who he and his wife are hosting, enjoys drawing, read-

ing, cooking, watching movies, and listening to Colombian music. According to his online profile, "Justin loves soccer and dreams of traveling to Brazil, specifically to visit their soccer stadiums.... Until then, he's happy to play soccer with his friends—and potentially with his dream family."

Learn more about becoming a Kidsave Visiting Family this summer or view the Summer Miracles Adoption Gallery with profiles and videos of youth currently available for adoption or hosting at - <https://www.kidsave.org/kids-galleries/>.

NEWS

Cooling Assistance

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) will provide cooling assistance to qualifying households this year through the Virginia Energy Assistance Program (EAP). Applications are currently being accepted and can be submitted until Monday, August 15.

To qualify, a household must have a child less than six years of age, an adult 60 years or older, or an individual with a disability living in the home. Income requirements, based on a household's gross monthly income (before taxes), can be found here. Individuals and families in need of Cooling Assistance are encouraged to apply even if they are unsure of their eligibility status. An example of maximum monthly income is \$2,879 for a family of three. https://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/bp/ea/intro_page/publications/032-03-0661-23_EAP_Information_Sheet_eng.pdf

Assistance is available for: payment of electric bills to operate cooling equipment; payment of security deposits for electricity to operate cooling equipment; repair of a central air conditioning system or heat pump; purchase of a

whole-house fan, including ceiling or attic fans; purchase and installation of a window unit air conditioner

Households that previously received approval for Cooling Assistance in 2022 for a one-time benefit of \$600 for the payment of an electric bill do not need to submit additional applications for this type of assistance during the current application period.

Applications (available in English and Spanish) can be submitted to a local department of social services, online via CommonHelp <https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/access/> or by calling 1-855-635-4370. Eligibility is determined by the local department of social services. All applications must be submitted by Aug. 15.

The Energy Assistance Program is funded by the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program block grant. Last year, VDSS served over 69,000 households with Cooling Assistance through the EAP. To learn more about Cooling Assistance and other assistance programs available, visit the VDSS Energy Assistance webpage <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/ea/index.cgi>

BULLETIN BOARD

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

GrandInvolve Seeks Volunteers. Would you like a unique and interesting volunteer experience to make a difference in a school, classroom, or in one child's life? GrandInvolve.org facilitates rewarding, flexible adult volunteer opportunities at Fairfax County Title I elementary schools, providing classroom assistance with math, reading, and other simple educational tasks. Visit www.GrandInvolve.org/volunteer-with-us for details and to complete an interest form. Or email info@grandinvolve.org.

NOW OPENED

Tyson's Pop-Up Biergarten. At 7581 Colshire Dr, McLean. This new Biergarten, located in the heart of Tysons, features four shipping containers converted into four unique restaurants under three massive tents. The concepts include Tyson's Biergarten, Waffles and Tacos, Roll-Bär, and Salamati. Each restaurant will catapult you to a different corner of the world through the mouthwatering flavors of their dishes and drink selections.

CELEBRATE NATIONAL FARMERS MARKET WEEK, AUG. 7-13

Fairfax County Farmers Markets will join farmers markets across the nation in celebration of National Farmers Market Week, August 7-13. Farmers Market Week highlights the role of farmers markets in supporting healthy communities, stimulating local economies, and supporting local farmers.

The mission of the Fairfax County Farmers Markets is to provide residents access to locally grown products and create market opportunities for area farmers and food producers. Join us as we celebrate the contributions our local farmers and food producers to the Fairfax community.

Visit each of the 10 farmers markets August 7-13 to support local farmers and businesses, learn how to prepare fresh ingredients at our cooking demonstrations, participate in fun & educational activities, listen to live music, and enjoy delicious foods from local producers. Farmers Market Week is also Bike to Market Week in Fairfax County. We invite you to bike to your local Fairfax County farmers market. To find a safe route, see the Fairfax County Bicycle Map. While you're at the market, stop by the Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling (FABB) table to learn about safe biking strategies and more.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) EBT cards can be used at select Fairfax County Farmers Markets. Thanks to partnerships with Virginia Fresh Match, FRESH-FARM, Cornerstones, Arcadia and Britepaths, you can use your EBT card at the McCutcheon/Mount Vernon, Annandale, Reston and Lorton Farmers Markets. We DOUBLE SNAP benefits so you can purchase fruits and vegetables for free! Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/farmers-market-week for the Farmers Market Week schedule and list of activities.

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
vienna@connectionnewspapers.com

Mary Kimm
Editor and Publisher
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Mercia Hobson
Staff Reporter
mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com

Ken Moore
Contributing Writer
kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com

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

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

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

Classified & Employment Advertising
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

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

In Memoriam Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic

Art/Design:
Laurence Foong
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com


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ENTERTAINMENT



"Shrek the Musical!" will be performed on Aug. 5-7 at the Vienna Community Center in Vienna.

"Shrek the Musical!"

7:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. on Aug. 7. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, Vienna. Get ready for Ogre-sized, family fun with the Vienna Youth Players summer stage production of "Shrek the Musical!" The greatest fairy tale never told comes to life in this colorful, song-filled production based on the Oscar-winning movie. "Shrek the Musical" is a story about friendships and acceptance featuring the beloved Princess Fiona, the evil Lord Farquaad, a host of magical fairy-tale characters and fabulous songs that will delight the young, and the young at heart. Tickets are \$15, and can be purchased at the Vienna Community Center front desk, or on the town website at www.viennava.gov/theatre.

SATURDAY MORNINGS

Summer Programming for Kids. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Reston Museum, 1639 Washington Plaza, Reston. Reston Museum is launching new summer programming for kids! Visit the Reston Museum to participate in fun and creative activities inspired by Reston's history. Program is free and everyone will receive an Explore Reston packet.

Now Thru Dec. 31

Crafts for Kids. 10 a.m. to 12 noon. At Reston Art Gallery and Studios, 11400 Washington Plaza W at Lake Anne, Reston. Free, themed art projects for children (with guardian) are offered at Reston Art Gallery and Studios every Saturday from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. Visit the website: www.restonartgallery.com

SATURDAYS UNTIL DECEMBER

The Reston Farmers Market (sponsored by the Fairfax Co. Park Authority) will take place at Lake Anne Village from 8 a.m.-noon. SNAP beneficiaries receive up to \$20 match. Visit <http://restonfarmersmarket.com/>

MCLEAN FARMERS MARKET

The McLean Farmers Market opened for the 2022 season on May 6th, at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The market will run every Friday from 8 a.m. to noon through November 11. Local farmers and producers will sell fresh produce and fruits; breads and pastries; prepared foods; meats: herbs; flowers, and more. All products are grown or produced by the vendors and come from within 125 miles of Fairfax County. For more information, see: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/>

HERNDON FARMERS MARKET

Thursdays through Nov. 3, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 765 Lynn St., Herndon, VA, 20170 <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/herndon>

GREAT FALLS FARMERS MARKET

The Great Falls Farmers Market Outdoor Market is open every Saturday, Spring and Summer,

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9 a.m. - 1 p.m., 778 Walker Road, Great Falls. For vendors and weekly highlights see <https://www.greatfallsfarmersmarket.org/>

NOW THRU AUG. 26 (FRIDAYS)

Storytime for Little Historians. 11 a.m. The second annual Storytime for Little Historians program returns this summer. Reston Museum invites our youngest visitors to the Reston Museum every Friday at 11 a.m. to listen to a story about Reston or one of Reston's founding principles. Books for the program come from the Reston Museum and Reston's Used Book Shop. Program is offered free of charge and each child will receive a goodie bag. Program is recommended for children under 7. Visit www.restonmuseum.org.

NOW THRU AUG. 18 (THURSDAYS)

Farmers' Market Fun Days. At Town Green, 730 Elden Street, Herndon. Enjoy free kid-friendly entertainment on Thursdays running July 7-August 18 from 10:30-11:15 a.m. on the Town Green, 730 Elden Street. Before or after the performance, people are welcome to shop the locally grown and homemade goodies at the Farmers' Market from 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., on Lynn Street in historic downtown Herndon. If inclement weather occurs, call the Inclement Weather line at 703-435-6866 for the status of the performance.

Entertainment Schedule:

August 4: Milkshake - music for little dudes
August 11: Groovy Nate - fun and educational shows using exotic musical instruments
August 18: Rainbow Rock - plays original children's music for the tot rock set

To learn more about the Town of Herndon Parks and Recreation Department, visit herndon-va.gov/recreation, or call 703-787-7300.

AUG. 4-7

4-H Fair and Carnival. At Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road Herndon. The carnival runs 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Big Truck Night is Friday from 5-7 p.m. The 4-H Static and Animal exhibits run Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Educational Community Tables run 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

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Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers. All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school events and Grand Openings, but now omniscient clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

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Dispensing Wisdom, Or Not



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Having spent way too much time visiting in a hospital recently, I only have one question: Were there always this many Purell "healthy soap" and hand sanitizers dispensing their healthful cleanliness before the pandemic? If you hadn't noticed, let me be the one to assure you; whatever supply chain issues exist in the world, there appears to be no shortage of Purell soap and hand sanitizer. They are everywhere. On nearly every wall 'round every corner. Of course, there mounted in every bathroom as well. It seems whatever turn, in whatever direction, you'll find a Purell dispenser; on either side, in front of you and/or behind you. In fact, they're everywhere you can imagine and a few places you can't. So far, the only place I haven't seen a Purell dispenser is on the elevator. Though there's always one on the wall immediately outside the elevator's floor stop, barely a step or two to the side.

There are so many dispensers on walls throughout the hospital, I'm wondering if there's an employee specifically assigned to monitor their level and to refill their cartridges the moment their level falls below the Mendoza-type line (extremely low). Given how big this hospital is, and how long the corridors are, if the dispenser isn't replenished the moment its levels are low-ish, it might be days before the dedicated Purell-refill employee returns to that wall. It reminds me of the story I heard years ago while tour-boating in San Francisco Bay. As we floated under The Golden Gate Bridge, the guide said the bridge is constantly being painted. That's because the painting process take so long that by the time the painting is finished at one end, it's time to start painting beginning at the other end. Talk about job security. It's a never-ending brush with destiny, especially when you consider the risk, being so high above water and exposed to the elements. Tending to the Purell dispensers feels like that. As long as the hospital remains open, there will be a need for Purell "healthy soap" and hand sanitizer dispensers and the refills that are necessary.

For all the proper hygiene reasons, the nurses are constantly touching the dispensers; before they enter the patient's room and again when they leave the patient's room and everywhere in between. There's a seemingly non-stop whir of the motorized apparatus that dispenses the Purell products. In the bathrooms, the "healthy soap" dispensed requires water to finish the task. Outside the bathrooms, the dispenser produces a foamy substance that one is directed to rub their hands until dry. No water required. It has been my observation that of all the things that happen in a hospital, nothing comes close, in its frequency of use or in its sheer numbers than the activity surrounding these Purell dispensers. In second place, a distant second in my opinion, would be the use of the nitrile (not latex) "clean" gloves. They are also mounted on the walls, rarely in the halls, mostly in patient rooms, three boxes: one for small, medium, and large hands. Other than maintenance and food delivery (they were their own gloves), whoever enters a patient's room must glove up. Of course, that only happens after they've waived their hand under the automated Purell dispenser. I certainly haven't been counting, but those boxes, 250 count, are regularly emptied as well, and replaced with new boxes. However, their numbers pale in comparison to the numbers of Purell dispensers and refills.

You'd be surprised what your mind conjures while sitting by yourself in a patient's room, and one who's unable to talk or even squeeze your hand. Comic relief is almost mandatory. And considering the circumstances, wondering is not far from hoping.

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



Weichert
REALTORS

JD CALLANDER

Direct: (703) 606-7901
Office: (703) 821-1025
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