

# Great Falls CONNECTION

On Election Day, from left, Carla Lanza, Pam Masaniello and Suzanne Charleston at Precinct 322 Forestville in Great Falls cover the Republican tent.

OPINION, PAGE 6 ❖ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 8 ❖ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

## Great Falls Voters Turn Out

PAGE 3

## Great Falls Rotary Gives to Cornerstones

PAGE 4



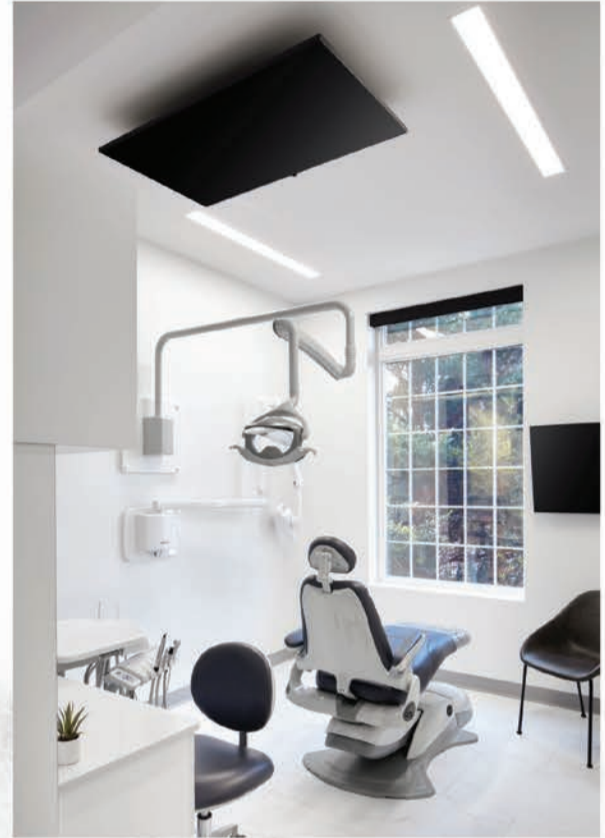
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# Great Falls on Election Day 2022

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Great Falls voters were up early and casting ballots in the midterm elections of 2022. At precinct 322 Forestville, only the 11th Congressional District race for the US House of Representatives was on the ballot. James (Jim) Myles (R) challenged Gerald E. (Gerry) Connolly, the incumbent (D).

The Virginia State Senate District 38 race and the VA House of Delegates District 6 race will be held on Nov. 7, 2023.

Virginia had no 2022 ballot initiatives comparable to Maryland's Question 4, "Legalize marijuana in Maryland," and California's Proposition 1, "Provide a state constitutional right to reproductive freedom, defined to include abortion and contraceptives."

Outside, close to the polling location, four people, one Democrat and three Republicans covered the two campaign tents. When asked what mattered to them in this election, each individual responded differently.

At the Republican Tent Carla Lanza listed three issues: "Education, crime, and inflation."

Pam Masaniello said that it involved multiple administration-related matters. "Anything that will help us change the tenor of what's going on, with the hostility with schools, with promoting policies that are detrimental to our children. I'm pro-life, but it's more



Jennifer covers the Democratic campaign tent outside of Precinct 322 Forestville in Great Falls.

than that. It's what we're doing with our children in the school system. These are very important to me."

Suzanne Charleston said, "It's all about the economy."

Over at the Democratic Tent, Jennifer smiled, glanced over at the Republican tent, and said, assuring, "There are Democrats in Great Falls."

We live here. We are part of this



From left, Carla Lanza, Pam Masaniello and Suzanne Charleston at Precinct 322 Forestville in Great Falls cover the Republican tent.

community, and we love this community. We want better things for our community, and we greet each other, say hello, and welcome our neighbors. We've had several new neighbors come through today,

and this is our first time voting in Great Falls."

Catherine Moran, Chief Election Officer at Precinct 322, reported 369 votes as of 10 a.m. on Election Day.



A Fairfax County Officer of Election checks voting status.



A voter hands over his ID to a Fairfax County Officer of Election.



## Toys for Tots Drive

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

From left, Everett George at Cornerstones and Meridith Hovan, vice president of resource development at Cornerstones, accept \$1,000 of Target and Mobile gas gift cards from Michael Broyles, president of the Rotary Club of Great Falls, and Bob Dinkel, Rotary's Cornerstones point person outside of the Embry Rucker Shelter in Reston.

## Rotary Club of Great Falls Provides \$2,000 in Gift Cards to Cornerstones

### Support for Embry Rucker Shelter & Cards for Kids.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

“Double your pleasure, double your fun” is how the Rotary Club of Great Falls supports the community needs of Cornerstones. Michael Broyles, president of the Rotary Club of Great Falls, and Bob Dinkel, Rotary's Cornerstones point person, presented \$1,000 in \$25 gift cards to Cornerstones at Reston's Embry Rucker Shelter on Tuesday, Oct. 23.

Rotary had previously provided 75 to 100 clients at the shelter with a boxed restaurant meal each quarter. Volunteering was hardest when locating restaurants that catered with discounted boxed meals. Dinkel named four local restaurants that, knowing the cause Rotary was addressing, stepped up to the plate, literally; Canteen D'Italia in Herndon (Jason), Mookie's BBQ in Great Falls (Brian), Gregorio's Trattoria at North Point in Reston (Christopher), and Brx American Bistro in Great Falls (Ash). Rotary bought the food, served the clients, and helped in the kitchen.

For the third quarter, Rotary asked Cornerstones what they needed most. The Wishlist? Cornerstone said gift cards were appreciated. Dinkel approached the Great Falls Rotary Board, which granted \$1,000. Rotary bought \$25 Target and gas gift cards to distribute.

“You would think it would be easy to obtain gas cards, but many gas stations don't offer them. You have to go high and low for gas

cards,” Dinkel said. He found them at a Chantilly Mobile station, 20 in total. “It was as if it were meant to be,” Dinkel said.

Broyles recommends gift cards because they let displaced individuals buy food, toiletries, and gas to get back on their feet and then cover other costs. Everyone's needs vary. In comparison to quarterly meals, gift cards fulfill a broader need. Dinkel and Broyles were thrilled with the idea. They gave the gift cards to Meridith Hovan, vice president of resource development at Cornerstones outside of the Embry Rucker Shelter on Oct. 25. She lauded Rotary's quick project turnaround.

Hovan said Cornerstones knew of the many needs in the community before the pandemic but did not realize their depth or breadth. Food insecurity, affordable housing, and family and individual stability remain priorities. Gift cards help shelter residents cope with unexpected crises we all experience, but people who are financially on the edge are hit the hardest.

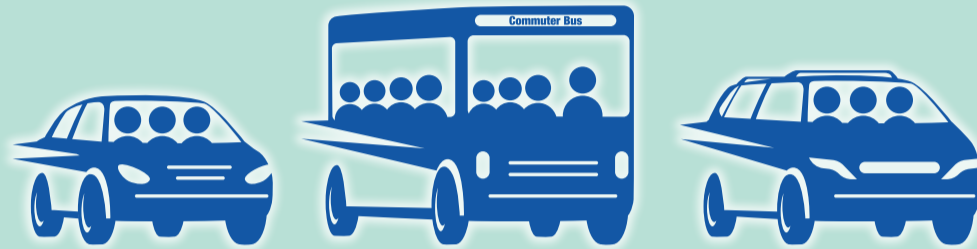
Rotary announced a surprise on Monday, Nov. 7. It is nearing the next quarter. Rotary Club of Great Falls is also giving Cornerstones \$1,000 in gift cards for its “Cards for Kids” holiday campaign, from Amazon, Dick's, Kohl's, and Walmart.

“We plan to stop by and meet with Meredith at Cornerstones at the Sunset Hills Road offices on Wednesday to deliver the cards, as we did at the shelter. I'm glad to see that Rotary is able to support Cornerstones and the local community they serve,” Dinkel said.

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SEE SUPPORT, PAGE 11
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## All Aboard Metro Silver Line Phase II

DELEGATE KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM

**O**n Tuesday of next week commuters in the region will realize a long-promised and anticipated opening of the Silver Line. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA, commonly referred to as Metro) current ending at Reston Station just east of Reston will be extended to six more stations past Reston and Herndon to Dulles Airport and two stations in Loudoun County.

While many have commented on the rail extension easing trips to the airport, the persons on those trips will constitute only ten to fifteen percent of persons using the line. Most of the riders will be commuters going to and from work from Loudoun County through the District of Columbia to Largo, Maryland or vice versa and any of the stops in between while remaining in the same seat.

The Silver Line will tie Northern Virginia into the Metropolitan region as nothing has before.

Certainly there will be workers in Loudoun and Fairfax who will take the train downtown to the District of Columbia saving them time and gas and parking money. At the same time there will be workers in Arlington who will commute to western Fairfax on the Silver Line, and there will be airport workers up and down the line who will get to work by train. You can substitute tourist for worker in any of these scenarios for those visiting the region will realize the value of this new artery in the area.

I have been involved in Dulles Metro Rail issues since the late 1980s for I was convinced that heavy rail was the best option to serve our region. Washington, D.C. up until this time was the only major capital city in the world that did not have a rail connection to its major airport. Beyond the airport traffic demands was the commuter traffic that jammed our roads even as we added and then expanded toll lanes to the Dulles Access Road. While the extension is now complete, it is over-budget and past deadline, it is miraculous to those of us working on it daily

over the decades that it has now been finished.

There was a debate that went on for years as to whether heavy rail was the best option over bus rapid transit or light rail. Each year we will learn that heavy rail was the best option to carry the increasing ridership that will develop. There was a strong debate over whether the line should be built over or under Tysons Corner. Costs made that decision for us as the above ground option was less expensive except for the short tunnel that goes under the hill at Tysons Corner. Many of us wanted the station at Dulles Airport to be under the terminal, but again the issue of cost won out.

In 1998 I founded the Dulles Corridor Rail Association (DCRA) to advocate for the rail extension along with many business and community leaders. We breathed life back into the project the many times it seemed doomed. I know the people who worked with me on DCRA share the pride I feel in this important infrastructure addition that will enhance the quality of life in our communities.

## Meet Tempestt Ware Harmon

General manager of The Closet of Greater Herndon shares information on voucher program.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Closet of the Greater Herndon Area hosted an open house for representatives of local social service agencies. The event allowed the store's new manager, Tempestt Ware Harmon, to introduce herself and speak about updates to the voucher program.

The Closet's authorized referring agencies, including LINK, Herndon-Reston FISH, Ayuda, and others, can provide vouchers up to two times per year to their clients who need assistance to meet their basic needs. Harmon said that the clients could visit The Closet and based on their needs, select household items, toys, clothing, and most any type of knickknacks to decorate their new home or shelter space. They are responsible for determining what shoes, clothing, blankets, and bed sheets they require.

"It is entirely up to them," said Harmon. "Only glass case items, including jewelry and the more expensive knickknacks, are exempt." According to Harmon, vouchers have range from \$60 per person to \$380 per family.

Gene Wiley, president of the executive committee of The Closet said the organization donated over \$100,000 worth of free merchandise to the voucher program the

year prior and over \$1 million in goods since 2007.

Harmon said, "My number one goal was to make sure that I got familiar with the staff and the volunteers to build a good rapport with everybody. But then also making sure that I put the customer first and the clients participating in the voucher program." Harmon said that with her background in fashion merchandising, she is maximizing The Closet's square footage and efficiency. In addition, The Closet provides free bakery items donated by local grocery stores.

The Closet at 845 Station Street, Herndon, is accessible via public transportation, including the Fairfax Connector buses 937 and 950, and RIBS 5. For the Metro trip planner, visit <http://www.wmata.com>.

### The Closet's Annual Everything Christmas Sale

The Closet's Annual Everything Christmas Sale will be held on Friday, Nov. 11 (3 - 7 p.m.) and Saturday, Nov. 12 (9 a.m. - 12 p.m.) at the Herndon Moose Lodge, 779 Center Street, Herndon. This is just around the corner from The Closet and should be your first stop for Christmas and seasonal items for holiday decor, gifts, toys, and entertaining.

Besides shopping at the sale, please consider helping The Closet make the sale a tremendous suc-

PHOTOS BY  
MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Tempestt Ware Harmon, general manager of The Closet of Greater Herndon, Inc.

cess by volunteering. Volunteers are needed on Nov. 11 and 12 during and after the sale. Go to our SignUpGenius link to see the volunteer opportunities: Volunteer for Everything Christmas Sale. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c45aba62ba6f4c61-theclsets>



Representatives of six agencies, Hunters Wood Fellowship House, LINK, Martin Luther King Jr. Christian Church, Fellowship Square Foundation, Ayuda, and Herndon-Reston FISH, along with Gene Wiley, president of The Closet of Greater Herndon, Inc. (front), listen to Tempestt Ware Harman introduce herself as general manager of The Closet.

### Let Us Know Your View

Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name.

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**Sold**

**\$1,525,000 - Great Falls**  
**714 Goldman Ln: 4BR, 3FB, 1HB**  
 Sold for \$225,000 above asking price!



**Sold**

**\$415,000 - Herndon**  
**13324 Schwenger Pl: 3BR, 2FB, 1HB**  
 Updated home with a new kitchen close to the future Metro  
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 Herndon.



**Sold**

**\$2,100,000 - Great Falls**  
**1023 Millwood Ln: 5BR, 4FB, 2HB**  
 Secured Home Inspection and other contingencies in a  
 market where few buyers were getting contingencies.



**Sold**

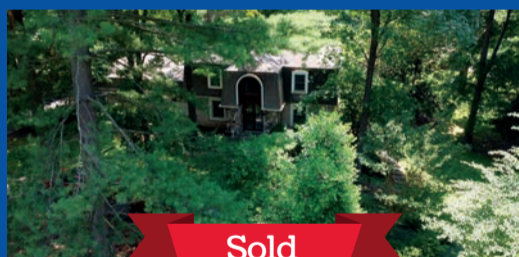
**\$1,052,000 - Lake Anna**  
**541 Lake Anna Dr: 3BR, 2FB**  
 We work throughout Virginia and secured a vacation home  
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**Pending**

**\$275,000 - Great Falls**  
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**Sold**

**\$1,100,000 - Great Falls**  
**10423 Deerfoot Dr: 5BR, 2FB, 1 HB**  
 Sold quickly before it went on the market



**Sold**

**\$700,000 - Burke**  
**9493 Harrowhill Ln: 5BR, 2FB, 1HB**  
 Estate sale that sold quickly for full price!



**Sold**

**\$978,000 - Reston**  
**2012 Lakebreeze Way: 4BR, 3FB, 1HB**  
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- 4/17/23 - Operation Second Chance
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## CALENDAR



"Blue Stockings" will be performed at Marshall High School on Nov. 10-12, 2022.

### 2022 MCLEAN HIGH SCHOOL BAND FRUIT SALE

Help support the McLean High School Band programs by purchasing fresh fruit from Florida. For over 40 years, the MHS Band Fruit Sale has offered high quality citrus from the Florida groves. This year you can purchase Navel Oranges, Mandarin Oranges, Grapefruit or a Fruit Sampler. Place your order online through November 9th at <http://www.floridafruitstore.com/McLeanHSBand>. Fruit is for pick-up only on Saturday, December 10th at McLean HS, 1633 Davidson Road, McLean. E-mail [fruitsale@mcleanband.org](mailto:fruitsale@mcleanband.org)

### OCT. 21 - NOV. 13

"Frankenstein." At NextStop Theatre Company, 269 Sunset Park Dr., Herndon. By Nick Dear, adapted from the novel by Mary Shelley. Celebrate Halloween season with this thrilling stage adaptation of Mary Shelley's science fiction masterpiece. Enter the dark world of Victor Frankenstein, as he attempts to decipher the secret of life by creating a childlike, but grotesque shadow of a human. Recommended for mature audiences. Visit [www.nextstoptheatre.org](http://www.nextstoptheatre.org)

### WEDNESDAY/NOV. 9

Talk on Lyme and Vector Borne Illnesses. 5:30 p.m. At Greenfare Restaurant, 408 Elden Street, Herndon. What is the incidence and

prevalence in our area? How do you prevent bites? How do you remove a tick? What are the signs and symptoms of Lyme? Is labwork accurate? What is the status of a vaccine? Come hear answers to these questions and more from a Lyme survivor, advocate, and health coach. RSVP: [mveiga@mylymeguide.com](mailto:mveiga@mylymeguide.com)

Link to event: <https://greenfare.com/event/the-latest-on-lyme-disease/>

### NOV. 10-12

"Blue Stockings." At Marshall High School. Marshall High School's Statesmen Theatre kicks off their 2022-23 season with the play Blue Stockings by Jessica Swale. For more tickets and information, visit their website at [www.statesmentheatre.org](http://www.statesmentheatre.org).

### THURSDAY/NOV. 10

Albert Castiglia Band. At JVs Live Music Room in Falls Church. Albert won the Best Blues Rock Artist award from The Blues Foundation in Memphis, toured on his own and with friend and label-mate Mike Zito, on their Blood Brothers Tour and recorded a Blood Brothers album with Zito that Joe Bonamassa and Josh Smith produced.

### FRIDAY/NOV. 11

Veterans Day Ceremony. 11 a.m. at Great Falls Freedom Memorial, behind Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The ceremony will honor all who have served our country in the Armed Forces. The event will include a color guard, patriotic songs by the Langley Madrigals, and remarks by retired Army Command Sergeant Major Howard E. Urban. Updates to the schedule will be posted at [www.gffreedom.org](http://www.gffreedom.org)

### SATURDAY/NOV. 12

Gin Dance Company Presents 'I Am Here.' At the Capital One Hall, Tysons. 7:30 p.m. "I Am Here" will be comprised of three World Premier pieces choreographed by GDC Artistic Director, Shu-Chen Cuff. Visit [www.gindance.org](http://www.gindance.org)

### SATURDAY/NOV. 12

Fall Bazaar and Craft Show. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center Street, South Vienna. Offered for sale will be crafts, holiday decorations, items for your home, clothing and gifts for that special someone. A delicious lunch menu is planned, as well as a bountiful homemade baked goods table. Looking for a unique find? Come shop at Vera's Attic table. Fire Department T shirts will be available for purchase. Proceeds from



The McLean Antiques Show and Sale will take place Nov. 12-13 at the McLean Community Center.

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# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

the rental of the table spaces and raffles benefit the fire department in their effort to raise funds for life saving fire and rescue equipment. For information, or to reserve a space and request an application, please call Carol at 703-309-3468 or email Dancers1023@aol.com, or Lisa at 703-981-4504 or email lisaemerson3@verizon.net. Admission is free.

**SATURDAY/NOV. 12**

NVMR Train Station Open House. 1-5 p.m. At Vienna Train Station, 231 Dominion Road, NE, Vienna. Stop

by the Historic Vienna Train Station where you can see and hear HO scale model trolleys and trains including Thomas and some of his friends on display and in operation. Great family fun and activity for the young and young-at-heart. Hosted by the Northern Virginia Model Railroaders. See [www.nvmr.org](http://www.nvmr.org).

**SATURDAY/NOV. 12**

Dark Sky Celebration. 6:30-8:30 p.m. At Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The Fairfax County Park Authority is partnering with the McLean Citizens Association, Dark Sky Friends and

the Analemma Society to host a celebration of the importance of dark skies. The free event will have hands-on activities and educational opportunities about how to protect the night sky. Learn about night time wildlife and constellations. Come experience the night with us and enjoy a small campfire and cocoa. Call 703-324-8671.

**SATURDAY/NOV. 12**

Second Saturday at Reston Town Center. 1-6 pm. The streets of Town Center will come alive with a Kids' Zone, Game Zone, Pet Zone,

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

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To find a free vaccine near you, go to [vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus](http://vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus) or call **877-VAX-IN-VA.**



**You've Got Options, Virginia.**

FROM PAGE 9

musical entertainment, and much more! Free and open to the public. Second Saturdays: October 8, 3-8 p.m.; November 12, 1-6 p.m.; and December 10, 1-6 p.m.). Sip & Stroll will be allowed on Market and Library Streets between the red lines (barricades), with alcohol available for purchase from and at the starred establishments on the map. For November and December, alcohol must be cleared from the footprint by 6:30 p.m.

## NOV. 12-13

**McLean Antiques Show and Sale.**  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday;  
11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.  
At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. The McLean Antiques Show and Sale will feature an exciting selection of designer vintage clothing and American Folk Art as well as well-known traditional show offerings. The show brings together a fine selection of antiques dealers from eight states from New England to North Carolina. Admission is \$10 per person for both days of the show. Children and teens under age 18 will be admitted free of charge. For a list of dealers, visit [www.dfsshows.com](http://www.dfsshows.com).

## SUNDAY/NOV. 13.

**Explore the War of 1812.** Noon to 3 p.m. At Historic Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Visit Colvin Run Mill to discover how communities, such as Colvin Run, supported the young U.S. Navy during the War of 1812. Government procurement was different in the 19th century; learn how women made uniforms, while grist mills, such as Colvin Run, helped feed sailors. Come hear members of the Ship's Company and the War of 1812 reenactors describe life at sea. Call 703-759-2771.

## UNDAY/NOV. 13

**Traditional Celtic Music.** 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. At the Old Brogue Pub in Great Falls. Featuring The Sean Heely Celtic Trio which features U.S. National Scottish Fiddle champion, singer and harper Seán Heely, bouzouki genius, singer and bass guitarist Beth Patterson, and dancer Agi Kovacs who accompanies their innovative repertoire of tunes, ballads, sea shanties, and songs in the Irish and Scottish folk traditions. Visit [seanheely.com/sen-heely-celtic-trio](http://seanheely.com/sen-heely-celtic-trio)

## TUESDAY/NOV. 15

**Five Hills Garden Club** welcomes all to join us as they enhance their knowledge and skills in gardening, floral design, landscape design, garden therapy, beautification, and preservation. Club highlights include new friendships, local field trips, community service, monthly guest speakers, and educational opportunities through National Garden Clubs. Meetings held the third Tuesday of the month, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Vienna Presbyterian Church, Vienna. Visit: [www.fivehillsgardenclub.org](http://www.fivehillsgardenclub.org)

## THURSDAY/NOV. 17

**Performing Arts Documentaries.** 1 p.m. At the Alden Theater, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Learn a little about the

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

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# NEWS

## Shepherd's Center Seeking Volunteer Drivers

Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church (SCMAFC), an all-volunteer organization, is seeking additional volunteers to support its mission of providing free transportation to seniors for medical and dental appointments or run errands to grocery stores and pharmacies.

The Center is an all-volunteer non-profit organization [501(c)(3)] that has been operating since 2006.

The total number of rides provided in 2022 is expected to exceed 2,500, but to fully respond to recent increases in the number

of requests, there is a need for more volunteers to join the current team of 60 volunteer drivers. "Of the rides provided, roughly 75% are medically related, 25% grocery, and 1% for handy helper needs," said Tom Callanen, Board Chair.

For volunteers there is no minimum commitment. Volunteers are free to choose how often and when they drive.

For detailed information or to apply, please visit the Center's website <https://scmafc.org/volunteer> or call (703) 506-2199 and leave a message.

## Fairfax County Fire and Rescue To Collect for Toys for Tots

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department (FCFRD) will participate in the Annual National Capital Region Fire and EMS Departments' 2022 TOYS FOR TOTS Campaign. The intent of the campaign is to bring holiday joy and deliver a message of hope to children. Stations will accept donations now through Sunday, December 11, 2022.

Collection boxes will be placed outside the front door of each fire and rescue station every morning. Residents will be able to drop off toys until 8:00 p.m., each evening.

Please help us to help those less fortunate this holiday season. Thanks to the generosity

of those who live and work in Fairfax County, FCFRD was able to provide the Marines with approximately 25,000 toys last year!

Children who are served by this campaign include toddlers and youths through age 17. The campaign will only accept new, unwrapped toys. Toys used as weapons or considered to be weapons (i.e., toy guns or knives of any kind) will not be accepted. Checks or money orders for donations must be made payable to TOYS FOR TOTS.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Stations will accept donations through Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022.

### BULLETIN BOARD

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

#### SHEPHERD'S CENTER SEEKS VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church (SCMAFC), an all-volunteer organization, is seeking additional volunteers to support its mission of providing free transportation to seniors for medical and dental appointments or run errands to grocery stores and pharmacies.

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For detailed information or to apply, visit the Center's website <https://scmafc.org/volunteer> or call (703) 506-2199 and leave a message.

#### SUPPORT GROUPS

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](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net) or 703-821-6838.

### CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

performing arts through these one-hour (or so) documentaries. Join Performing Arts Director Sarah Schallern Treff for a discussion after.

#### 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](http://www.restonartgallery.com)

#### SATURDAYS UNTIL DECEMBER

The Reston Farmers Market (sponsored by the Fairfax Co. Park Authority) will take place at Lake Anne Village in Reston from 8 a.m.-noon. SNAP beneficiaries receive up to \$20 match. The market will continue until Decem-

ber. 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 Nov. 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/>

#### GREAT FALLS FARMERS MARKET

The Great Falls Farmers Market Outdoor Market is open Saturdays, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., 778 Walker Road, Great Falls. For vendors and weekly highlights see <https://www.greatfallsfarmersmarket.org/>

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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 websites 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.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

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 has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

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## Give Me Some Credit, Will You?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As a former C.F.P. (Certified Financial Planner) and insurance broker prior to joining Connection Newspapers as an advertising representative in late February 1997, I have an above-average familiarity with stocks, bonds, mutual funds, insurance, annuities, and money matters in general. It's not as if I could teach a class on any of these topics, but I'd likely have a pretty good understanding of what I was being taught. Moreover, debt consolidation, mortgage refinancing and the use and abuse of credit was similarly familiar to me. I understood their pros and cons, and their dos and don'ts. They were not exactly products I could sell. Rather they were situations I could possibly discuss/utilize to provide clients some unexpected financial relief/assistance.

Speaking of credit cards: I got my first credit card in 1977. How do I know that year? Because that was the year I got engaged and I used my brand new "Central Charge" card (a credit card local to the DMV) to pay for the dinner the night I surprised my wife, Dina with the engagement ring that I had laid away. Once I experienced the convenience of using a credit card to pay for something I couldn't readily afford, I was hooked, like so many of us; and I've been on a slippery slope ever since. Over the ensuing years, I've cash-advanced and consolidated mountains of debt enabling me to navigate the many cross currents of familial and financial ups and downs. And from my perspective, I should receive a lifetime achievement award for keeping our credit history as clean as it still is. Unfortunately, my wife, Dina has never agreed with this assessment. Not that the mundane world of income and outflow ever interested her; nevertheless, she expected results.

So here we are, almost 45 years since that engagement still having differences of opinions concerning money; made even more significant now that we're both over age 65 and I'm only working part time and Dina is, as she's fond of saying: "Presently not working." There's enough money to go around but after it has completed its journey, it's kind of tucked out and the few dollars remaining make very little sense.

Consolidating credit card debt into one lower monthly payment at a lower interest rate is on paper a reasonable and mostly prudent action. However, as a practical matter, I don't see how, given today's online lifestyle and new consuming patterns, it could work, especially if the goal is to have fewer monthly payments; not the same number, just with different lenders/cards. Albeit at a lower rate - for a while. Still, fewer monthly obligations are the goal, not having the same amount. Consolidate doesn't mean differentiate.

As a few examples of my dilemma: Many of us shop at Costco. A membership is required to shop there. A membership card, with your picture on it is also required. For convenience, and miscellaneous other benefits, it makes sense to use a Costco Visa credit card as your method of payment. Not using their card wouldn't be a hardship per se, but it would minimize the gains realized shopping there. Since it serves its own unique purpose, I feel compelled to keep it.

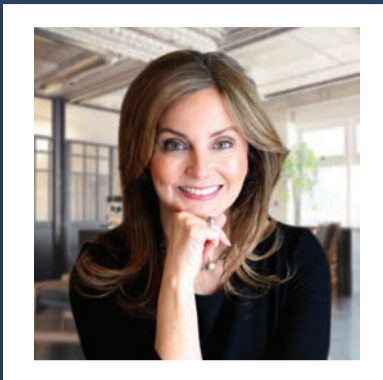
Many of us also shop online with Amazon. To facilitate your online transactions, using their Amazon-brand Visa makes an otherwise arduous process, simpler. If I consolidate it elsewhere, that next Amazon purchase won't be as easy or as beneficial. Again, that card is a keeper.

Our everyday Visa is a United Miles Visa. We've used it for over 20 years. Fortunately, or not, due to years of accumulating debt, we've earned multiple airline trips for free to California, Idaho, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, and Montana, expensive trips, especially to Bozeman in Montana. The West is amazing, but it usually requires an airline flight to get there. If we have to carry/accrue debt, I'd rather there be some benefit to it, considering the interest isn't as deductible as it used to be.

Lastly, my wife has her own American Express card. It provides her independence - from me. If we consolidate, it must go. Do I really want to sacrifice her independence for my financial gain. As you can see, there are other consequences/extenuating circumstances, to consolidating. It's not always about the money.

If I were to consolidate, it seems to me, given the consuming world in which many of us live, I'd be stuck with more cards, more payments, less convenience, and more aggravation. The exact opposite of what I intended. "Too much for anybody's nerves," to quote my late mother.

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



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