

THE CONNECTION

McLean ♦ Vienna ♦ Oakton ♦ Great Falls ♦ Reston ♦ Herndon ♦ Oak Hill ♦ Chantilly ♦ CENTRE VIEW ♦ Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station

Seeing Stars

PAGE 19

While this visitor to Observatory Park in Great Falls views Mars through a refractor telescope, the red planet and nearby Pleiades star cluster, also known as the Seven Sisters, are visible overhead.

Should Supervisors Be Paid More?

PAGE 12

Tearing Down The House?

PAGE 14

PHOTO BY CHRISTINA TYLER WENKS
OPINION, PAGE 10 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 12, 21 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 22

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6631 Tucker Avenue, McLean
Gorgeous 4BR/4.5BA home on 3 spacious levels—completely remodeled/rebuilt and expanded in 2019! Fantastic McLean location! Everything about this home is top-of-the-line and has been designed with beautiful custom features and attention to detail. This open, light, and bright layout showcases 10 foot ceilings on the main lvl and 6” wide European plank oak hardwood floor on the main and upper lvls. Add'l features include, gourmet kitchen; living room with floor to ceiling fireplace; expansive primary suite. **McLean HS pyramid!**

2220 Grayson Place, Falls Church
Gorgeous 6BR/5.5 BA Colonial home on 3 finished levels in sought-after Westhampton location! Only a half mile to the **West Falls Church Metro!** Private cul-de-sac plus near half acre lot with huge fenced-in backyard! This stunning home features sparkling hwd floors; dramatic foyer w/curved stairs that overlooks 2-lvl light/bright family room.. Main level BR suite w/ full bath; gourmet island kitchen; huge primary bedroom with sitting room; LL guest suite w/ kitchen & tons of light! **Haycock, Longfellow, McLean Schools!**

1625 N. Albemarle Street, McLean
By Premier/Award Winning modern home builder **TriCrest Homes.** Sited on a premium near-half acre lot in one of McLean’s most sought-after neighborhoods— **Chesterbrook Woods!** This to-be-built, spectacular, modern home feature 6BRS/5.5 baths on 3 spacious finished levels; dramatic walls of glass with natural light and creative architectural features. The builder is now in the design phase, so plans, specifications and finishes can be tailored to the homeowner. **Chesterbrook, Longfellow, McLean Schools!**

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SOLD!



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McLean, 22101
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SOLD!



**401 Meadow Lane
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\$1,725,000**

SOLD!



**281 Gundry Drive
Falls Church, 22043
\$727,010**

SOLD!



**1930 Relda Court
Falls Church, 22043
\$1,220,000**

SOLD!



**1639 Macon Street
McLean, 22101
\$2,215,000**

SOLD!



**2204 Beacon Lane
Falls Church, 22043
\$1,795,000**

Curious what your home is worth? Call to chat with JD and Ed today!

Education Reparations Await Governor's Signature

Bill would extend benefits to descendants of those directly impacted by massive resistance in Virginia through the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

The first bill that Delegate Kaye Kory (D-38) filed for the 2023 session of the General Assembly sought to expand reparations for Virginia's failure to educate African American students in the 1950s and '60s. At that time, state leaders sought to circumvent the U.S. Supreme Court desegregation decision in the 1954 case of *Brown v Board of Education*. The landmark decision would eventually end segregation in schools. But in 1958 and 1959 Virginia politicians declared a "massive resistance" strategy to avoid integration. Many schools were shut down until the Virginia Supreme Court and a panel of Federal judges from the Eastern District of Virginia declared the resistance policies unconstitutional.

In 2004, the General Assembly created a scholarship program and fund to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the landmark *Brown v Board of Education* decision. The program was designed to assist those who were enrolled in the public schools of Virginia during the ten year period of Massive Resistance between 1954 and 1964, but denied an education.

Several jurisdictions closed their public schools to avoid desegregation. Better off financially, white students could seek out private school alternatives, but most African American families were left with no options to educate their children.

Under the 2004 scholarship program, applicants could request awards to obtain an adult high school diploma, the GED certifi-



Del. Kaye Kory.

PHOTO COURTESY KAYE KORY

cate, CLEP credit, career or technical education or training, transitional education services, or a two-or four-year degree from an accredited public or private Virginia institute of higher education. An awards committee was established and an application cycle starts each January, operating now for almost two decades.

The State appropriated initial funding and regularly approved administration funds. The fund also received an early \$1 million donation from a Charlottesville foundation created by philanthropist John Kluge. Several smaller donations raised the available starting funds to more than \$2 million. The state has awarded scholarship money to about 88 students over the years since its establishment. However, far more than that number were denied an education during the massive resistance years.

Kory noticed that the scholarship awards

HB 1419 *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program; extension of eligibility. Extends eligibility for the *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program to the lineal and collateral descendants of persons who were residing in jurisdictions in Virginia in which the public schools were closed to avoid desegregation between 1954 and 1964 and whose educations were affected by the school closings. Currently, only persons who resided in such jurisdictions at the time of the school closings are eligible for the program. This bill is identical to SB 1498.

had used only a little over half of the available funds. She made this discovery as she looked for scholarship funds scattered throughout Virginia code that might aid her constituents. As a former elected school board member for ten years and an education advocate, she said she knew "a good educational foundation from K-12 prepares people for success, crucial for participating fully in our economy and society." She also noted that little use of the funds had been made since 2019 and that, by law, the funds could only be used for the stated purpose of the law: education of those impacted by massive resistance. She said she "saw the opportunity to help a lot of people" by making the funds available to more than the few people still alive who could apply under the existing Code. She felt that unless the criteria changed, it was unlikely the money would be used. Recognizing the need to "stem the tide of permanent economic loss that could still be reverberating in impacted families" she sponsored her bill to extend the coverage to descendants of those directly impacted.

Her bill added the language to §30-231-2 of the Code of Virginia to define "eligible student" to also mean "a lineal or collateral

descendant of such person." This new language means, Kory said, "the fund will open to benefit a lot of people who would want a higher education." Kory knows of several who plan to apply once the bill is enacted. It now awaits the signature of the governor, due by March 27, in order to become law.

Will the bill meet success in this final step? Consider that HB 1419 was one of only 27 percent of bills sponsored by House delegates to pass in the 2023 session. The bill passed by unanimous vote in both the House and Senate.

Kory has another idea regarding the fund. She notes that it has not received additional contributions since it was established, beyond administrative funding for the awards committee staff which accepts applications and makes the awards. Kory thinks it is likely that members of the public would wish to contribute to the fund. She plans to work on ways to make public contributions to the fund possible.

For more information about the fund, including eligibility details and an application packet, see

<http://brownscholarship.virginia.gov>. The current deadline for applying under this cycle and current law is March 31, 2023.

Vigil for Timothy Johnson, Killed by Fairfax County Police

The Fairfax County NAACP held a vigil for Timothy Johnson at the Fairfax County Government Center on Friday, March 3. It was cold and raining but there was a good turnout nevertheless.

At approximately 6:30 p.m. Feb. 22,, officers from the Tysons Urban Team special unit of Fairfax County Police Department responded to a theft at Nordstrom at 8075 Tysons Corner Center. Store security reported a man was concealing designer sunglasses. An officer observed the man exiting the store near a parking garage.

Timothy McCree Johnson, 37, of Washington D.C., ran through the parking garage, across the parking lot and into a wooded area while the officers gave him commands to get on the ground, according to police reports. While in the

wooded area, two officers discharged their firearms striking Johnson in the chest one time. Officers rendered aid until Fairfax County Fire and Rescue arrived. Johnson was taken to an area hospital where he was pronounced deceased.

Sergeant Wesley Shifflett, a 7-year veteran of the department and Police Officer First Class James Sadler, an 8-year veteran of the department discharged their firearms. Both officers were assigned to the Tysons Urban Team.

The body worn camera will be released within 30 days of the incident in accordance with the department's guidelines, police said

Attending the vigil on Friday, Pastor Vernon Walton of the First Baptist Church in Vienna tweeted: The elements were not the best but I'm grateful for all those who stood

SEE VIGIL FOR . PAGE 16



PHOTO VIA TWITTER



This one-acre site is where 11 townhouses are proposed for construction off Route 29 in Centreville.



This 1.77 acre site in Fair Oaks is proposed for 100 multi family homes with ground-floor retail.

Land-use Proposals for Sully District, Part 2

More 'Site-Specific Plan Amendment' proposals in Sully District.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

This is part II of the Site-Specific Plan Amendments various entities have proposed for land in the Sully District. Part III to follow.

These proposed amendments to Fairfax County's Comprehensive plan were discussed during virtual meetings Jan. 25 and Jan. 30, presented by the Department of Planning and Development and moderated by Michael Burton. Online attendees also got to comment.

"The Comprehensive Plan provides our guidance for land use," said Supervisor Kathy Smith (D-Sully). "And your feedback during this process is important."

Then members of the West Fairfax County Citizens Assn. (WFCCA) and Sully District Council (SDC) Joint Land-Use Committee received their own presentation, Feb. 20, and made recommendations.

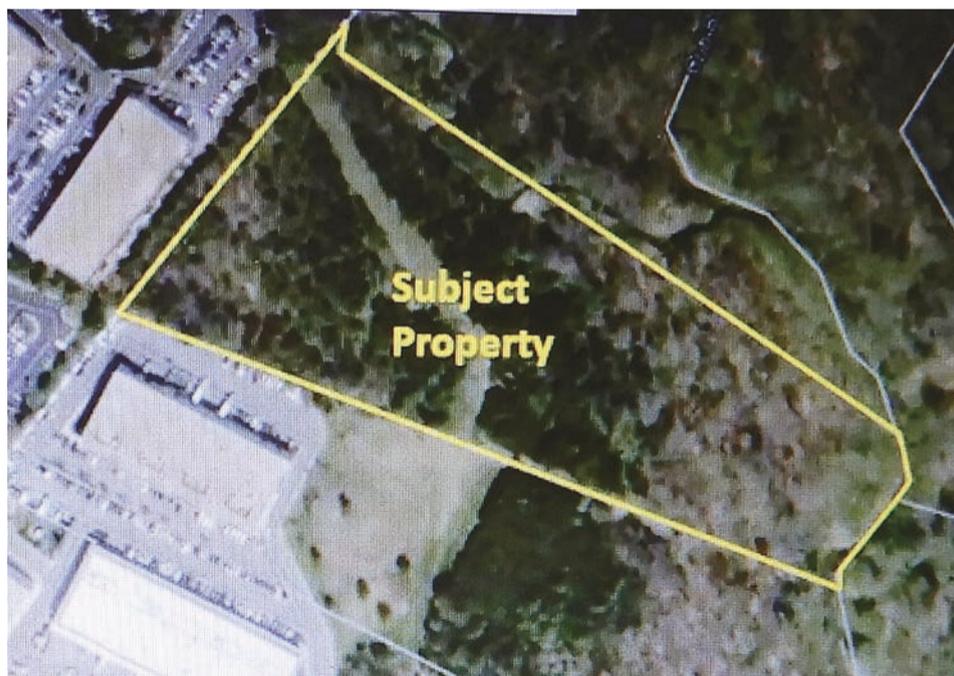
❖ Route 29 – This 1-acre parcel is near Stringfellow and Clifton roads and adjacent to the 7-Eleven along Route 29 in Centreville. It's undeveloped land currently planned for single-family residential use at 2-3 homes/acre. But it's now being proposed for townhouses at a density of 8-12 homes/acre. Currently, said Burton, "Site access is just a right in, right out. The median will remain, and open space will be a challenge to provide."

Representing the property owner – who made the nomination – was land-use planner Ben Wales. "The Comprehensive Plan recommends residential use, but this would be a different type of unit, and there are other townhouses nearby," he said. "The proposal is for 11 townhomes accessed from a new service road along the south side of Route 29."

Instead of just building two or three homes on this site, continued Wales, constructing townhouses would be a "more-efficient use of the land. The Route 29 widening project there will begin this spring, 4 ❖ THE CONNECTION ❖ MARCH 8-14, 2023



Artist's rendition of the 250 independent-living apartments for seniors proposed for Fair Oaks. This 3.7-acre, vacant parcel is at 3870 Centerview Drive in Chantilly, just northwest of Route 50.



Either a warehouse or a parking lot could go onto this 9.68-acre site.

and VDOT is constructing the service road as part of it."

However, a caller said 11 townhomes

would be too dense, and he was also concerned about the loss of trees on that land. Another person simply asked, "Does every

acre of developable land need to be developed?"

Agreeing, Jay Johnston said, "Going from 2-3 homes to 8-12 seems like abuse; let's save some trees. These homes will probably be \$500,000 to \$700,000 apiece. We need to stop the development so we can have a reasonable quality of life here in Fairfax County."

As for the Joint Land-Use Committee, it believed that "It would be inappropriate to shoehorn additional housing in this site," so it didn't recommend this proposal.

❖ Route 50 – This 1.77 acres of land is currently improved with the Briar Oaks Service Center at 12306 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway in Fair Oaks. The Exxon gas station there is next to the Fair Oaks fire and police stations at the Fair Ridge Drive/Route 50 intersection. The proposal is for a mixed-use development there with up to 100 multifamily units above 14,500 square feet of ground-floor retail.

"There's a potential to impact traffic here, plus there'd be noise from Route 50," said Burton. "And the density will make meeting open-space and parking requirements challenging."

Representing the amendment nominator, Burke Petroleum Realty LLC, Andrew Gregg said a gas station (currently Exxon) has been there since 1961. Meanwhile, he explained, "The surrounding area was redeveloped with townhouses, single-family homes, commercial uses and a hotel – with possible shared parking that could be used for this project."

He said the gas-station owner wants to reconstruct and modernize it, increase its size and add a minimart and carwash. Regarding the mixed-use portion of the proposal, said Gregg, "There are other projects in the area with similar density, and we think this would fit in well with the community."

Resident Lewis Grimm told him, "I think your major challenge is in its access. Right now, you have to come out of that service station, go up the road, make a U-turn and come back to get to Route 50."

Plan Amendments

FROM PAGE 4

And Jeff Parnes said that gas station is a good use there that benefits the community.

Regarding this project as a whole, the Joint Land-Use Committee recommended denial, considering it “inappropriate for a multi-story, multifamily building with 100 dwelling units to be on this site.”

❖ Centerview Drive – This 3.7-acre, vacant parcel is at 3870 Centerview Drive in Chantilly, just northwest of Route 50. It’s planned for office/industrial flex use, but is now proposed for some 250 affordable, independent-living apartments for seniors with incomes 60 percent or lower than the Area Median Income. It will offer supportive amenities and services and may also include an adult daycare center for those needing continuing care.

Presenting more details of the proposed Agape House Chantilly was land-use planner Mike Van Atta, representing the nominator, Agape Property Management Inc. “The site has frontage on Thunderbolt Place and was planned for a hotel that was never built,” he said. “It’s near an existing pond and trails; open-space amenities are important to us.”

Agape proposes up to a five-story building with enhanced ADA-designed facilities. Planned, as well, are an onsite pharmacy, office for visiting doctors, physical-therapy room, computer/arts rooms, fitness areas, dining room/community kitchen, in-home care, nursing supervision and medication management.

“We’d provide transportation and meal services,” said Van Atta. “The building would be constructed of high-quality materials, and its design would be compatible with the surrounding facilities. We’re very excited about it.” Each

apartment would be one bedroom and 600-670 square feet.

A man asked if the residents would have their own vehicles, and Van Atta said, “There’ll be parking spaces for the residents, but we expect most to rely on Agape’s own, private, shuttle service to take them places.”

The Joint Land-Use Committee wanted plenty of parking provided and assisted-living facilities to be available for people to stay in their environment and with friends they’ve established. Van Atta replied that 146 parking spaces are required, and Agape would provide 165.

He also said Agape would “continue to consider the mix of independent living vs. assisted living units to ensure residents could remain at the facility as they progress through the continuum of senior care.”

Then, with the committee’s John Litzenberger saying, “We really need this type of housing,” the committee endorsed this amendment.

❖ Route 50 and Loudoun County line – This 9.68-acre site is designated for office/industrial flex uses. The proposal is to add an option for a 14,000-square-foot warehouse use, distribution site or place for vehicle parking. Van Atta also represented this applicant, A&A Contracting Inc.

“We’d improve vehicle access and stormwater management there,” he said. “The parking-lot option is for nearby auto dealerships for storage of new and nearly new cars.”

The Joint Land-Use Committee asked what would trigger a warehouse being built there vs. parking and was told it would depend on the market. Van Atta also reassured the members that no hazardous materials would be in the warehouse, and the committee said it has no objection to this proposal.

Dr. Whyte’s

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Released February 14, 2023

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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.

THURSDAY/MARCH 9

Review of the Proposed County FY 2024 Budget. The McLean Citizens Association (MCA) and Supervisor Foust will host a virtual public meeting on the Proposed FY 2024 County budget on March 9 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will feature Fairfax County Budget Director Phil Hagen who will present information on, and answer questions about, the proposed Budget.

Registration is recommended to

participate via Zoom. To register, go to the MCA’s home page (mcleancitizens.org) and click on the Events Calendar. The event also will be livestreamed on the MCA’s Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/mcleancitizens>.

If you have a question you would like the distinguished guests to address at the meeting, send them to Louise Epstein at b_t_committee@mcleancitizens.org.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 18

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Superintendent Dr. Michelle C. Reid, FCPS



Karen Corbett Sanders (Mount Vernon)



Abrar Omeish (Member-at Large)



Karl Frisch (Providence)



Melanie K. Meren (Hunter Mill)

School Board Approves Superintendent's FY 2024 Budget & More

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

At its Feb. 23 meeting, the Fairfax County School Board adopted the Superintendent's proposed FY 2024 Advertised Budget. School Board Representative Abrar Omeish (Member-at-Large) abstained.

The School Operating Fund budget for the Advertised FY24 Budget is \$3.5 billion, a net increase of \$249.6 million, or 7.6 percent, over the FY23 Approved Budget.

"This is a solid budget," Superintendent Michelle C. Reid said. "We believe the needs expressed within the budget are needs that are going to meet the vision, mission, and goals of our projects at FCPS."

According to online documents, 86 percent of the budget is spent on instruction, while the county and state provide 96 percent of operating revenue. The county transfer request is \$159.6 million, or 7.0 percent, over the approved county transfer for FY23. Approximately 34 percent of FCPS's projected enrollment of 179,952 students in FY 2024 are economically disadvantaged.

"FY 24 may be another challenging year due to the impact of the pandemic and limited new revenue," said Eileen Tholen, (Dranesville District) representative.

The Superintendent's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 24 focuses on competitive compensation for all employees, closing achievement gaps, increasing enrollment, investing in early literacy and prekindergarten expansion, continuing current multiyear initiatives (Joint Environmental Task Force, advanced academics, HR system replacement), and security initiatives.

Tholen discussed the board's adopted resolution (Nov. 14, 2022), which identified priorities. It requested that the superintendent continue to focus on a "needs-based approach for school staffing," as well as "student academic success and closing achievement and opportunity gaps." Other priorities included student health and wellness.

"The retention bonus included in the governor's introduced budget is non-recurring,

FY 2024 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT CALENDAR*	
February 28	Joint Meeting with Board of Supervisor's to Discuss Budget and Tax Rates
March 7	Board of Supervisors Advertises Tax Rate
April 11	School Board Budget Presentation to Board of Supervisors
April 11-13	Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Holds Public Hearings on Budget
April 28	Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Budget Pre-Markup
May 2	Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Budget Markup, Determine Budget Package, and Tax Rates
May 9	County Board of Supervisors Adopts Budget, Tax Rates, and Transfer to FCPS
May 11	Approved Budget Presented to School Board
May 16	School Board Holds Public Hearings on the Budget
May 18	Board Holds Budget Work Session (Public Hearings if Needed)
May 25	School Board Adopts Approved Budget
July 1	FY 2024 Begins
*All Dates Tentative	

Fairfax County Public School's FY 2024 Budget Development Calendar

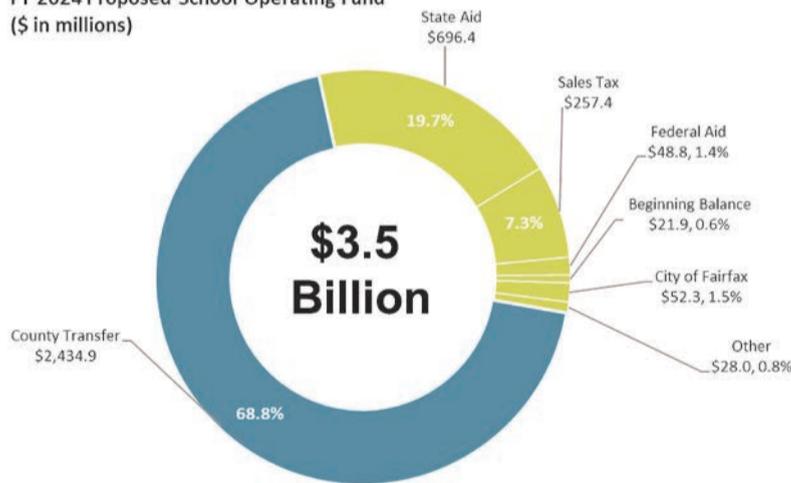
and if that survives the General Assembly's deliberations, it may be funded with FY 23 carryover," Tholen said. She said that the budgets released by the House and Senate last week differ significantly, and "neither proposal provides funds to address the VDOE error." According to Tholen, the error costs FCPS \$12.7 million in state revenue. "The Senate and House Budgets currently result in a net negative impact on FCPS ranging from \$30 million to \$39 million, including a loss of \$12.7 million," Tholen explained.

"Overall, it is a good news budget," Tholen said. "Raises for our employees, step increases, as well as initiatives that provide needed support to our students."

Among the school board's proposed follow-up motions on the FY 2024-28 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the board unanimously approved a proposal sponsored by Karl Frisch (Providence) and Stella Pekarsky (Sully) It directs Reid to develop an annual updated School Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Assessment Program.

"From Oakton and Vienna to Tysons and Falls Church, school communities across the

Where it Comes From - Revenue*
FY 2024 Proposed School Operating Fund
(\$ in millions)



Revenue sources for the proposed FY 2024 Proposed School Operating Fund in millions

county face significant road and pedestrian safety concerns that too often result in tragedy," Frisch said.

"There is nothing more important to me as a mother and school board member than the safety of our students," Pekarsky added.

The school board unanimously approved two follow-on motions proposed by board members for the school year calendar 2023-2024, the first involving efforts to increase childcare options and the second to develop a more equitable school calendar policy.

Karen Corbett Sanders (Mount Vernon) presented the childcare motion, saying that it would "provide some relief for working parents."

Melanie K. Meren (Hunter Mill) described the county's limited school-based childcare options as "one that just continues to stagnate." You can't just keep saying to people there's no space (in SACC, the school-aged childcare program)," Meren said.

The board approved Sanders' proposal, which directs Reid to work with County Executive Bryan Hill to develop a plan for promoting enrichment and/or recreational activities in which students may participate when schools are closed for professional work days or extended periods.

Abrar Omeish (Member-at-Large) introduced the second calendar follow-up motion. According to Omeish, vacation is an opportunity for some families to enjoy recreation, but for others, "it's a struggle with burdensome expenses." They are concerned about childcare and must deplete funds that could be used for other purposes.

The school board unanimously approved motion that "directs the Board governance committee to work

with the superintendent on developing a new calendar policy or to revise existing regulation 1344 to devise a comprehensive calendar policy that includes but is not limited to which factors are considered calendar criteria, how they are prioritized in ways that are equitable and fair, what roles various entities play in informing the process, and the timeline by which this occurs; and to present this draft to the board early enough for it to be approved before any future calendar discussion or development."

ANNANDALE COMMUNITY CENTER



From left: Torrey Piper, Operations Manager, Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services Region 2; Theresa Brown, Assistant Division Director, NCS Region 2; Keesha Jackson-Muir, Principal, Braddock Elementary School; Pedro Herrera Santiago, 5th grade student, Braddock Elementary School; James Walkinshaw, Braddock District rep, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; Jeffrey McKay, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; Penny Gross, Mason District rep, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; Pallas Washington, Deputy Director, Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services; Jim Almond, Senior Vice President of Operations, Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington; Chris Scales, Division Director, Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services .

Annandale Community Center Opens

On Saturday, March 4, 2023, county leaders, the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington and community members gathered to celebrate the grand opening of the new Annandale Community Center at the Heritage Shopping Plaza.

The 2,100-square-foot center features two multipurpose rooms, small lounge, a kitchen and restrooms. Fairfax County is partnering with the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington (BGCGW) to offer affordable youth programming and afterschool activities in the new space. Additional programs and resources will be added following the grand opening.

"This shows the many true partnerships we have in Fairfax County to improve the lives of our young people," said Fairfax County Supervisor Chair Jeffrey McKay of the new facility.

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, PAGE 9

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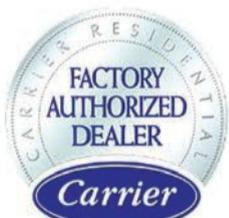
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Fairfax City Manager Unveils Proposed FY 24 Budget

Recommends a 3-cent residential real-estate tax hike for City of Fairfax properties.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City has two choices. It can keep its tax rate as is – and not have enough money to adequately fund all the City services its residents have come to expect. Or it can raise it and help Fairfax realize its current and future plans, while becoming an even better place to live.

City Manager Rob Stalzer chose the latter. Unveiling his proposed FY 24 budget Tuesday, Feb. 28, to the mayor and City Council, he recommended a 3-cent increase in the residential real-estate tax rate.

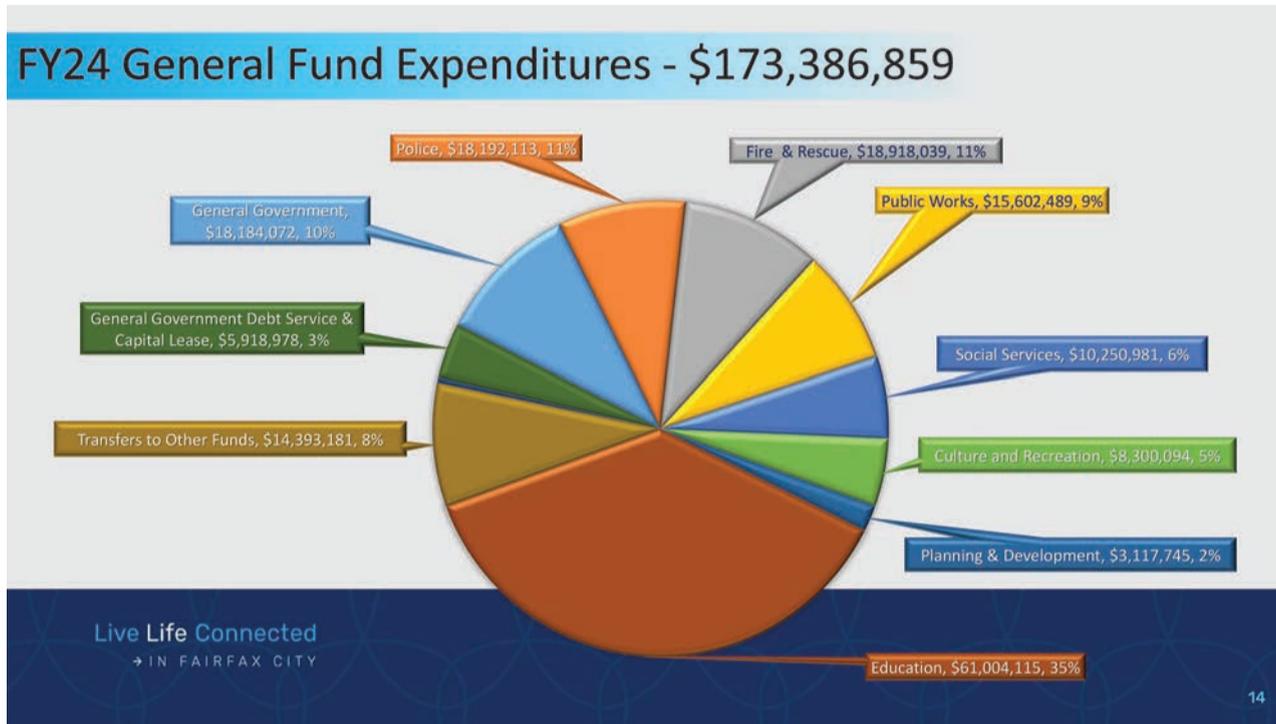
The hike would take it from its current \$1.01 per \$100 assessed valuation to \$1.04. And for Fairfax City homeowners, it would be a double whammy because increased Fairfax County property assessments will cause their tax bills to rise as well.

For calendar year 2023, the average assessed value of homes in Fairfax City rose from their previous \$588,000 to \$602,375. So even if the City's tax rate didn't rise, owners of the average homes here would still have to pay \$135/year more in taxes. With the 3-cent jump, they'll pay an average of \$316/year more.

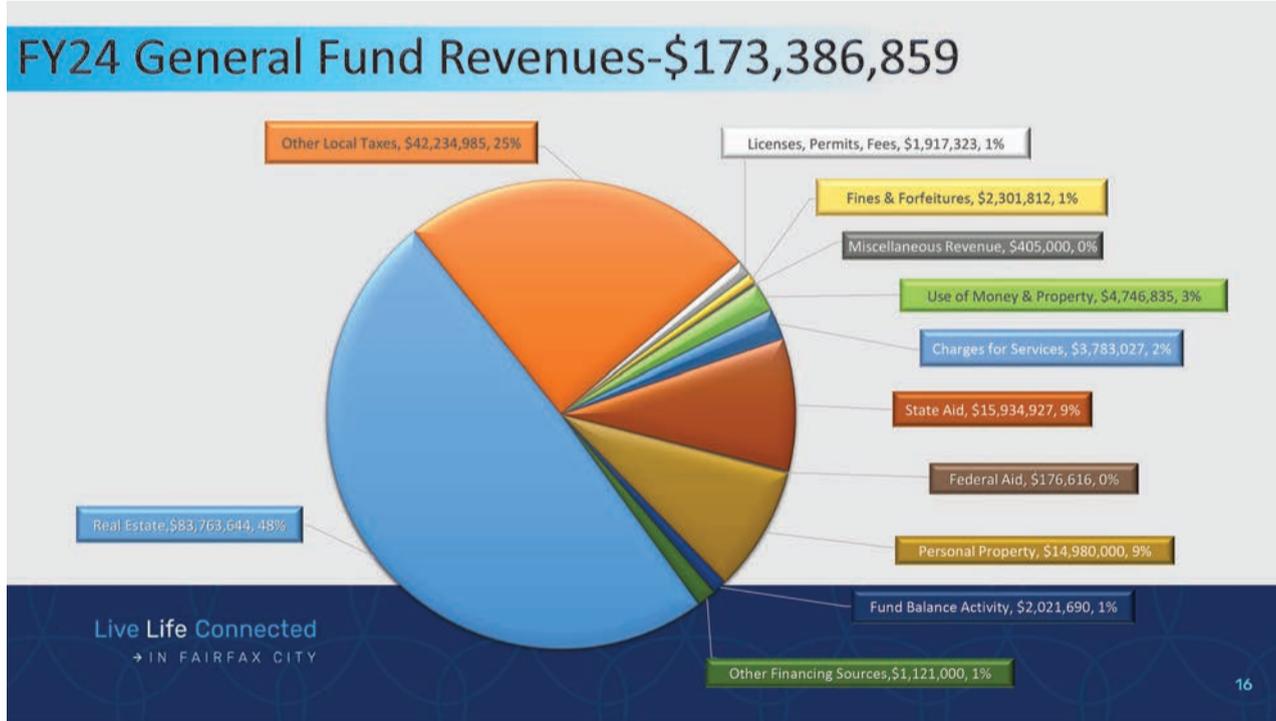
However, said Stalzer, "A \$1.04 tax rate would still be one of the lowest in the region, compared to other Northern Virginia cities and towns. The projected, proposed rate for the City of Alexandria is \$1.11, and Fairfax County, \$1.1425." And since revenue from real-estate taxes accounts for some 50 percent of Fairfax City's General Fund income, it's critically important to the City's continuing, successful operation.

In his message to City Council last week, Stalzer said the FY24 budget focus is on fulfilling Council's adopted strategic goals and 25 corresponding, priority-action items in the realms of economic development, environmental sustainability and stewardship, community, transportation and governance. To do so, he said Fairfax needs to:

- ❖ Provide money to fully fund the City's FY24-FY28 CIP (Capital Improvements Program – \$72.7 million in FY24 (93 projects); \$323.4 million for FY24-FY28 (115 projects);
- ❖ Achieve its fiscal-policy goals to maintain a 15-percent or more (15.9-percent in



City of Fairfax FY 24 General Fund revenues.



City of Fairfax FY 24 General Fund expenditures.

FY24) unassigned fund balance, while aspiring for 20 percent, and keep the City's AAA bond rating;

- ❖ Set self-supporting rates, where applicable, to cover the full costs of, for example, the Stormwater Utility Fund, Wastewater Fund and CUE bus system;

- ❖ Modernize the City's organization and support its employees via competitive salaries and benefits to retain them and recruit more; and

- ❖ Pursue multifaceted, aggressive economic-development initiatives, partnerships and innovation to grow the tax base, while attracting new businesses and retaining the current ones.

"The work of the Economic Development Authority and Economic Development Office is integral to us being able to carry out

Council's initiatives," said Stalzer. "A+ developers can go anywhere, but they continue wanting to come here."

He also advised Council members to keep the City's unfunded FY24-FY28 priorities on their radar and reminded them that the four City schools have significant, future capital needs. Meanwhile, the proposed budget fully funds the City School Board's tuition request of \$55,554,400.

"Education is 35 percent of our General Fund budget," said Stalzer. "It used to be 40 percent, but we've seen a drop in the number of students to 2,900."

FY24 expenditures for all Fairfax funds – General, Capital Projects, Old Town Service District, Transportation Tax, Cable, Wastewater, Stormwater Utility and Transit – total \$228,432,057. General Fund reve-

nues and expenditures equal \$173,386,859 – a 6.9-percent (\$11.2 million) increase over FY23.

The overall budget also recommends major CIP investments, especially in recreation, \$8.1 million; transportation, \$28.3 million; wastewater, \$10.5 million; and general-government projects, \$7.1 million. Stalzer proposes, as well, adding 3.25 employee positions, including another master police officer, plus a coordinator for the Fairfax Village in the City program, which supports senior citizens so they can stay in their homes here.

Regarding salaries, Stalzer recommends, effective Jan. 1, 2024, a 3.5-percent merit pay increase for eligible employees and a 2-percent market-rate adjustment, effective July 1, 2023, to general pay scales, to retain parity within the region. In October 2022, public-safety employees were moved to a step system, and the FY24 budget proposes a 1-percent cost-of-living increase, effective July 1, 2023, in addition to annual step increases.

Also recommended is a 6-percent wastewater utility rate increase to cover the City's share of operations at the county's wastewater-treatment plant, plus a 6-percent stormwater facility fee hike to support this City facility's operations. The personal-property tax rate will remain at \$4.13 per \$100 assessed value. However, vehicles are proposed to be assessed at their full market value, instead of the 86 percent ratio temporarily adopted for FY23.

Stalzer said this budget will ensure that the City's natural, cultural and historical resources are preserved, protected and improved. He also stressed that budget funds will help Fairfax create an intermodal system for safer and more efficient movement of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

"Since 2016, we've been awarded some \$203.4 million for transportation projects, and we currently have 21 ongoing projects," he said. "For a community of 6.34 miles, that's a lot of money and a lot of projects."

As for the CIP, said Stalzer, "We have an ambitious program, but also a funding plan to make these projects a reality."

Budget public hearings are set for March 14 and 28, and April 11 and 25, with budget adoption slated for May 2.

NEWS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 7

NCS Deputy Director Pallas Washington said it was vital that the community's voice was heard in the multiple public engagement sessions on the new facility's features.

"We are committed to making sure that everything that happens here to support families is definitely a reflection of [the community]," she said.

Earthquake Relief

The death toll in Turkey from last month's earthquake has risen to over 45,000. The earthquake and aftershocks injured more than 108,000 people in Turkey and left millions sheltering in tents or seeking to move to other cities. More than 160,000 Turkish buildings collapsed or were severely damaged in the disaster, the worst in the country's modern history.

This past Friday, the Board of Supervisors held an Earthquake Relief Press Conference partnering with Northern Virginia Regional Commission and made a commitment as a community to raise \$25,000 to Embrace Relief.

Embrace Relief is working to provide food assistance directly on the ground in Turkey. Any donation will make a difference. Visit www.helpearthquakevictims.org

Vienna Man Dies in Arlington Crash

At 3:37 a.m. on Saturday, March 3, Virginia State Police responded to a single-vehicle crash on westbound I-66 at the Rosslyn Tunnel.

A 2018 Range Rover was traveling west on I-66 when it ran off the right side of the road and struck a jersey wall just before the tunnel. It then traveled into the tunnel and overturned.

The driver, Talaat B. Hamooh, 26, of Vienna, Va., died during transport. He was not wearing a seatbelt and was ejected from the vehicle.

A passenger, Hussain A. Aljahdali, 29, of Arlington, Va., sustained minor injuries in the crash. He was wearing a seatbelt.

Excessive speed is being investigated as a contributing factor in the crash. The crash remains under investigation.

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, PAGE 18

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Legislative Stand-Off

BY DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM

The 2023 General Assembly session has adjourned for the year with results that might be best described as a "stand-off." Few were surprised with the outcome of the divided legislature controlled in the House of Delegates by Republicans and in the Senate by Democrats. Democrats—who had had probably the most successful progressive legislative sessions ever in 2020-2021 controlling both houses and the governor's mansion and passing laws to make the voting system fairer, expand human rights protections, and respond to the climate crisis among others—were anxious to build on their successes. They instead faced a barrage of bills by Republicans now in control of the House who were interested in turning back Democratic gains and in passing conservative laws that among other things would restrict a woman's reproductive freedom.

The two houses in many ways canceled themselves out with little bipartisan agreement. Adding to the pressure of coming away from



the session with legislative gains they can claim as their own was the fact that all 140 members of the legislature are up for re-election this November. The fact that as many as a third of the current members may be retiring and their seats filled with new members did not lessen the partisanship. The rookie governor who seemed to have his attention more on national affairs and his political ambitions did not help the situation.

Although the state has more cash available for its budget than ever before there was only limited agreement on how the biennial budget should be revised. Limited revisions were made to the current budget to fill in for a \$250 million error the Youngkin administration had made in calculating school aid, technical appropriation for the state retirement fund, and the rainy day fund. About three billion dollars was left on the table unappropriated as budget negotiators could not agree between tax cuts and critical program funding.

The major piece of legislation coming out of the session may be a bill that will tighten regulatory control over the state's largest utility

Dominion Energy. In recent years the General Assembly has usurped the powers of the State Corporation Commission to control electricity rates. The bill puts back that authority and makes rate adjustments that should result in lower rates for consumers. At the same time the House was able to stymie efforts by the governor to take the state out of REGGI that works to clean up greenhouse gas emissions.

With the overturning of Roe v Wade the House Republican leadership successfully fought off efforts to have the issue come to the floor for a vote protecting women's reproductive rights. The strategy was probably to keep vulnerable incumbents from going on record as being opposed to women's reproductive rights. At the same time Republicans in the House defeated a measure that would have repealed a ban on same-sex marriage that is already defunct because of a court decision.

If you want to know the outcome of a specific bill, you can look it up at <https://legiscan.com/VA>. Although I have announced that I will not be a candidate for re-election this year, I remain a delegate until my term ends in January 2024. Please call on me whenever I can be of assistance to you.

Updating Bus Camera Laws Are Helping Protect Kids

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

Like many residents of Fairfax County, I am alarmed by the growing frequency of accidents and near-misses of students boarding and exiting school buses. The headlines of small children nearly struck by speeding motorists as they get on and off the bus are difficult to swallow.

A simple covenant exists for parents – we drop our kids off at the bus stop for school and they are returned home safe and sound. That yellow school bus has always served as a symbol of safety, but when a flurry of motorists can willfully ignore the flashing lights and stop-arm sign, it requires a smarter approach to enforcing the law.

Across Virginia, communities are beginning to take action to protect their children from reckless drivers. I was proud to patron a law in 2020 that gives local governments the ability to implement school bus camera enforcement programs. These programs utilize automated technology solutions that reduce the number of stop-arm violations and drive behavioral change through effective enforcement of the law.

While illegally passing a stopped school bus is one of the most dangerous traffic violations you can



commit, it's also one of the most difficult to enforce. In Fairfax County, with a school bus fleet greater than Greyhound, it is not practical to ask our hardworking law enforcement officers to monitor every bus and bus stop for illegal passings. Similarly, we cannot expect bus drivers to note down the license plates of offending vehicles, while also taking care of the 50 young lives aboard their bus. As a result, hundreds of violations go uncited every single school day. What's worse is that the current laws do not give our law enforcement adequate time to fully review these violations to ascertain whether a violation has occurred. While Virginia has made considerable progress by making these safety tools widely available across the state, further action is necessary.

So, this General Assembly session I was proud to introduce HB 1995 that would give our law enforcement personnel more time to review whether a school bus violation occurred and to issue the ticket, a \$250 fine. A simple fix that could save lives and prevent a tragedy, this bipartisan bill passed both chambers overwhelmingly and awaits the Governor's signature. I worked across the aisle with

Sen. John Cosgrove of Chesapeake on the legislation. This bill will expand the time to issue a citation from 10 days to 30 business days – consistent with other states that implement similar programs. This is a commonsense measure that is supported by local governments in other parts of Virginia as well.

By ensuring that school buses are outfitted with photo-enforcement technology, we are finally giving "eyes" to our buses, thereby removing responsibility from our dedicated bus drivers who witness these violations every day, and already shoulder an enormous responsibility. The premise is simple – break the law, get a ticket. By

equipping buses in a community with automated enforcement technology, motorists learn to exercise caution around a school bus. The results speak for themselves. Data shows that 98% of first-time violators do not get a second ticket when issued through a full fleet stop-arm safety program.

It is my sincere hope that Fairfax County follows the lead of their neighboring counties to implement a program of its own. There is no excuse not to act. I urge every parent to urge their local leaders to act on behalf of protecting their children. Child safety is all our responsibility, and we must not sit by and wait for a tragedy to happen.

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NEWS

Donuts and Ice Cream Coming to Renovated Site

Central Springfield sees an expanded variety of cuisines.



The sign in the window is the only hint of the new tenant.



A drive-thru window will cater to the commuters from Backlick Road.

By MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

In a restaurant site where a Kentucky Fried Chicken once dished out buckets of fried chicken, crews are putting the finishing touches on the site that will house a Dunkin Donuts and Baskin Robbins Ice Cream in central Springfield.

The Dunkin Donuts is being relocated from a corner location a block away that has been a Springfield favorite for years. The aging building on the corner of Commerce Street and Brandon Drive will no longer be dishing out donuts when the new location opens.

The refurbished building is just off busy Backlick Road, a block south of Mike's American Grill that recently reopened after a Valentine's Day fire closed the restaurant for a few days in February. Also in the immediate area is a McDonald's, Bob and Edith's, a sub shop and the Paper Moon – a "Gentlemen's Club" which specializes in burgers and steaks with live entertainment. There are a variety of food types available as well so there's no shortage of eateries in this area.

This part of central Springfield has been "rebooted," a couple of times in an attempt to bring a fresh look to the area. A few blocks away is a new transportation center that is near completion, a new Giant Food, and a space where the Whole Foods is rumored to be moving, and the Trader Joe's that is relocating. There will be fresh façade's all around and a fresh look to this aging area.

The Dunkin Donuts will have a seating area and a drive through window that will cater to the com-



This Dunkin Donuts around the corner is relocating to the newly refurbished site a block away.



The shelves are empty at Bed, Bath and Beyond.

muters who can jump right off northbound Backlick Road and grab a bite to eat and cup of coffee on the way to work.

Although the new building has all the looks of Dunkin with the color scheme that is familiar to its fans, no opening date has been released as of yet.

Changes are coming on the other side of I-95 too. The Bed, Bath and Beyond chain is hurting finan-

cially so some stores are closing in the area. In Springfield, the store along Loisdale Road is closing, as is the one in Mount Vernon, said Holly Dougherty at the Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce.

According to a presentation on the "Today" show, the company recently announced plans to shutter another 150 stores nationwide including another store in Fairfax Towne Center.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

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Fill Us In!

In-Person Public Hearing on the McLean Community Center's FY 2025 Programs

Wednesday, March 22, 6:30 p.m.

The governing board and staff of the McLean Community Center seek **input from residents** of Dranesville Small District 1A at a Public Hearing on Programs for FY 2025 (which runs July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025).

This is an opportunity for residents to suggest class offerings, community events, theater programs, art exhibits, youth events and teen activities that are meaningful to the community.

If you would like to speak at the hearing, call the Center to have your name placed on the speakers' list. You may also submit comments to feedback@mcleancenter.org.



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Board of Supervisors Seeks to Raise its Salaries

Supervisors Herrity and Alcorn vote no.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

At its March 7 meeting, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted 8 to 2 to consider a pay raise for themselves beginning Jan. 1, 2024. Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) brought up the proposed compensation increases, although he will no longer be on the board by the time the raises would go into effect.

Compensation for board members would rise from \$95,000 to a range of \$125,000-\$130,000, and for the chairman, from \$100,000 to \$140,000-\$145,000.

According to Foust, the proposed salaries for Board members are “consistent with both with surrounding large jurisdictions as well as what Board members’ compensation would be if they had

received the same pay increase County



Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville)



Supervisors Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill)



Patrick Herrity (R-Springfield)

staff received since 2015.”

The Board’s compensations have not changed since 2015 and can only be adjusted following a public hearing in an election year. The change can only be applied to the next Board.

Foust said that the Board of Supervisors is not a part-time governing body. “Every Supervisor and the Chairman maintains full office hours throughout the year, and the

Board meets most Tuesdays,” he said.

Supervisors Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill) and Patrick Herrity (R-Springfield) voted against the measure. “I do not support raising supervisor salaries more than what county employees have received during the past eight years,” Alcorn said.

“It is unbelievable that this Board would propose a 37 percent raise for themselves when our residents are struggling with high

inflation, a 50 percent increase in homeowner taxes over the last decade, and in a budget that does not address the staffing crisis in public safety and other critical county positions,” Herrity said.

Residents can sign up to testify at the March 21 public hearing scheduled at 4:30 pm. regarding the increase. Here are ways for residents to testify that day: <https://fairfaxcounty.gov/clerkservices/>

Community Stuffs the Bus for WFCM’S Pantry

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

A Stuff the Bus food drive for Western Fairfax Christian Ministries’ (WFCM) food pantry was held Saturday, Feb. 11, at the Chantilly Walmart near the Dulles Expo Center. Part of Fairfax County’s annual initiative to stock local food pantries in the winter, it proved to be a big success. The five-hour event yielded 2,154 pounds of food and supplies.

“We are grateful to all of the community members who chose to donate food and toiletries to WFCM during Stuff the Bus,” said WFCM Executive Director Harmonie Taddeo. “We appreciate the Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services team members who coordinated this food drive for food pantries countywide. We also appreciate the support of our volunteers who collected, sorted and stocked the donated food and toiletry items.”

During the event, volunteers greeted Walmart customers as they entered the store and passed out fliers asking for food donations to help non-profit WFCM continue providing food for local families in need. Items collected were

then stuffed into a Fastran bus and brought to the organization’s pantry.

Meanwhile, those unable to participate in this food drive may still contribute to WFCM because the need for food, as well as toiletries, is ongoing. The most needed food items are canned fruit (no sugar preferred), canned mixed vegetables (low salt preferred), juice (shelf-stable, family-sized, plastic bottles), oil, hot cereal (oatmeal, grits), ramen noodle soup, canned stewed tomatoes (low salt preferred), regular flour and Maseca flour, mashed-potato mixes, and ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise (family sizes).

Toiletries needed are shampoo, conditioner, body wash, feminine pads, lotion, toothpaste, baby wipes, diapers (sizes 5 & 6), and Pull-Ups (toddler sizes 4T & 5T).

Donations may be dropped off at WFCM’s pantry at 4511 Daly Drive, Suite H annex, in Chantilly, Monday-Friday, 8-10 a.m., or the second Saturday of each month, 9-11 a.m. Drive to the back door. For large donations or other donation times, call 703-988-9656 for an appointment. For more information about WFCM, go to www.wfcma.org.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Collecting food donations outside the Chantilly Walmart are (from left) WFCM volunteers Jeanne Kline, Mike Kortan, Katherine Schweit and Shah Sakina, plus Fastran supervisor Ed Boatwright and Fastran driver Camacho Ezequiel.



Fastran supervisor Ed Boatwright loads a crate of donated macaroni and cheese boxes and fruit cups inside the bus to take to WFCM’s food pantry.

Bold and Innovative, He Delivers on His Vision

Chris Bruno receives Economic Development 40 Under 40 award.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City Economic Development Director Chris Bruno was recently honored as a recipient of the 2023 Economic Development 40 Under 40 Award. It's the biennial recognition given to rising stars under 40 years old in the economic development industry.

This national award was presented Jan. 29 during a reception in Tucson, Ariz., hosted by Development Counsellors International (DCI), a New York-based, integrated-marketing firm, and Jorgenson Consulting, a leading national executive-search firm. And Bruno was happy to be among those honored for their achievements in economic development.

"I'm thrilled to be included in the 40 under 40 class of 2023," he said. "While I'm grateful for this recognition, it's really the team at the Fairfax City EDA [Economic Development Authority] that does the work on a daily basis. Thank you to them and thank you to the teams at DCI and Jorgenson Consulting for this honor."

An independent selection committee of six, economic-development leaders and site-selection consultants evaluated nominations based on demonstration of strong

leadership, commitment and innovation every day in the workplace.

Bruno has served as the City's economic development director since 2016. Prior to that, he was assistant general counsel at the New York City Department of Small Business Services. In addition, he currently serves as a Senior Fellow for Law and Leadership at New York Law School in New York.

In Fairfax City, he's grown the Economic Development Office substantially – building teams to provide direct support to small businesses and leveraging opportunities to launch pilot projects and create unique connections. And last year, Bruno led the office through the development of its first-ever, strategic work-plan, building the framework for economic development in Fairfax City for the next five years.

"The City of Fairfax benefits from the perspective and experience that Chris brings to developing important partnerships and collab-

orations with far-reaching impacts to our economic development," said Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read. "He's bold and innovative, and he delivers on his vision. He's put together a great team, and their energy will move our economy in the direction we want to move as a 21st-century community."

Bruno's efforts have also put Fairfax City on the economic-development map regionally. In

2019, he was a founding member of the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance. It's a partnership of the 10 Northern Virginia jurisdictions which work toward promoting Northern Virginia as the best place in America to grow a business.

City Manager Rob Stalzer also appreciates Bruno's achievements that improved the whole atmosphere for economic development in Fairfax. "Under Chris's leadership, the Economic Development team has grown significantly in size, scope and importance," he said.

"It was responsible for successfully overseeing our COVID-19 business-response programs, the redevelopment of publicly owned property to a higher and better use, the relocation of our City's business incubator, the attraction and retention of a number of core businesses, and the development and deployment of unique and innovative pilot programs."

Furthermore, said Stalzer, "Chris has been intensely focused on the cultivation of partnerships – in-

cluding those with our neighboring colleges and universities, such as George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College – which has allowed him to leverage many opportunities to elevate Fairfax City Economic Development regionally and nationally."

The 40 under 40 awards ceremony was held in conjunction with the International Economic Development Council 2023 Leadership Summit, held exclusively for Certified Economic Developers and senior managers in the profession.

"The purpose-driven work of economic development plays a vital role in communities around the world, and much of it is led by young professionals," said Julie Curtin, president of DCI's economic-development practice. "These 40 rising stars are contributing their creativity, dedication and leadership to make a tremendous impact in their communities and our industry as a whole, and I so look forward to what lies ahead in their careers."

"The economic development industry continues to evolve, and these rising leaders are stepping up to the challenge," added Todd Jorgenson, managing director and principal of Jorgenson Consulting. "Congratulations to these 40 winners – and to the communities that are lucky to benefit from their expertise."



Economic Development Director Chris Bruno in Old Town Fairfax City.

BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

'He's Always One of the First to Volunteer'

PFC Viar feted as Sully's Officer of the Quarter.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

PFC Henry Viar was selected as the Sully District Police Station's Officer of the Quarter for the fourth quarter of 2022. He was honored at a recent meeting of the station's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

In his letter nominating Viar, Sgt. Dave Popik stressed that this nomination wasn't based on a single case but "an entire body of work" over the past year. "PFC Viar is a high-performing officer who was one of many officers to lead the station in incident reports and arrests – specifically, DWI arrests – and traffic citations," wrote Popik.

Throughout last summer, Viar volunteered to help with [potential evidence] recovery efforts at a landfill and was there for the entire duration of the event. And, said Popik, "After picking through the trash in the summer heat, he came back with the same enthusiasm he had when he left on the assignment."

Then on Oct. 5, 2022, Viar was recognized by a Mobile Crisis clinician, who "took the time to write an email expressing appreciation for his impeccable service," said Popik. "Viar assisted Mobile Crisis with an in-home visit with a combative patient. The clinician

wrote, in part, "Thank you for guiding me to safety and, most of all, for being so supportive."

A week later, on Oct. 12, 2022, Viar overheard a dispatched call involving a suspicious vehicle in the Fair Oaks District. Based on the vehicle description, he believed the car was involved in catalytic-converter thefts. So Viar responded to that area as the vehicle was leaving the neighborhood.

"He was involved in a high-risk stop [of that vehicle], which ultimately identified multiple suspects and helped close out several cases being worked on throughout Fairfax County," wrote Popik. "Lt. Bryant from the Franconia Criminal Investigations Division sent an email to Viar and his supervisors expressing his appreciation for helping to close these cases."

In addition, Popik said Viar has maintained a positive attitude and "is always one of the first to volunteer for assignments. It has been a pleasure to have him on the midnight squad, and it is my pleasure to nominate him for the Officer of the Quarter."

Reading Popik's nomination letter aloud during the CAC meeting, Capt. Rachel Levy, Sully District Station commander, then presented a certificate to Viar and thanked him "for all the hard work you do every day for the Sully District and the citizens of Fairfax County."



Capt. Rachel Levy honoring PFC Henry Viar.

BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Residents Oppose Demolishing 113-year-old Buildings

Wrecking ball posed to demolish house in historic district; heritage value vs. owner rights.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Process to Demolish

At a Feb. 15, 2023, Herndon District Review Board meeting, residents opposed an application by Adams Herndon Holdings, L.L.C. for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish its two buildings within the property of the Historic District at 725 Elden Street. The original application was filed on Jan. 13, 2020. The review board heard the opposition's comments during a portion of the meeting for matters not on the evening's agenda.

"There must be an alternative. This really has to stop," says speaker Jim Cudlip, vice president of the Herndon Historical Society referring to proposed demolition of the buildings.

Board member Mathew Ossolinski questioned staff about why they hadn't seen the application. Tamsin Hines, the town planner, said the board would not have seen the application "at this point" because it had not been formally advertised and thus not on the agenda. "However, the application is public record," she says, adding public hearings will be advertised and scheduled for board review.

On Jan. 11, 1991, the Herndon Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places. It includes within its 115 acres the downtown commercial district and surrounding neighborhoods in Herndon. The buildings at 725 Elden Street are classified as two of the district's 173 "contributing resources" and described as "Residence (ca. 1890-1910), wood frame; 2 story; 3 bay; asymmetrical; vernacular Victorian; contributing garage."

The buildings are classified as contributing resources within the Herndon Historic District. The district, not 725 Elden Street, is registered in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

On Sept. 9, 2020, eight months after January 2020's original application for demolition was filed, Michael L. O'Reilly of The O'Reilly Law Firm, who is assisting Kathryn and Chris Adams with the application, writes to Lesa Yeatts, Herndon Town attorney, saying, "No hearing has been scheduled before the HPRB ... Given the nature of the Heritage District, we are realistic that it likely will be denied."

Faced with the probable denial and the fact that they'd have to abide by the time-consuming process of appealing the application to the Town Council for another hearing, O'Reilly advises his clients to list the property for sale "as required by 78-60.3(h)(2)." The property is rezoned to commercial. It is listed for sale on Aug. 11, 2020. Despite a price reduction from \$1 million to \$550,000, there is no sale. The listing expires on Dec. 31, 2021.

On Jan. 3, 2022, at the town staff's request, a new application is completed to demolish 725 Elden Street. On Nov. 21, 2022, the site construction to remove two existing structures on the property of 725 Elden Street, Town Plan # TP#2115, is approved.

On Feb. 1, 2023, O'Reilly writes a letter to Hines saying, "Unfortunately, the Application has not progressed very far ... We are working on accommodating the other numerous staff requirements that will allow the matter to move forward."

Speakers Oppose Demolition.

Barbara Glakas is a historian of the Herndon Historical Society. "I do not support the demolition of this home," she says. Glakas quotes



Application for Demolition: the 113-year-old house and garage at 725 Elden Street, Herndon, Va.



John Cudlip, vice president of the Herndon Historical Society.



Barbara Glakas, a historian on the Herndon Historical Society.

"Neither the National Historic Preservation Act nor the Code of Virginia ... requires property owners, developers, or government agencies to avoid affecting or destroying historic resources."

(Source: DHR | Virginia Department of Historic Resources)

and then debates several statements made by O'Reilly in his Feb. 1 letter. She begins with O'Reilly's sentence, "The building does not contribute to the character of the historic or heritage district." Glakas says it is the second-oldest house in town. In response to O'Reilly's statement that the house has been "unoccupied for years and years," Glakas counters that it was a home for most of its history,

with the Adams family living there and renting it out later.

Glakas says that O'Reilly writes that residential use is not permitted in buildings in the Central Commercial District. She believes the property could be rezoned back to residential use. Glakas reads another O'Reilly statement: "With all the work done by our Historical Society and others documenting the early days of Her-

ndon, we would have known if this building contributed in any way." She says, "As a historian of the Herndon Historical Society, I can say that the admin did not reach out to us to discover any history about the house."

Glakas points out that according to O'Reilly, the engineer did not evaluate the load requirements of the house as a "residential build-

SEE RESIDENTS, PAGE 15

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PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Michael L. O'Reilly, of The O'Reilly Law Firm, is assisting in connection with the application for demolition.

Steve Mundt, resident.

Residents Oppose Demolishing 113-year-old Buildings

FROM PAGE 14

ing.” She concludes by calling O'Reilly's claims into question that relocating the building is “neither practical nor cost-effective” and rehabbing the structure is not feasible because of the extensive work needed.

Speaker Steve Mundt says he is concerned that as he watches the development of the Historic Downtown District, he, as a homeowner, is required to maintain “the presence of the historic district,” but commercial building owners are not.

“Take the time to really look at what is going on with this because I think we are about to lose a very, very valuable piece of our history.” He alludes to the successful relocation of “The Yellow House.”

Board member Mathew Ossolinski inquires about The Yellow House. Glakas informs him that it was first relocated from where the funeral home now stands to the back of its property. When the Adams-Green Funeral Home needed more parking, the town, a developer, and others worked together to relocate The Yellow House for the second time to the corner of Pearl and Oak.

O'Reilly Responds to HDRB Comments

O'Reilly stated a few days after the Feb. 15 meeting that, to his knowledge, no one lived at 725 Elden Street after the Adams' moved out. “If it was, I'm not aware ... My understanding is that it has not been occupied for a substantial period.”

O'Reilly clarifies that the second structure under consideration in the Application is “a 465-square-foot storage shed.” He says, “It has no historical value. ... You could move it, but the cost of trying to do that would be prohibitive. It's four big walls with a concrete slab.”

O'Reilly says when he was mayor of Herndon, The Yellow House at the back of the funeral home property was considered for demolition. O'Reilly describes working with the building's owners, the Adams, and others to relocate the structure.

“It was a terrifically difficult process. If anyone wants to ask me, I'll explain it,” O'Reilly says.

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PHOTOS VIA TWITTER

Vigil for Timothy Johnson, Killed by Fairfax County Police

FROM PAGE 3

with the Johnson family whose unarmed son was tragically killed in Fairfax County. Justice must be served!

#timothyjohnson #goodtrouble #faithnaction #goodpolicingmatters #prayervigil <https://twitter.com/vernoncwalton/status/1632152939417546752?s=51&t=0ea-jn6EG7MoywYgw6rcLJQ>

We should not have to live in a world where the price for stolen sunglasses is death. My Black brothers and sisters do. Until there is Justice everywhere there is Justice nowhere. Please, no more names. Vigil for #TimothyJohnson #SayHisName #BLM, tweeted Shyamali Roy Hauth @ShyamaliHauth

Large crowd braving the cold and rain for this vigil for #TimothyMcCreeJohnson, tweeted Stand Up for Racial Justice NoVa



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Patrecia Anjum, 17, Analiese Jones, 15, Izzy Ahad, 16, and Emily Pham, 18, members of the Herndon High School Interact Club take part in the meal packaging event for Rise Against Hunger.

Rise Against Hunger

Local Rotary and Interact clubs pack meals.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

In two and a half hours on Jan. 28, 46 volunteers, mostly Rotarians from the Rotary Club of Herndon-Reston and its Interact club members from South Lakes and Herndon high schools, packed 10,152 meals for global distribution by Rise Against Hunger. Rise mission is “Driven by the vision of a world without hunger, Rise Against Hunger is growing a global movement to end hunger by empowering communities, nourishing lives and responding to emergencies.”

Pam Love is the community engagement coordinator for Rise. She led the Jan. 28 meal packing event at Fairfax County Public Schools Aldrin Elementary in Reston. Love said soy protein granules

in the meal bags protect muscles and satisfy hunger. Rice provides carbohydrate fuel, while dried vegetables boost nutrient intake. After cooking, recipients add a vitamin and mineral packet.

“Rotary is one of our largest sponsors and partnerships within the organization on a national scale,” Love said. She expressed her appreciation for Rotary’s generosity and the volunteers’ work.

Analiese Jones, 15, Patrecia Anjum, 17, Izzy Ahad, 16, and Emily Pham, from the Herndon High School Interact Club, were among the volunteers. Izzy said, “I heard about it and thought it would be interesting. Plus, there are service hours.”

Elysa Birman, who is in charge of community service for the Rotary Club of Herndon-Reston, says that the club paid for the 10,152 meals. Donations helped cover some of the cost.

Rise reported that in 2021 it accomplished serving over 2.7 million people in 29 countries with its programs and facilitated the packaging of more than 540 million meals to date to be distributed to countries worldwide.



The Rise truck awaits loading at Aldrin Elementary School.

SCHOOLS

A Role Model With a Crown and Sash

Miss Virginia visits a Reston elementary.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The glitz and glamor of and sash attract the attention of children and frequently lend credibility to the wearer's words. Miss Virginia 2022, Victoria Chuah, visited a Fairfax County Public School, Aldrin Elementary in Reston, and spoke with students.

The visit allowed Chauh to model positive values and share her passion for her social impact initiative, 4A: Awareness & Advocacy for Adults with Autism, inspired by her 19-year-old brother Luke. Aldrin Elementary has two K-6 and three preschool autism classes.

Chuah also promoted healthy lifestyles and substance abuse prevention to students. Chuah earned a



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Miss VA 2022 talks with FCPS students at Aldrin ES in Reston.

master's in computer science from the University of Pittsburgh and graduated Summa Cum Laude. She is an incoming software engineer with Morgan Stanley.

Engineering With Empathy

Carson MS students design devices to help those in need.

Eighth-grader Rishab Naduri made a brace to help people with spinal cord injury inspired by his father's back pain woes. His classmate Aasritha Duriseti made a specialized bottle cap opener after watching her grandmother struggle to open things on her own. And Roman Moreno-Hines made a "third thumb" that he hopes will help people with arthritis hold objects longer after noticing his grandfather's difficulty hanging onto coffee mugs.

It's all part of an "Engineering With Empathy" unit created by Rachel Carson Middle School instructor Mark Bolt for students in his Engineering 3 elective course.

"The overarching goal of this project is for my students to understand that empathy is an important component of engineering," Bolt says. "Engineers need to understand their users' needs, and put themselves in the users' shoes, in order to then build an effective solution."

Bolt challenged his students to start the project by researching various disabilities and the obstacles individuals must overcome to perform daily tasks. Then he had students construct an adaptive device, have classmates test it and give feedback that can be used to improve the item.

"Throughout the project, students follow the Engineering Design Cycle and document their work showing the evolution of their adaptive device from prototype to finished project," Bolt said.

Eighth-grader Michael Kuwashima did just that with his "book blinds," which are designed to assist people with dyslexia as they process written information. The blinds, made of folded paper that the user can move up and down on a page, can be used to isolate words by the reader.

"Fewer words means less to focus on so people will hopefully have an easier time reading," Michael says, adding he started the project by asking a good friend with dyslexia to have an "in-depth talk" with him about what life is like with the disorder. "The biggest challenge he mentioned is that when you're kind of



PHOTO COURTESY OF FCPS

Carson MS technology education teacher Mark Bolt looks over students' work in the classroom.

tired, it is hard to focus anyways and words can get jumbled up."

Kuwashima's classmate Arjun Garg created a "dressing stick" to help people with limited mobility put on clothes more easily. The device has four hooks that can be utilized to do things like grab the arm holes of a shirt, so a person doesn't have to twist around as much while getting dressed.

"I wanted to create something that would reduce pain and make life easier for people," Arjun said. "I am interested in the medical field and this type of bio-engineering is exactly what I want to do: make things that improve the lives of people, build devices that benefit patients and help doctors and nurses at the same time."

Students noted the difference between solving problems in the classroom to benefit others and fun projects they'd previously undertaken, like work on model rockets and LED light stands.

"I loved the real world element," said Rishab Naduri, who made the back brace with velcro straps, chipboard, and fabric that he hopes would help people like his father on a daily basis.

Carson Middle School Principal Gordon Stokes agreed.

"So often our teachers in all classes are trying to connect their projects to real world applications and this unit did exactly that," Stokes said. "Our students took the principles they've learned in the classroom, applied it in the real world and helped people in need. I think everything they've developed could be used right now to assist others. That is the hallmark of really good learning and I'm very proud of Mr. Bolt and his students for making it happen."

Here's What's Happening at MCC!

MAR 10

Presented by The Alden

(the) Unruly Theatre Project
Friday, March 10, 7 p.m.

Free admission

Old Firehouse Center
5th & 6th Grader Party

St. Patty's Party
Friday, March 10, 7-9 p.m.

\$35/\$25 MCC district residents
\$20 OFC members.

MAR 10

Old Firehouse Center
Friday Night Trip

Washington Capitals Game
Friday, March 17, 4:30-10 p.m.

\$70/\$60 MCC district residents

MAR 17

Presented by The Alden
Women's History Month Event

"Makin' Cake" with
Dasha Kelly Hamilton
Saturday, March 18, 6 p.m.

Free admission

MAR 18

MCC Governing Board

March Board Meeting and
Public Hearing on FY2025 Programs
Wednesday, March 22, 6:30 p.m.

Free admission

MAR 22



The McLean
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www.mcleancenter.org

Home of The Alden Theatre
www.aldentheatre.org

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NEWS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 9

Open Hire Events March 14

The Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services is holding two Open Hire events on Tuesday, March 14, 5 – 7 p.m.

Locations:

Pennino Building, Room 206, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA, 20035

Herndon Neighborhood Resource Center, 1086 Elden Street, Herndon, VA, 20170

Apply and interview on the spot for multiple positions. Applicants should bring several copies of their resume. Available positions throughout the county include: Community-based Programs and Services – Recreation Leader II and III; School Age Child Care – Day Care Center Teacher I and Day Care Center Assistant Teacher; Therapeutic Recreation Services – Therapeutic Recreation Leader, Unit Leader and Director

Fair Housing

Where you live continues to have a significant impact on your life outcomes in the metropolitan Washington region. COG supports local governments in their duty to affirmatively further fair housing and prevent discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing so that all residents can choose to live in communities with access to quality schools, jobs, transportation, and housing that is affordable for a range of incomes.

Collaborating closely with local governments, COG is helping area jurisdictions meet fair housing require-

ments through the Regional Fair Housing Plan (also known as the Regional Housing Equity Plan). Participating local governments in the region, together with their public housing authority partners have determined that working together to create a regional fair housing plan may help ensure that local goals are consistent, collaborative, innovative, and more likely to be effective.

The Fair Housing Act was passed in 1968 and prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. The law was designed with two aims: one, to prevent discrimination; and two, to take active steps to undo historic patterns of segregation.

Review and comment on the draft Regional Fair Housing Plan. The 60-day public comment period is open from January 31 – March 31. <https://www.mwcog.org/community/planning-areas/housing-and-homelessness/regional-fair-housing-plan-comment-form/>

Car Seat Inspections, March 9

Parents may get their children's car seats inspected on Thursday, March 9, from 5-8:30 p.m., outside the Sully District Police Station. It's at 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. Inspections are done on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants should install the child safety seat themselves, so the inspection can be performed. The seat will be properly re-installed, if necessary, and parents will be taught how to install the seat properly. Everyone is eligible. Another car-seat inspection is scheduled for March 23, at the same place and time.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

PROGRAMS FOR AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS

The Fairfax County Park Authority is excited to offer American Heritage Girls Badge Program in the parks. American Heritage Girls is a scouting program that started in 1995 and has opportunities for three levels of scouts: Tenderheart, Explorer and Pioneer/Patriot (PiPa). Choose from a variety of badge programs, including fire safety, hiking, or kitchen science experiments. The American Heritage Girls Badge offerings are a great addition to our current scouting offerings for the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts of America.

American Heritage Girls Badge Programs that are open for registration, include:
American Heritage Girls, Pioneer/Patriot (PiPa)- Hiking at Lake Accotink Park on Sunday, March 12, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Cost \$11.
American Heritage Girls, Tenderheart – Hiking at Burke Lake Park on Sunday, March 19, from noon to 1:30 p.m. Cost \$11.
American Heritage Girls, Explorer-Kitchen Scientist at Lewinsville House on Saturday, March 25, from 10 a.m. to noon. Cost \$15.
American Heritage Girls, Tenderheart - Kitchen Scientist at Lewinsville House on Saturday,

April 15, from 9 a.m. to noon. Cost \$23.

For more information about scouting programs, visit the Park Authority Scouting website.

GEORGE MASON ENTERPRISE CENTER TO OPEN IN HERNDON

George Mason University is expanding its small business incubator programs to the Town of Herndon, with the aim of empowering more Northern Virginia businesses with high-growth potential. The newest Mason Enterprise Center (MEC), located at Office Evolution, 205 Van Buren Street in Herndon, will focus on supporting small, entrepreneurial and emerging businesses while promoting Herndon's economic growth.

Herndon becomes the fifth Northern Virginia locale to partner with the MEC, joining Fairfax, Arlington, Fauquier, and Springfield. The no-cost and low-cost services brought to small businesses include business advisory services and educational workshops, from federal and state programs such as the Virginia Procurement Technical Assistance Center (Virginia PTAC), the state Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network, and the Innovation Commercialization Assistance Program (ICAP) among others.

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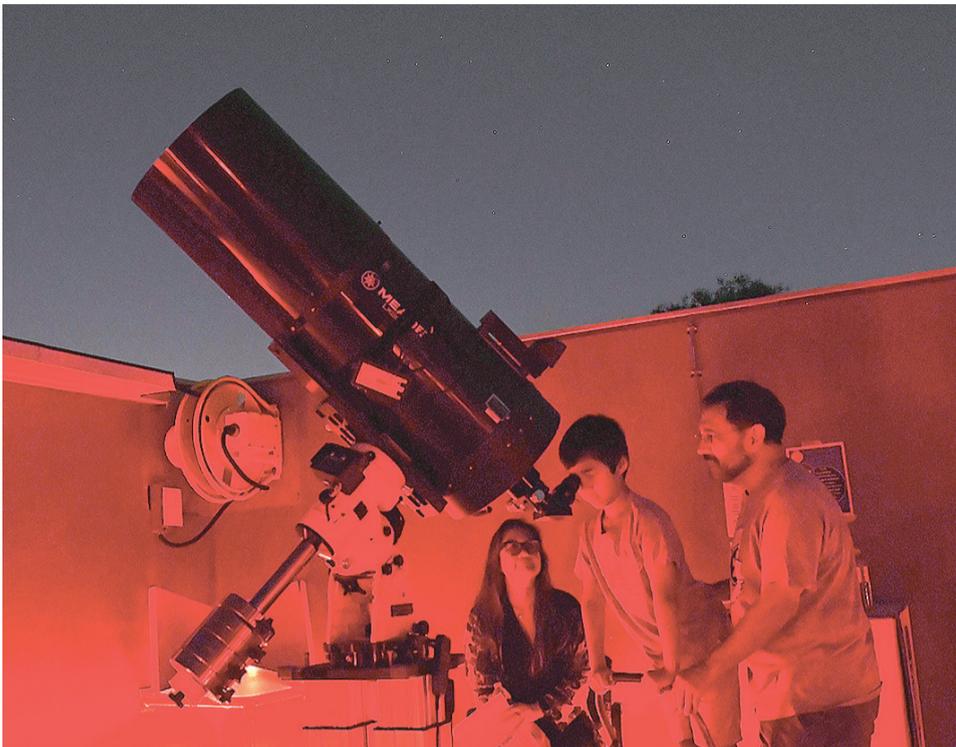
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OBSERVATORY PARK

PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA TYLER WENKS



A family takes turns peering through a Schmidt-Cassegrain style telescope to examine colors of double stars.



The Roll-Top is half classroom and half-observatory, where the roof opens providing sky access to mounted telescopes.

Seeing Stars

The number of visitors illuminates local observatory's glowing, growing popularity and purpose.

BY CHRISTINA TYLER WENKS
THE CONNECTION

“Seeing the planets is a beautiful experience,” said Vienna’s Ritu Thanuria, enthralled at seeing Jupiter, Saturn’s rings, Uranus, Neptune, Mars, and double stars. She brings different family members during each visit to Observatory Park in Great Falls. On Friday night, she brought her niece.

“Every visit is ‘WOW!’ You can look at the universe,” said Shrishti Chhajlani, a Georgetown University nursing student.

More than 4,000 people visited Observatory Park this year, doubling last year’s attendance and quadrupling 2016 figures.

Observatory Park offers free sky viewing on Friday nights, weather permitting, plus Fairfax County Park Authority’s Parktakes classes, and other learning opportunities. Requests for special programs are growing.

“I’d like to increase astronomy programs across the county, but if given a choice to sign up for a class elsewhere or at the observatory, the public will choose the observatory,” said Tammy Schwab, Fairfax County Park Authority education and outreach manager.

Fairfax County relies on a local organization to manage technical equipment and the rising popularity. “We rely on Analemma Society for support and training of volunteers because they are the experts,” Schwab said.

During 2022, about 20 Analemma Society volunteers provided astronomy classes and operated telescopes for more than 130

events and more than 1,650 service hours.

“Our ultimate goal is to inform the public about the history and value of astronomical development that leads to science-based decisions that continue to improve our lives,” said Charles Olin, who founded Analemma Society in the 1990s to develop Observatory Park in partnership with Fairfax County.

Observatory Park’s history is distinct from neighboring Turner Farm and includes shared missions decades ago with the NIKE Missile Sites and the Defense Mapping Agency Herndon Site that became central to Global Positioning System development and navigation technologies. A former radar pedestal is now the Remote Access Astronomical Observatory where a planned 16-inch telescope will be remotely operated from the Roll Top Building a few hundred feet away. Construction of sundials depicting the science of time through multiple cultures is also planned.

Outdoor night-sky programs started in 2003, but the Roll Top Building’s 2016 completion was a game changer. The Roll-Top is half classroom and half-observatory, where the roof opens providing sky access to mounted telescopes. Walls block headlights and wind, providing a darker, warmer space on cold nights.

“Now that we have the classroom, we can do regular programs. We go right from the classroom to telescopes, and we don’t have the setup time of hauling telescopes outdoors,” explained Analemma Society’s Jeffrey Kretsch, who works with FCPA to accommodate increasing program demand.



Nov. 8’s lunar eclipse as witnessed at Observatory Park in Great Falls



More than 100 people turned out on Nov. 8 to Observatory Park to witness the lunar eclipse.

Ken Randell of Fairfax called Observatory Park an inexpensive family date. Others call the historic site and knowledgeable volun-

teers a local treasure.

For more information about events, classes, volunteering and more, visit analemma.org.



Kofi Annan in front of his Soul Rebel Food Truck, Caribbean Roots American Soul. Visit Soulrebelfood.com.

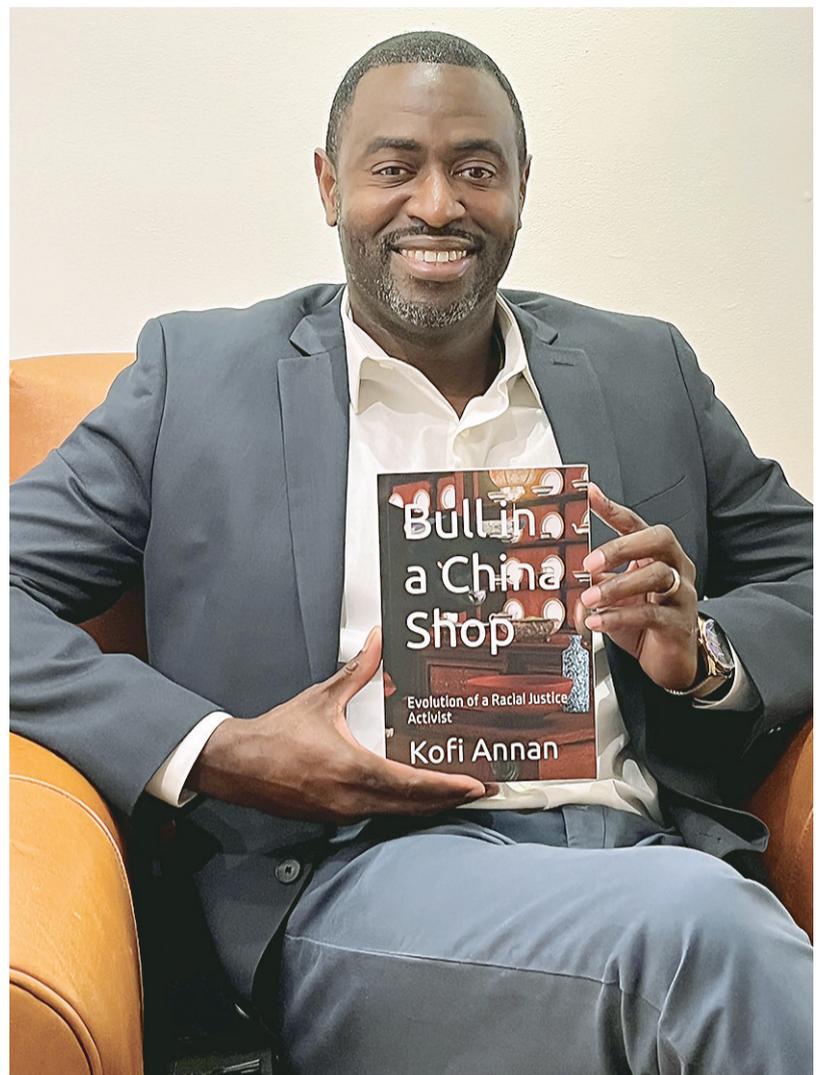


PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Kofi Annan with his recently released book, “Bull in a China Shop: Evolution of a Racial Justice Activist” (2022)

Then and Now for the Kofi Annan

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

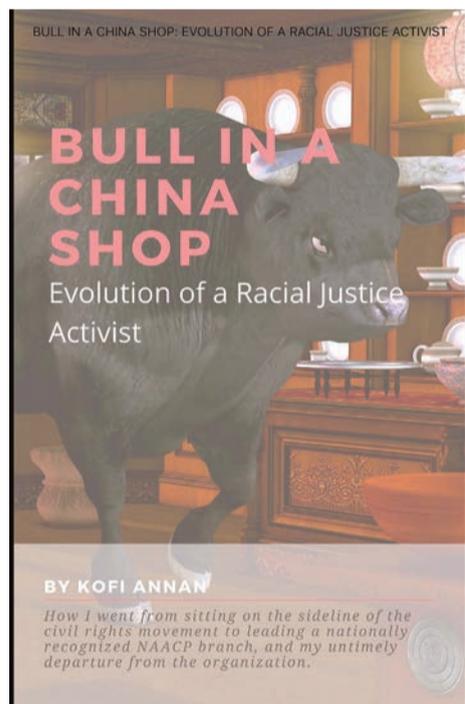
Early in 2022, Kofi Annan released “Bull in a China Shop: Evolution of a Racial Justice Activist” (2022). The 237-page book is a brutally honest memoir by the past president of the Fairfax County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Under Annan’s leadership, the branch won the top award from the national association in July 2018: the Thalheimer Award for outstanding program activities in 2017. What occurred after was, as Annan said, an exit that “was quite dramatic, to say the least.”

Annan served as chapter president of the NAACP from December 2016 to July 2019. Following a dispute with the previous president of the chapter, he writes, “I should have just put my phone away.”

Annan said Sharon Bulova (D), the former chair of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, suggested what became the book title to him before his 2019 resignation as president of the NAACP. He recalled Bulova saying, “You came into the county like a bull in a china shop.”

“I was motivated by the injustices of watching so many Black men gunned down or beaten to death in the street at the hands of police,” he writes. According to Annan, “Bull in a China Shop” demonstrates why “voting alone accomplishes nothing to alleviate the issues of the Black community’s needs.” Annan’s book provides a view of how and why Black concerns are deprioritized. He said that the Democrats did such a good job of establishing the NAACP as the voice of the Black community but that his criticism “raised eyebrows.”

Through Annan’s writing, the reader travels with him as a youngster in Guyana, one



of the poorest countries in South America. Annan observes his single mother working tirelessly to improve their lives. She moves them to Antigua and then the United States. In 1991, she relocated them to the District of Columbia. It is called the murder capital of the United States at that time, and crack cocaine is prevalent.

Annan is a middle school student who hears gunfire daily. “Some of us even get robbed at gun or knifepoint. We were all afraid — afraid for our safety,” he says.

“What we needed was professional counseling, conflict resolution alternatives, (and) alternative accountability programs.” He says the grownups around him also suffered. “Overworked, underpaid, and equally traumatized.”

“Wanting to understand how the system worked and why it had such a devastating impact on communities of color,” Annan studies Criminal Justice and Psychology at Tennessee State University. After graduating and liking his college service in the Army Reserves, Annan re-enlists as an intelligence analyst in the U.S. Army. It places his career trajectory “on an upward trend.”

Early in Annan’s NAACP tenure, members discovered that ICE had raided a church to catch immigrants trying to leave a shelter. “I knew we could not let this moment pass by without doing something,” he writes. “The prevailing sentiment among the immigrant community was fear, and it hit home in a major way since I, too, was an immigrant,” he writes.

A panel discussion on immigration involving elected officials, law enforcement, and community activists follows. Annan’s NAACP presidency changes thinking. “We no longer cared what elected authorities thought of us. The authority came from the people, not the elected leaders,” Annan says.

Annan realizes he is “upsetting the apple cart.” Annan’s first clue is that things are not what they seem, leading to a series of new insights. Annan holds town hall sessions on affordable housing with the NAACP. He learns that budgets are not about actual dollars but priorities. The money is always there.

“We simply had to convince the county to make it a priority. ... After months of being told there was no room in the budget to expand on affordable housing initiatives,

the county did an abrupt about-face and allocated an additional \$5 million toward the housing trust fund,” Annan writes.

Summer of 2018, then-FCPD Chief Edward Roessler requests school resource officers in FCPS elementary schools. Annan says he confirmed SROs fuel the school-to-prison pipeline. He writes, “The results are devastating to Black and Latino youth.”

After Annan resigned from the NAACP in 2019, the reader follows him “helping Black people.” He campaigns for the Virginia State House of Delegates and loses the primary. He creates “The Activated People” magazine and turns it into a non-profit for volunteer activism. If Annan wants readers to take something away from his book, it is that if he can make an impact, anyone can.

In 2021, Annan left the Department of Defense. In February 2021, he opened Soul Rebel-Caribbean American Fusion Food Truck. “I felt unburdened, felt my heart was free, and conscience was clear,” Annan said.

After his book launched, Annan said, “I worked hard to improve the lives of countless Virginia families, but in the process, I sacrificed time that I should have been spending with my own family.”

Now Kofi Annan and his wife Shareem are ready for another transition. “We are proud to celebrate our two year anniversary [of the Soul Rebel Food Truck]! But there’s more, we will be moving to Petersburg to open Soul Rebel restaurant this summer.”

“Bull in a China Shop: Evolution of a Racial Justice Activist,” by Kofi Annan is available on Amazon.

CALENDAR



"How the Light Gets In" will be presented now through March 19, 2023 at 1st Stage of Tysons.

NOW THRU APRIL 30

Score: Mixed Media Art. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Score explores 20 years of the work of Virginia-based mixed media artist, Joan Dreyer. While developing her MFA thesis at Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia, PA, Joan began taking tools, techniques and imagery that have been historically considered "women's work" and transforming them into innovative, contemporary art that is responsive to the tone and tensions of our times. Created by combining fiber techniques with unexpected materials like X-rays, her work is a subtle art that asks questions about life, loss, symbolism, and the impact of war instead of providing one size fits all answers. The artist's work provides a space for the contemplation of life stages that we all encounter. The result is a body of work that allows for meaningful but also multiple interpretations by the viewer. Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/score-mixed-media>

ONGOING

Earthquake Relief Collection. Elected leaders from Northern Virginia announced the launch of a fundraising effort to collect money to purchase food packages for those impacted by the recent earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. NVRC hopes to collect \$25,000 for this effort. To donate, visit www.helpearthquakevictims.org.

MARCH 1 TO MAY 31

Candytopia Opens. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Candytopia, in partnership with Tysons Corner Center announces the arrival of its sweet interactive concept to the center. It will feature 16,000 square feet with 14 different interactive environments, Instagram-worthy photo opportunities, and delectable tastes of your favorite sweet treats. There is a candy art gallery, a state-of-the-art candy confetti room, complete with confetti-farting pigs, a marshmallow pit filled with a quarter-million

marshmallows, as well as DMV-inspired elements throughout the experience. The journey includes candy samples throughout the experience. Visit www.candytopia.com.

MARCH 2-19

"How the Light Gets In." Presented by 1st Stage of Tysons, 1524 Spring Hill Road Tysons. Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. From the co-writer of the breakout hit Duck Harbor comes an uplifting story of connection and healing. Set against the backdrop of a peaceful Japanese garden, this beautifully touching story centers around four very different people who build a community of love and hope. Tickets can be purchased online at www.1ststage.org or by calling the 1st Stage box office at 703-854-1856.

MARCH 3-12

"Stop, Kiss." Presented by Reston Community Players. At Reston Community Center, Reston. Friday and Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. A powerful play honoring the struggles of the LGBTQ+ Community by Diana Son.

MARCH 3-12

Vienna Restaurant Week. At restaurants in Vienna. Celebrating its second year, the event will showcase the culinary breadth of the town's dining community. The Spring program will feature 50 participants from restaurants to fast-casual eateries throughout the Town of Vienna. During the week-long event, participating restaurants will offer three-course prix fixe menus of \$25 for lunch/brunch and \$35-40 for dinner per person. In addition to the curated menus, specialty restaurants, and eateries will offer discounted a la carte dining providing food lovers the opportunity to further explore Vienna's culinary scene. Diners are encouraged to follow at @ExploreViennaVA on Instagram and Facebook and tag #ViennaRestaurantWeek. For more

information, visit exploreviennava.com/restaurantweek.

MARCH 4 TO APRIL 16

Texture Photography Exhibit. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Falls Church Arts Gallery, 700-B West Broad Street, Falls Church. Sixty photographic images from 37 photographers will be featured in "Texture, A Photography Show" on view at Falls Church Arts Gallery. The submissions vary widely and range from country and city scenes to bodies of water, botanicals, and geographical formations, among others. Visit the website: www.fallschurcharts.org.

MARCH 6-12

Fairfax City Restaurant Week. At Restaurants in Fairfax City. The event celebrates Fairfax eateries by placing them center stage all week long. Restaurants offer prix fixe menu experiences (\$25 brunch/lunch and \$40 dinner, per person/couple/family options available at select locations). Additionally, specialty restaurants offer a Two for \$10 Deal, providing food lovers the opportunity to further explore Fairfax City's regionally lauded diverse culinary scene. For more information, visit fairfaxcityrestaurantweek.com.

MARCH 8 TO APRIL 2

Art Exhibition. 1-6 p.m. At Mosaic Arts Gallery, 2931-B Eskridge Road, Fairfax. An art exhibition titled "Focus on Faces" will be presented by the mosaicArts Gallery. The exhibition will feature encaustic portraits of young adults painted by Alexandria artist, Linda Lowery. Opening reception March 11 from 4:00-7:00 p.m. Visit the website: mosaicarts.site

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 8

Education Recruitment Day. 9 to 11:30 a.m. At Dewberry Hall, Johnson Center, Fairfax Campus, 4477 Aquia Creek Ln., Fairfax. Employers will be on campus looking to hire undergraduate, graduate students and alumni for positions in the education field. Open to the public. You do not need to be a



Members of Moch Pryderi who will be playing traditional celtic music at the Old Brogue Irish Pub in Great Falls on Sunday, March 12, 2023. (From left): Rik Rice, Mary Triola Bailey, Dave Caouette, Lauren Smith and Mike Gallu.

Mason student or alum to attend Education Recruitment Day.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 8

LUNAFEST Film Festival. 6-9 p.m. At Angelika Film Center at Mosaic, 2911 District Ave., Fairfax. Girls on the Run of Northern Virginia will host the annual LUNAFEST event, the fundraising film festival dedicated to amplifying stories by women and gender nonconforming filmmakers, and bringing people together in their communities, on International Women's Day, Wednesday March 8th. For those interested in attending this event, tickets are now available online for purchase. To purchase your tickets, visit <https://girlsontherunofnova.kindful.com/e/gotr-nova-lunafest-2023>.

THURSDAY/MARCH 9

Travel Training. 9:45 a.m. to 12 p.m. Meet at RA Headquarters, Reston. Reston Association will partner with Fairfax County to provide free hands-on training on how to read and understand local bus and rail schedules, pay for bus and rail trips using Reduced Fare SmartTrip technology and how to transfer throughout the local bus and rail systems. They will hop on the bus to the Silver Line and take a ride out to the airport and back. Contact me at Ashleigh@reston.org or 703-435-6577 if you are interested.

FRIDAY/MARCH 10

(the) Unruly Theatre Project. 7 p.m. At The Alden Theatre, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingle-side Ave., McLean. Come enjoy a night of laughs on us! (the) Unruly Improv is The Alden's professional teen improv company dedicated to bringing comedic performances to the community. In May 2022, UTP was named 1st place Champions at Improvicon of Northern Virginia!

FRIDAY/MARCH 10

Old Firehouse Center 5th & 6th Grader Party. 7-9 p.m. At The Old Firehouse, McLean. Old Firehouse 5th & 6th grader parties are themed and decorated accordingly. Free catered food and beverages will be distributed to participants. Parties feature a DJ, an open dance floor and a variety of activities.

SATURDAY/MARCH 11

Teen Job Fair. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Final workshops ending at 1:30 p.m.) At West Springfield High School, Springfield. Hosted by Supervisor Herry's office. Fair focuses on students and young job seekers looking for a variety of employment opportunities; full time, after-school, seasonal positions, internship opportunities, and volunteer positions. The fairs have provided thousands of teenagers

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 23

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Legals

Notice is hereby given that on **Thursday, March 23, 2023, commencing at 10:30 am, EST** we will sell by public auction, at the single location of **5801 Rolling Road, Springfield, VA**, the personal effects stored at the following, Ace Van & Storage, Inc. 5801 Rolling Road, Springfield, VA for the account in the name of **WAYNE ADAMS; JUDITH BOSTON; BEATRICE GEELHAAR (1); BEATRICE GEELHAAR (2) and JOANN MARTIN** to enforce its warehouseman's lien for storage and/or other related services. All parties in interest please take notice.

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THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 21

the opportunity to get in front of employers and for our employers to find talented Fairfax County students to fill their positions. Students can register here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZFG3RC2>

SATURDAY/MARCH 11

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra. 8 p.m. At GMU's Harris Theatre, Fairfax. Grammy-winner Jason Vieaux, "among the elite of today's classical guitarists" (Gramophone), is described by NPR as "perhaps the most precise and soulful classical guitarist of his generation". He is joined by Aaron Clay, FSO principal bassist and member of "The President's Own" United States Marine Band for the U.S. Premiere of a new work by composer Sylvie Bodorová.

SATURDAY/MARCH 11

Christ Church Children's Consignment Sale. 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Christ Church, 7600 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. A community-focused event, that serves families with kids from babies to teens. Clothes, shoes, toys, games, books, baby equipment and much more! Thousands of items from 225+ families. 40-90% off retail. Quality items. Organized in categories. Awesome deals. Affordable for all. Cash, check and credit cards (with photo ID) accepted. One-half price sale from noon-2 p.m. Proceeds benefit ministries and missions of Christ Church. Free Admission. Website: <https://www.christchurchsale.com>

SATURDAY/MARCH 11

Fairfax Choral Society's 60th Anniversary Gala. 7:30 p.m. At Capital One Hall, 7750 Capital One Tower Road, McLean. The choirs of the Choral Society, along with special guest The Children's Chorus of Washington, will present Dan Forrest's Jubilate Deo. They will be joined by internationally acclaimed Soprano Simone Paulwell. Website: <https://www.capitalonehall.com/events/detail/fairfax-choral-societys-60th-anniversary-celebration>

SATURDAY/MARCH 11

"I Love McLean Celebration." 1-4:30 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Chat with other community residents over light refreshments. Enjoy musical performances, Arts and Crafts and other entertainment provided by youth groups and other local entertainers. Open house of the Alden Theatre and McLean Project for the Arts, Youth Art Show, McLean Pyramid.

MARCH 11-12

Virginia Opera - La Traviata. Saturday at 8 p.m. Sunday at 2 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Composed by Giuseppe Verdi. Featuring one of the most demanding, sumptuous, and recognizable scores of all time, Virginia Opera concludes its season with Giuseppe Verdi's tour de force La Traviata. Set amidst the pleasure-loving and decadent French aristocracy of the 19th century, Verdi's three-act tragic and romantic opera follows a sophisticated courtesan, Violetta, who falls in love with a man she cannot have, Alfredo Germont.

SUNDAY/MARCH 12

Traditional Celtic Music. 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. At the Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Featuring Moch Pryderi. Tickets must be purchased in advance at www.oldbrogue.com - \$21 general admission. Visit www.oldbrogue.com or call the Old Brogue at 703-759-3309

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 15

The Falls Church Pyramid Art Show. 5:30-7:30 p.m. At Falls Church High School, Entrance 8 lobby. The Pyramid Art Show is held annually in Fairfax County Public Schools to promote student art from grades K through 12. Art teachers from Camelot, Fairhill, Graham Road, Mason Crest, Pine Springs, Westlawn, Woodburn, Luther Jackson and Falls Church select a number of student artworks to display in the event to represent each school.

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"Makin' Cake" will be presented at the Alden Theater in McLean on Saturday, March 18, 2023.

MARCH 17 TO APRIL 8

Easter Bunny Photos at Tysons Corner Center. The Easter Bunny is back at Tysons Corner Center starting on March 17. Individuals, kids and families can visit the Bunny in Fashion Court-Lower Level Nordstrom Wing, and for the easiest experience, pre-book photo sessions for your littles by visiting the link: <https://www.tysonscornercenter.com/BunnyPhotos>

SATURDAY/MARCH 18

"Makin' Cake." 6 p.m. At The Alden Theater, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Dasha Kelly Hamilton's inspiring stage production, "Makin' Cake," reveals what the history and ingredients of cakemaking can teach us about race, class and equity in America. Filled with "Aha!" moments, poignant vignettes, digital media and two onstage bakers. Tickets are \$25, \$15 for Alden district residents and \$20 for seniors and students. Visit aldentheatre.org or call 703-790-0123, TTY: 711.

SATURDAY/MARCH 18

KODO - One Earth Tour 2023: Tsuzumi. 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Experience the power, grace, and joy that KODO's athletic percussionists bring to the stage in their much-anticipated 40th anniversary performance: Tsuzumi. As masters of the ancient art of Japanese taiko drumming, KODO bewitches audiences with visually stunning performances that combine raw athleticism and refined percussive virtuosity.

SATURDAY/MARCH 18

Fundraising Banquet. 6-9 p.m. At Arlington Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Coastal Conservation Association's Northern Virginia Chapter 20th Annual "Save a Fish - Build a Reef" Fundraising Banquet. Support CCA Virginia's efforts to ensure the health and conservation of our Chesapeake marine resources and anglers' access to them. Visit the website: ccavirginia.org

SATURDAY/MARCH 18

NOVA BPW Best Friends Luncheon. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. At 12025 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy, Fair Oaks. The Northern Virginia Business and Professional Women's (NOVA BPW) Club, of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Club, Inc. will host a Best Friends Luncheon on March 18, 2023. The Best Friends Luncheon will recognize the history of true friendship and the bond of friendship between friends. A woman's best friend, male or female, positively contributes to her mental and emotional health. The proceeds from this event will support scholarship, schools, women's shelters, and other non-profit organizations in Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince Williams Counties. Tickets are available (\$85.00) online at Eventbrite at <https://BestFriendsLuncheon.eventbrite.com>

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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 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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Do or Die, and I Did; So Far Anyway



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

On or about Feb. 20, 2023, I celebrated (you bet I celebrated; every single day that I'm still alive I do) the 14th anniversary of my date with destiny, the date when Team Lourie (my wife, Dina; my brother, Richard, and me) attended our initial meeting with an oncologist (a specialty with which I don't believe I was familiar at the time). He was referred by my internal medicine doctor (who also had been the doctor who had called me the previous week with the results of my surgical biopsy). We had never met this man/oncologist before. Nevertheless, here we all were sitting across from one another in his office as he proceeded to read the reports from all the doctors who had been involved in the previous seven-plus weeks of various diagnostic tests to determine what had caused the pain in my rib cage. Pain which subsequently migrated to the other side of my rib cage and then completely disappeared. It all began, innocently enough (or so I thought) when I first went to Urgent Care on Jan. 1, 2009, for an assessment. (Yes, New Year's Day, of all days to go to an Urgent Care). However, it wasn't until this Feb. appointment that I learned the results of the two different sets of X-Rays, one CT scan, one PET scan and a surgical biopsy which had occurred since that first fateful day when the pain in my rib had made it difficult to breathe, especially inhale - and even bend over to tie my sneakers, as I got dressed to drive to the emergency room: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV, a killer if there ever was one, and unfortunately, in medicine, there are many.

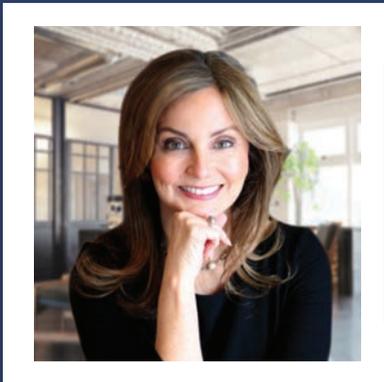
As the oncologist read all the reports/summaries from the physicians who had been investigating the cause of my rib pain, I couldn't quite believe what I thought I was hearing. I mean, I heard all the words from the oncologist, as he was sitting less than 10 feet away but really couldn't process what I was hearing. I remember saying "What?!" However, I clearly remember being told that I had a "terminal" diagnosis. The prognosis: "13 months to two years."

At that time, I was 54 and half and I had never spent a night in a hospital, broken a bone, or barely even had any stitches. Yet, here I was, in major harm's way. My luck, such as it had been, had officially changed. The worm, figuratively speaking, as so many have said in similar circumstances, had turned (along with everything else. Topsy turvy, inside out and upside down, might give you a sense of the total upheaval in your life when a boom such as this is lowered. Actually, it's more like kaboom). The most common description/word I can use to respond to being given a "terminal" diagnosis like this, out of the blue, no less, is/was surreal. It's hardly a unique reaction. I've heard others in similar do or die-type scenarios use the exact same word.

After receiving this life-changing news, the ride home, with Dina and I alone in the car, and my brother a phone call away, was one of stunned silence. Whatever words we exchanged are lost in the ether. I remember, we were barely able to converse. In a matter of 30 minutes or so, our world of possibilities just shrank to next to nothing. What little we understood about cancer, the treatment, my prospects, et cetera, paled in comparison to the fear and anxiety that enveloped us. Lung Cancer!? I thought was a smoker's disease? I never smoked a cigarette in my life, and moreover, being an outside salesman my entire adult work life until then, I rarely spent time in an office and so had never been around much second-hand smoke either. Yet here I was: jackpot city.

But I survived it all. And every February, I take stock and count (figuratively speaking) my blessings. As for the future, I sort of play it dumb and try to go about my business/life as if I haven't been afflicted with a "terminal" form of cancer. Not dying gives one a certain amount of hope. In the early days of every-three-month in person appointments and regular scans, I would often ask my oncologist what if-type questions about various scenarios and side effects and so forth. He was always hesitant to answer my questions. He didn't want to talk too much about scenarios that might never arise or side effects that I might not experience. Eventually, I got the message and the process: thinking too much (or constantly) about something unpleasant/impactful that may or may not happen health wise in the future was counterproductive. And I've been rewarded for my attitude and understanding ever since. And it's never clearer to me than it is every February: My favorite month of the year.

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



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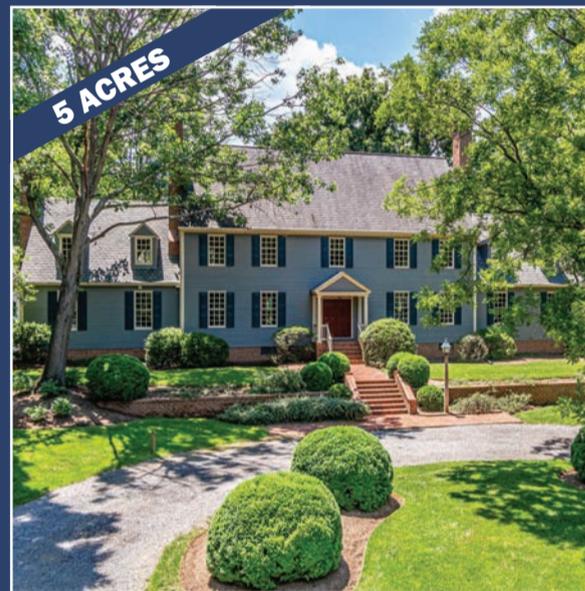
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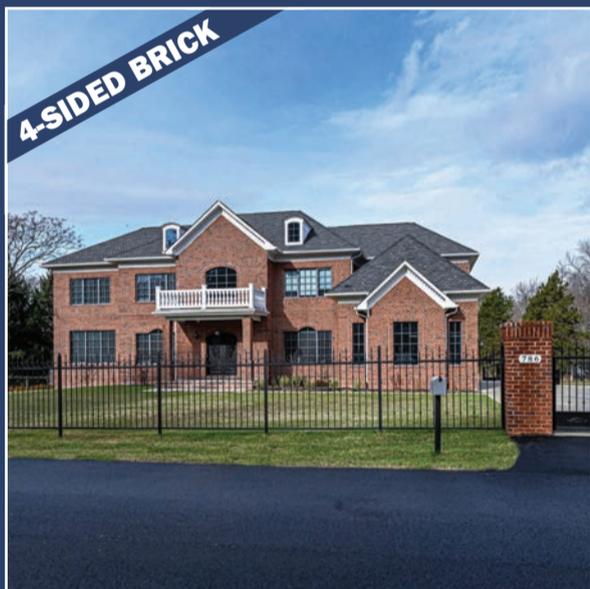
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