

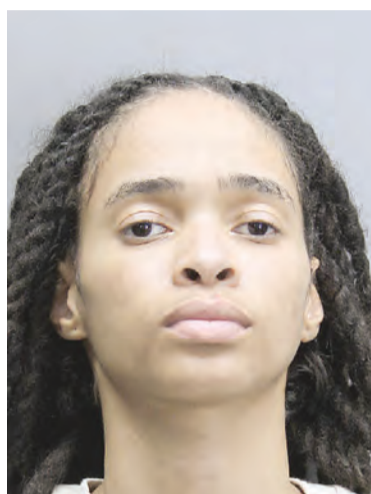
Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

APRIL 6, 2023

Area Businesses Suffer During Police Standoff

Road closure limited customers for two days.



Brittany Copelin.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE
More on page 4.



The gun that was involved.

In the early morning hours of Thursday, March 30, the situation with a woman in crisis came to a peaceful end after a 34-hour standoff with police. Finally the lanes of traffic were open on Richmond Highway once again. For police and the woman in crisis, the negotiations were a success. (See page 4.) But the two-day ordeal did deliver a blow to the businesses in the Hybla Valley area.

"I opened but nobody came," said Zulfiger, owner of A-One Groceries which is located right across from the Honda dealer where the police activity was taking place. He saw the helicopters and at one time, there were three drones flying around. He figured he lost about \$300-\$400 each day.

A few doors down at Family Fortune Chinese Food, it was a similar situation. "Business was bad, people came only to turn around," the owner said. "We sat down and had

conversations, nothing to do," the owner said.

Next door at a Mexican restaurant, it was the same story. "We lost a little bit of money," said owner Thomas Perez. "I need to open, I had to pay the employees, we were hoping she would give up," he said. There was one bright spot for Perez though, he got interviewed by a local TV news station, and his friends saw it so he saved the clip on his cell phone.

The local chamber of commerce was watching the road closure too.

"This situation was a terrible blow to the businesses in the area blockaded by the police. We hope the community will reach out and support these affected businesses that suffered two days of loss with no customers," said Holly Hicks Dougherty, President of the Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of

Commerce.

It all started on Tuesday, March 28 around 11 a.m., when officers were called to the 7200 block Fordson Road in Alexandria to check the area for Brittany Copelin, 29, who was reported missing by Charles County Sheriff's Office.

They found the 2016 Jeep SUV with Copelin driving and attempted to stop the Jeep but Copelin drove away. Officers engaged in a short pursuit until the Jeep came to a stop on the service road at Richmond Highway and Arlington Boulevard.

Copelin displayed a firearm to officers and refused to exit the Jeep.

This led to a standoff that ended just after midnight early Thursday morning. Copelin is now facing felony charges, police said.

One block south of the scene,



Perez with the clip of his television news interview.



This grocery store was one of the businesses that had no customers during the crisis.

Mount Vernon Plaza was impacted for several days. The Kentucky Fried Chicken and Five Guys closed. "Yes, it did affect business," one employee of the plaza said but added that she was glad the situation was resolved peacefully. At the IHOP, business "wasn't that great,"

said one manager.

Information about what was going on filtered in and out. "Most people thought it was over but it wasn't," said Maryanne Mattern, who was also concerned about the employees of the Honda dealer where the car was surrounded.

Comment Period Nears End for Bike-Ped Portion of Long Bridge

Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail are part of the discussion.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Throughout the month of March and into early April, Friends of the Mount Vernon trail were seeking comments on the plan for the bicycle and pedestrian aspect of the Long Bridge railroad project across the Poto-

mac River. Their comment period went on throughout the month of March and ends on April 10 where the design of the pedestrian bridge will be looked at again.

The Friends group wanted a wider bridge with spots to let people "pause," whether it's to tie a shoe or rest, but the final comment is open for a few more days. "We likely won't know results for several months until NVR-

PA has their next round of engagement sessions," FOMV said.

"Please widen the bike/ped span to 24 feet in as many areas as possible to create space where people can pull to the side & pause," they indicated in the comment section.

This is just one part of modifications to the Long Bridge railroad venue across the Potomac River. The whole \$1.9 billion

project will include additional railroad tracks creating a four-track corridor, eight rail bridges and related railroad infrastructure improvements between Arlington and Washington. According to the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, a new bike-pedestrian bridge also will be constructed as part of the mitigation

SEE FRIENDS OF THE, PAGE 11

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OPEN SAT 4/8, 1-3

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OPEN SUN 4/9, 1-3

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JUST LISTED

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NEWS



Find Your 'One Thing' During Earth Month

BY DAN STORCK, SUPERVISOR
MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT

April is Earth Month and we can all make small changes every day to improve our shared environment! As Wendell Berry said, "The Earth is what we all have in common." Let's work together to save it.

I invite you to join us for another exciting Environment Expo on Saturday, April 22 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Fort Hunt Park, in partnership with the National Park Service. This fun, free, family-friendly event features live music by the Anthony James Band, live animal demonstrations, hands-on-activities, nature and bird walks, an electric vehicle showcase, giveaways and more! Learn more: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/5th-annual-environment-expo-get-outdoors-learn-and-do>.

You can also join us for multiple stream cleanups on Saturday, April 15 from 9 a.m. – noon, led by Sen. Scott Surovell, Del. Paul Krizek and the Friends of Little Hunting Creek. <http://www.friendsoflittlehuntingcreek.org/news/cleanup.htm>.

Participate in the Park Authority's Take Back the Forest campaign from April 1 to May 31. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/park-news/2023/z-ir041>

With the kickoff of the Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP), the adoption of Resilient Fairfax and the Green Business Partners launch, the County remains a leader in climate action. As Chair of the Board's Environmental Committee and the author of the Fairfax Green Initiatives, I am proud of the progress we have made in the last five years and continue to push for more aggressive action to meet our goals. To help us all see the big picture, the County has created the Climate Action Dashboard, a single site for explaining and sharing progress on our ambitious climate action goals of community-wide carbon neutrality by 2050 and for all County government operations by 2040. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/climate-action>

Now is the time to think about "what can I do?" Calculate your carbon footprint and see easy steps you can take today to decrease yours: <https://www3.epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator/>. Or, you can take

on plastics! They're everywhere. Plastics are so ubiquitous that we carry micro pieces of them in our very bloodstreams. Some suggestions: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/take-plastic-pollution-earth-month>. Or, try these three kid-friendly activities at home: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment-energy-coordination/celebrate-earth-month-three-kid-friendly-activities>.

We can all do "one thing" to protect our natural world and all who live in it. I invite you to find your "one thing", whether recycling right, composting, litter clean up, buying an electric vehicle, weather stripping your home, replacing your appliances with high-efficiency energy star units, biking to work or investing in solar panels, we can all make a difference!

However you choose to participate in Earth Month, I hope you will get out and enjoy the beautiful natural environments we have all around us in the Mount Vernon District.

Other Upcoming Events:
Supervisor Dan Storck 2nd Saturday Office Hours for April 8

Lorton Library 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton 9am – 11:30am

Mount Vernon District office 2511 Parkers Lane, Mount Vernon 12:30pm-3:00pm

Supervisor Storck is available for phone and video calls, as well as in-person meetings during his regular 2nd Saturday office hours. Contact mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-780-7518 for more details and to schedule a meeting.

**Environment Expo
April 22, 10 am - 2pm
Fort Hunt Park**

Join us for the 5th Annual Mount Vernon District Environment Expo: Get Outdoors! Learn and Do! on Saturday, April 22, 2023, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Fort Hunt Park, 8999 Fort Hunt Road. FREE Family Friendly Event: Live Music, Live Reptile & Raptor Programs, Electric Vehicle Showcase, Nature & Eagle Nest Walks, Junior Ranger Program, Scavenger Hunts, Touch-a-Truck, CCTV Robot Camera & Solar Cooking Demos, Exhibitors, Give-aways and more!

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/5th-annual-environment-expo-get-outdoors-learn-and-do>

BULLETIN BOARD

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

NEW HOSPITAL APPROVED FOR FRANCONIA

Inova Health System is pleased to announce the Virginia Department of Health has approved its Certificate of Public Need (COPN) application to build a new hospital in the Franconia community of Southern Fairfax

County. Last year, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors provided unanimous approval for Inova's land-use applications in support of the new hospital.

The new hospital will be built on land adjacent to Inova's existing Franconia-Springfield HealthPlex and within walking distance of the Franconia-Springfield Metro and Virginia Railway Express stations.

This hospital will serve as one of two replacement hospitals for the current Inova Alexandria Hospital on Seminary Road. The other location will be at the WestEnd Town

Center (formerly Landmark Mall) in the City of Alexandria.

The initial phase of the Franconia-Springfield project will include a state-of-the-art inpatient facility with 110 beds spread across two patient towers. The hospital will include private rooms, an expanded emergency room, diagnostic imaging, and multiple procedural rooms. An adjacent building will offer a variety of outpatient services, including ambulatory surgery, physician offices, and procedural rooms.

The existing HealthPlex will be linked

to the hospital through new internal road and walkway connections.

The emergency room currently located at the HealthPlex will be expanded and relocated into the hospital, allowing patients ready access to inpatient care when needed.

Patients will continue to have access to the Emergency Room, physical therapy, physician offices, and other clinical operations at the Franconia-Springfield HealthPlex leading up to and during construction of the new buildings.

The planning and design phase is un-

derway, with construction slated to begin in 2024 and anticipated completion in 2028.

ROBERTA TINCH IS EMERGING LEADER

Inova Health System is proud to announce that Roberta Tinch, MHA, FACHE, has been recognized by Modern Healthcare as one of the Top 25 Emerging Leaders for 2023. The program recognizes the healthcare industry's rising stars age 40

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

To Serve and Protect

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK
MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT

This was more than just a motto last week as our Mount Vernon District police officers managed the major challenges of a barricade situation on our busiest main street – Richmond Highway. When officers encountered Brittany Copelin, 29, in her car with a gun experi-



Storck

encing a mental health crisis, their exceptional training kicked in and they patiently worked for over 34 hours to find a peaceful resolution. Joined by crisis managers, negotiators and teams from surrounding jurisdictions, and with united police and civilian leadership, our dedicated officers persevered, protected lives and, ultimately, peacefully restored our community.

Wednesday morning at the Mount Vernon Station, I was joined by our Mount Vernon leaders Sen. Scott Surovell, Del. Paul Krizek, School Board Member Karen Corbett Sanders and Clayton Medford from Chairman McKay's office to thank our incredible Mount Vernon Police Station officers, and specifically "Day Shift B," our first responders on the scene and most involved throughout the incident. We all extended a THANK YOU to the many other units and teams involved: Fairfax County Police: Mount Vernon Station Patrol, Major Crimes Division Detectives CID Mount Vernon; Operations Support Bureau: SWAT, Crisis Negotiations Unit, EOD (Bomb Squad), Traffic Division (Motor Squad), Safety Officers, Helicopter Division- Fairfax One and UA-Unmanned Aircraft Unit (Drone), Technical Support Unit; Fairfax



Supervisor Dan Storck, Sen. Scott Surovell, Del. Paul Krizek, School Board Member Karen Corbett Sanders and Clayton Medford with Chairman Jeff McKay's office with the Mount Vernon District Days B Shift who were the initial incident responders.



Supervisor Dan Storck thanks officers for their outstanding service and compassion.

County Community Services Board Mobile Crisis Unit; Alexandria City Police Department: SWAT, Hostage Negotiations Unit; Virginia State Police: SWAT, Crisis Negotiations Unit; and George Mason Police Department UA-Unmanned Aircraft Unit (Drone).

We recognize the considerable impact the barricade had on our

residents and businesses, disrupting key services, tangling travel and lack of access to the area, and we appreciate the community's patience.

Beyer Subaru and Brown's Honda Dealerships, across from the barricade, were especially supportive to our dozens of first responders by keeping their businesses

open for their use.

This incident, and its outcome, is one that our community can be proud of; one where our commitment to the sanctity of all lives, first responder training and professionalism of our police served and protected the perpetrator, victim, police and the greater Mount Vernon community.

An Electric Vehicle Future

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

The future of our planet will rely on fuel efficiency from renewable energy, and what's more fuel efficient than electric vehicles?

Imagine how much gasoline is wasted during rush hour driving when a vehicle is idling in standstill

traffic? Electric vehicles (EVs) do not use energy when stopped, except to run utilities in the vehicle. Moreover, given that there are more vehicle choices and most EVs now go 150-330 miles on a charge, there is little reason



Krizek

for "range anxiety," the worry that you can't go very far between charges. In addition, in 2021, the Biden Administration passed the landmark Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act which invests in a network of electric vehi-

cle charging stations and provides training for electricians to install electric vehicle supply equipment. Wider availability of EV charging infrastructure across the US further enhances the appeal of making the switch to an EV.

EVs are becoming increasingly popular globally. The total number

SEE AN ELECTRIC, PAGE 5

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A Connection Newspaper



An Electric Vehicle Future

FROM PAGE 4

of plug-in electric vehicles sold in the US has increased every year. Sales of EVs reached their highest level ever in 2022 at an estimated 800,000 in the US. For comparison, roughly 320,000 plug-in electric vehicles were sold in all of 2019. Even while total passenger vehicle sales dropped in 2022, EV sales actually increased by over 60%, representing over 4.5% of all vehicles sold in the United States. Globally, the numbers are even more striking: As many as 24% of new vehicle sales worldwide were either plug-in hybrid or EVs, with EV sales reaching 10 million in 2022.

As many of my constituents who have made the transition to electric vehicles know, while the day to day operational cost of operating an EV is much lower than the average gas powered car, the upfront cost can be higher. Purchasers can make up for that cost in the long term with tax benefits and immediate savings on fuel.

The Virginia rebate program, originally introduced and passed by Delegate David Reid in 2021, was unfortunately left unfunded in that year's final budget. As passed, the program, which began January 1st, 2022, offers buyers a \$2,500 rebate for the purchase of a new or used electric vehicle. An "en-

hanced rebate" of \$2,000 would also be available to buyers whose household income equals less than 300 percent of current poverty guidelines. Designed with equity in mind, this program would help get EVs into the hands of those who stand to benefit in the long-term from the lower total cost of ownership. I look forward to the opportunity to vote to fund this program in the upcoming budget vote. The federal government also incentivizes purchasing EVs by allowing EV buyers to claim a tax credit of up to \$7500 on their federal return with the Clean Vehicle Credit, updated by last year's Inflation Reduction Act. To be eligible for this credit, vehicles must have undergone their final assembly in North America.

It is somewhat perplexing when folks say "I prefer the overwhelming convenience of gasoline-powered vehicles." Well, EVs have 85% fewer moving parts than a gasoline-powered vehicle. This allows for much fewer maintenance visits. All you need to do to maintain your car is rotate the tires and fill up the windshield washer container. No waiting at the gasoline pump. No oil changes every 5,000 miles. No routine maintenance at 15,000, 30,000, or 45,000 miles. With all that factored in, which car is more convenient?

One big environmental advantage for EVs is that it's easier to contain emissions of all kinds at a central point than to do it across hundreds or millions of individual locations. And, of course, nearly every electric utility uses some mix that includes nuclear, hydro, wind, natural gas, and now solar, so compared to gasoline there will be a higher percentage of energy that is clean in the first place.

From the perspective of energy use, EVs are about 80-85% efficient in converting electricity to power, compared to around 20% for gasoline-powered vehicles. There is, of course, a meaningful loss of efficiency as the electricity is generated and transmitted, with coal producing the least efficiency and wind the most. At current prices, the cost of the electricity used to move an EV one mile is much less than the cost of gas to do the same thing, which certainly suggests that EVs are significantly more efficient from an energy-usage perspective. As we continue to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels over the coming decades and the power grid here in Virginia becomes entirely powered by renewable sources by 2050, the future powering of EVs will be carbon neutral.

My next car will be an electric vehicle, will yours?



Natalia Kazaryan, piano



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Groveton Shooting Tuesday Night

Detectives from FCPD Major Crimes Bureau are investigating a shooting in the Groveton area of Mount Vernon.

Tuesday, April 4 at 11:55 p.m., officers responded to the 6300 block of South Kings Highway, Groveton for an adult man who was shot. Officers found the victim suffering from gunshots to the lower body. Officers provided medical aid until fire and rescue arrived. The victim was transported to

a local hospital and remains hospitalized. Detectives believe the shooting occurred after a verbal argument and continue to investigate to identify a suspect involved.

Anyone with information about this shooting is asked to call detectives at 703-246-7800, option 5. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone - 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

A vibrant community enriched and supported by strong businesses

The Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce was created by combining the former Mount Vernon Lee Chamber and the Greater Springfield Chamber into a new regional chamber of commerce. Joining forces expands our reach, offers a stronger support network for businesses, a greater voice to our members and more opportunity for all. The future is bright for a united chamber of commerce working to strengthen our community.



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45th Annual Fairfax County Valor Awards

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/ THE GAZETTE

Celebrates nearly 200 first responders who went above and beyond.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

A select group of 193 public safety responders answered the call to serve, protect, and save lives in 2022, going above and beyond the call of duty in Fairfax County. On March 30, the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce (GRCC) hosted the 2023 Fairfax County Valor Awards luncheon. Held at the Hyatt Regency in Reston, the event celebrated those brave responders of the Fairfax County Police Department, Fire and Rescue Department, and Sheriff's Office, as well as the Vienna Police and Herndon Police departments and the Virginia State Police.

Before the ceremony started in the grand ballroom, award recipients, like Silver Medal of Honor Technician Sean O'Neill of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue and Gold Medal of Valor recipients Master Police Officer Lance Guckenberger and



The Gold Medal recipients of the 45th Annual Fairfax County Valor Awards: (left) Police Officer First Class Matthew C. Grubb and (right) Master Police Officer Lance T. Guckenberger of the Fairfax County Police Department are joined by (center) Philip Assante of the Reston Chamber of Commerce.



Award.

Police Officer First Class Matthew Grubb of the Fairfax County Police, mingled with loved ones, colleagues, and others.

O'Neill said he and fellow Fire and Rescue personnel would receive awards because they "entered a structure without their protection of a hose line under heavy fire conditions."

"We have a saying, 'Risk a lot to save a lot,'" O'Neill said. "And if we know there are possible citizens to be saved, we will risk our lives to save them."



Chief Kevin Davis of the Fairfax County Police Department, Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid and Fire Chief John S. Butler of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department.

O'Neill and members of his unit were dispatched for a fire call around two o'clock in the morning with reports of people trapped inside. "When we showed up, the personnel on my crew on Tower 8 conducted an interior search under heavy fire conditions and heavy smoke to try to locate the victims and provide access around the exterior of the house and ventilation operations on the roof. The search ended through our coordinated effort with multiple companies (within the county's Fire & Rescue Department). We located the victims."

A 9-year-old girl and her grandmother died due to the fire at the single-family home in the Falls Church area.

A steering committee composed of law enforcement agencies, representatives, the Sheriff's Office,

Greater Reston Chamber, stood nearby and listened to O'Neill's account. Kapur told O'Neill that he'd been responsible for writing a brief of every medal story to be heard during the ceremony. "Officer O'Neill has just given a very harrowing recap. When you get it directly from the person there, you are taken to the scene," Kapur said.

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Greater Reston Chamber, stood nearby and listened to O'Neill's account. Kapur told O'Neill that he'd been responsible for writing a brief of every medal story to be heard during the ceremony. "Officer O'Neill has just given a very harrowing recap. When you get it directly from the person there, you are taken to the scene," Kapur said.



The national anthem at the 45th Annual Fairfax County Valor Awards- (second-row from left) Fire Chief John S. Butler of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department; Chief Kevin Davis of the Fairfax County Police Department; (first row from left) Thomas Arnold, Deputy County Executive for Safety and Security, and Mayor Sheila Olem of the Town of Herndon.

event sponsors such as Inova Hospital and Visit Fairfax, and members of the Fairfax County community selected the recipients, guided by specific criteria per category. Responders "would not otherwise seek such public acclaim," Kapur said.

There were five award categories: the Lifesaving Award, the Certificate of Valor, the Bronze Medal of Honor, the Silver Medal of Honor, and the Gold Medal of Valor, said Barry Biggar, head of Fairfax County Conventions & Visitors Corporation (Visit Fairfax).

"The Gold Medal is awarded to people whose lives were in immediate danger, and the incident required service way above and beyond what would normally be required," Biggar said. "Either weapons are involved, or their lives as first responders could be threatened."

A recipient of silver, like a recipient of gold, must go above and beyond the call of duty and what is expected. "Generally, it (silver) doesn't necessarily involve weaponry, but their lives are certainly in danger or threatened," Biggar said.

Chief Kevin Davis of Fairfax County Police and Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid attended the ceremony. Davis said, "Not only is this group elite, but I think every deputy sheriff and police officer who served in Fairfax County is part of an elite group. These particular officers, over the course of the last year, exhibited courage, bravery, and exceptional performances that led them to this moment of recognition today."

Kincaid added that the county's

Valor Awards are an opportunity to give deputy sheriffs, police officers, and first responders the recognition they deserve. "We're proud to be here. We're proud to share in what we do and how we do business, and more importantly, that we're able to celebrate our staff,"



The color guard representing all agencies honoring public safety heroes in our community kicks off the 45th Annual Fairfax County Valor Awards hosted by the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce.

Kincaid said.

She stressed the importance of the family unit to her deputies, the

police officers, and firefighters. "It's so critical. To have the support of your family is something that you

need," Kincaid said.

GOLD MEDAL recipients Master Police Officer Lance T. Guckenberger and Police Officer First Class Matthew C. Grubb described what happened when they responded to an incident in McLean after a victim called to report that his roommate had shot him in the face. The victim had locked himself in a bedroom, but his assailant was attempting to break in and do more harm.

"The hostage at that point was injured. Given the circumstances, we knew we'd have to go in and rescue (him)," said Grubb. "Training kicks in, and it was like just another repetition for us."

After the smoke cleared, Guckenberger asked Grubb if he was sure he hadn't been hit. "Lo and behold, I was struck in the arm," Grubb said.

Officers safely extracted the hostage, then deployed a robot to locate the suspect. They talked him into surrendering without further incident.

According to Guckenberger and Grubb, when they returned to the scene later and walked through it, they saw where the bullet holes came through the wall while affecting the hostage rescue. "Intervention, for sure. Act of God definitely looking over us not to have gotten hit at that moment," Guckenberger said.



Valor Awards: Town of Herndon Police Department: Silver Medal of Honor-Lt. Mark Dale, SPO Henry Ruffin; Bronze Medal of Valor-Sgt. Damien Austin, Sgt. Joe Furman; and Certificate of Valor-PFC Bryce Cooper, with Captain Steven T. Pihonak, Chief Maggie DeBoard, and Mayor Sheila Olem of the Town of Herndon. "It was clear from the details of the valor awards bestowed on many today throughout Fairfax County that everyday officers risk their lives, without hesitation, to protect and save people they have never met. ... There is no nobler a profession," posted DeBoard on Instagram.

PHOTO VIA INSTAGRAM HERNDON POLICE



Silver Medal of Honor recipient Technician Sean O'Neill of the Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department with his daughter.



Gold Medal of Honor recipient Police Officer First Class Matthew C. Grubb of the Fairfax County Police Department with his daughter Makayla, 16, and wife Cindy.



Mingling and good times at the 45th Annual Fairfax County Valor Awards.

THROWBACK PROM

Saturday, April 22
Old Mount Vernon High School
(Teen/Senior Center)

Dinner - 5pm
Dance 6pm-8pm

Join the Fun for a Good Cause, Rising Hope Throwback Prom

Relive your glory days at Rising Hope's first Throwback Prom, April 22, 2023. Before dancing the night away, you'll enjoy dinner and classic mocktails (no spiking the punch!). Then move to the gymnasium, complete with streamers and balloons to dance the night away. Come dressed in

your favorite prom dress or tuxedo (not required - no peer pressure).

Join Rising Hope for an evening of fun, memories, and fundraising at its Throwback Prom! Rising Hope helps the most underserved in our community. It focuses on help-

SEE JOIN THE FUN, PAGE 11

JOIN US FOR Woodbine Healthcare Decisions Day

National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) exists to inspire, educate and empower the public and providers about the importance of advance care planning. NHDD is an initiative to encourage individuals to express their wishes regarding healthcare and for providers and facilities to respect those wishes.

Woodbine will host a Healthcare Decisions Day with volunteers offering **FREE CONSULTATIONS**, explanations and support to anyone wishing to learn about Palliative and Hospice Care or complete an Advanced Directive.



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3 Dates to Circle in April

BY HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

From anniversary parties to block parties to a refined wine dinner, April is bringing a great many ways to celebrate. Here are three of the month's best.

Chalkboard Wings and BBQ First Anniversary Party, April 15

Has it been a year already? Chalkboard Wings and BBQ is ready to ring in its first birthday in style. From food and drink specials to live entertainment featuring musician James Stevens, the eatery is pulling out all the stops. And if you can't get enough Chalkboard, good news: The restaurant is launching a Kickstarter campaign to open a second outpost as well as additional food truck and catering options. 8723-C Cooper Road. 1-11 p.m.

Spring Block Party at Lost Boy Cider, April 22

Shop, eat and drink – and maybe have your tarot cards read? – at Lost Boy Cider's block party. Hooffs Run Drive will undergo a conversion from parking area to party zone with lots of entertainment options.

LAZ Collective will be providing live music; Whiskey and Oyster will be shucking oysters; and nearly a dozen vendors from Shop Made in VA will also be in attendance to allay your shopping cravings. And – of course – Lost Boy's cider will be readily available! 317 Hooffs Run Drive. 1-6 p.m. Free entry.

Copper Cane Wine Dinner at Burtons Grill and Bar, April 24

Take in a food-and-wine pairing event at Burtons' Alexandria location featuring varietals from Copper Cane Wines and Provisions. The four-course meal will feature the likes of a Southwest spiced salad, spicy tuna tartare, an entrée of either herb and garlic crusted lamb or roasted duck breast, and finally some caramel custard bread pudding as a sweet treat. Each course will pair with a different California wine. Call the restaurant to reserve your spot. 6452 Old Beulah St. 6:30 p.m. \$95.

APPETITE

Hope Nelson is the author of "Classic Restaurants of Alexandria" and owns the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.



Chalkboard Wings and BBQ first anniversary party, April 15

CALENDAR

ALEXANDRIA EARTH DAY

April 2023, various events, Virtual and In-Person. Help commemorate the 53rd anniversary of Earth Day with a month full of environmentally focused events, activities, and online initiatives that center on the Eco-City Vision in which Alexandria's residents, businesses, and City government participate in a vibrant community that is always mindful of the needs and lifestyle of the generations to come. We all need to do our part and what better way than through fun, educational, and engaging opportunities. For more information go to: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/EarthDay>



Take a Cherry Blossom Water Taxi to The Wharf from Alexandria.

ONGOING

Cherry Blossom Water Taxi to The Wharf. Departures beginning at 1:30 p.m. Departs from the Alexandria Marina, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Cruise from Old Town Alexandria to Washington, D.C., to enjoy the famous cherry blossoms. City Cruises Potomac Water Taxi offers a 25-minute direct water taxi from Old Town to The Wharf development in D.C. From the dock at The Wharf, it is a 10-minute walk to the cherry blossoms at the Tidal Basin. The water taxi docks at the Transit Pier, 950 Wharf St. SW, near the Tidal Basin, the National Mall, Hains Point and a Capital Bikeshare station. Visit citycruises.com

BEGINNING SATURDAY/MARCH 18

Traveling Exhibit, We The People: Portraits of Veterans in America. At National Museum of the U.S. Army, 1775 Liberty Drive, Fort Belvoir. Exhibit tour with artist Mary Whyte. In 2010, Whyte set out on an inspirational seven-year mission to paint 50 large-scale watercolor portraits of current-day American veterans. WE THE PEOPLE, depicts military veterans of all ages and in all walks of life. Images including a Missouri dairy farmer, a Rhode Island lobsterman, a Pennsylvania

science teacher, a South Carolina single mother, and 46 other moving portraits will be showcased. Visit the NMUSA.org.

NOW THRU APRIL 16

Cherry Blossom Guided Tours with Pedego Electric Bikes Alexandria. Departures at 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on weekends; by appointment on weekdays. Admission: \$69 per bike (\$10 for passenger riders on cargo or tandem bikes). At Pedego Alexandria, 210 North Lee St., Alexandria. Join a three-hour guided tour from Old Town Alexandria to the cherry blossoms in Washington, D.C., including a ride through the blossoms around East Potomac Park. The views of the blossoms from a Pedego are fantastic, and you don't have to fight traffic or find a place to park downtown. Weekend tours fill up quickly, so contact Pedego early to make your reservations. Call 571-312-5168 or email info@pedegoalexandria.com. Pedegoalexandria.com

NOW THRU APRIL 30

Matthew McLaughlin Art Exhibit. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Reception: Sunday, March 26, 4 - 6

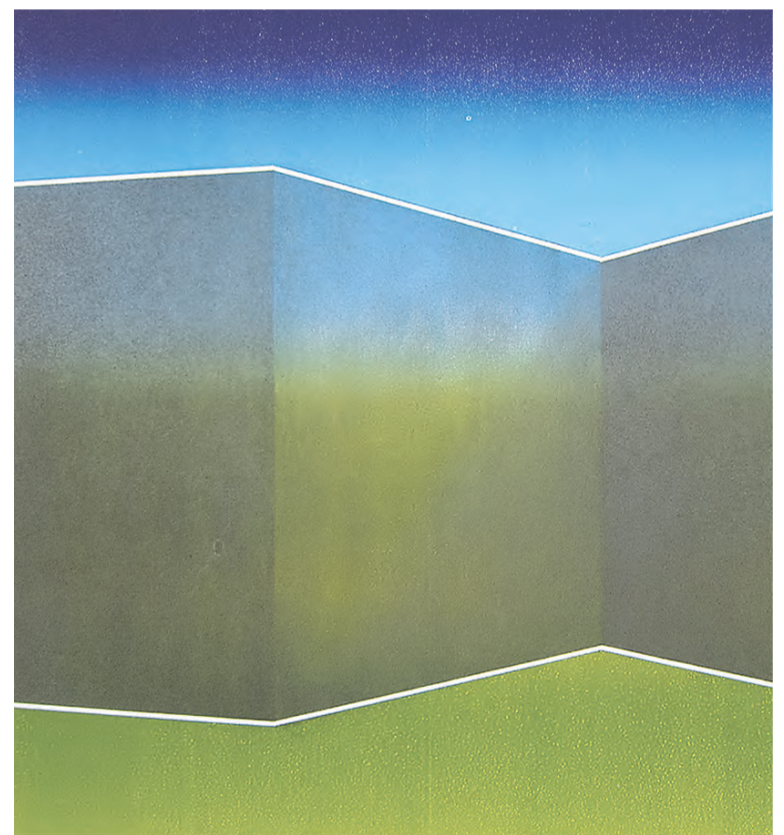
p.m.; Artist Talk: Sunday, April 30, 2 - 3. Matthew McLaughlin's work explores how people define space in relationship to themselves on multiple levels, through personal and public forums, by bringing together those themes via mixed-media works from multiple series. The exhibition covers three distinct series, Proxemic Boundaries, Plotting Truths, and Reflective Cartography.

APRIL 7 TO APRIL 29

"A Tale of Two Studios." Del Ray Artisans partners with Art Enables Gallery & Studio in an open-themed showcase of the inspiring art of these two community organizations to convey an essential story about creative expression and art-making. At Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Opening Reception: Friday, April 7 from 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays 12-6 p.m., and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (closed April 30). DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

GARDENING TIPS AT GREEN SPRING GARDENS

Garden Talk - Spring Cleaning in the Garden. At 4603 Green Spring



The Matthew McLaughlin Art Exhibit can be seen at the Athenaeum from now through April 30, 2023.

Road in Alexandria. Friday, April 7, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. There is plenty of seasonal maintenance to do before summer arrives! Learn from Extension Master Gardener docents what you need to do to ensure that your plants are ready for the summer ahead, what needs pruning, what needs transplanting, and what needs mulch. Enrollment is \$12 per person. Plant Swap - Houseplants, Cuttings and Containers Saturday, April 8, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Join us for our annual Plant Swap! Bring your unwanted houseplants, cuttings and containers to swap with others or simply give away. A lecture and Master Gardener Help

Desk will be included. Leave with new plants, containers, garden friends and expert advice. Enrollment is \$15 per person.

Hidden Gems of Green Spring Saturday, April 8, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Join Green Spring Gardens staff on a walk that highlights interesting and seldom seen parts of the gardens. Get the inside scoop on the dazzling plants that bloom in the quiet corners of Green Spring. Program takes place outside, please dress for the weather. Enrollment is \$19 per person.

Garden Talk - Small-Space Veggie Gardening

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

FROM PAGE 9

Saturday, April 22, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Don't have a large yard? With a little creativity, even the smallest patio, deck or townhouse yard can be turned into a successful vegetable garden! Let Extension Master Gardener docents show you how to grow vegetables in a small space. Whatever your space constraints, you too can grow delicious and nutritious fruits and vegetables! Enrollment is \$12 per person. Green Spring Gardens is located at 4603 Green Spring Road in Alexandria. For more information on these and other gardening program offerings, call 703-642-5173 or visit the Green Spring Gardens website.

THURSDAY/APRIL 6

Yacht Haven Garden Club Meets. 10 a.m. At Mount Vernon Yacht Club, 4817 Tarpon Lane, Alexandria, Va. The program will be Growing Hydrangeas. Contact pmuchello@aol.com

FRIDAY, APRIL 7

Garden Talk - Spring Cleaning in the Garden. 1:30-2:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (Adults) There is plenty of seasonal maintenance to do before summer arrives! Learn from Extension Master Gardeners what you need to do to ensure that your plants are ready for the summer ahead, what needs pruning, what needs transplanting, and what needs mulch. \$12 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code Q56.GL4T.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8

Plant Swap: Houseplants, Cuttings and Containers. 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (16-Adult) Join us for Green Spring Gardens' 2nd annual Plant Swap! Bring your unwanted houseplants, cuttings and containers to swap with others or simply give away. A lecture and Master Gardener Help Desk will be included. Leave with new plants, containers, garden friends and expert advice. Rules and regulations of the swap will be emailed before the program. \$15 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code 1AT.VWV5.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8

Hidden Gems of Green Spring. 1-2:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (Adults) Join Green Spring Gardens staff on a walk that highlights interesting and seldom seen parts of the gardens. Get the inside scoop on the dazzling plants that bloom in the quiet corners of Green Spring. Program takes place outside. Dress for the weather. \$19 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code UNW.JQYM.

FRIDAY/APRIL 14

The Late Shift Art Night: Cherry Blossom Jubilee. 7 to 10 p.m. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. In partnership with the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Torpedo Factory Art Center invites visitors to explore the celebrated cherry blossoms through art demonstrations, music and interactive activities among three floors of open studios and galleries.

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CALENDAR

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16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31		

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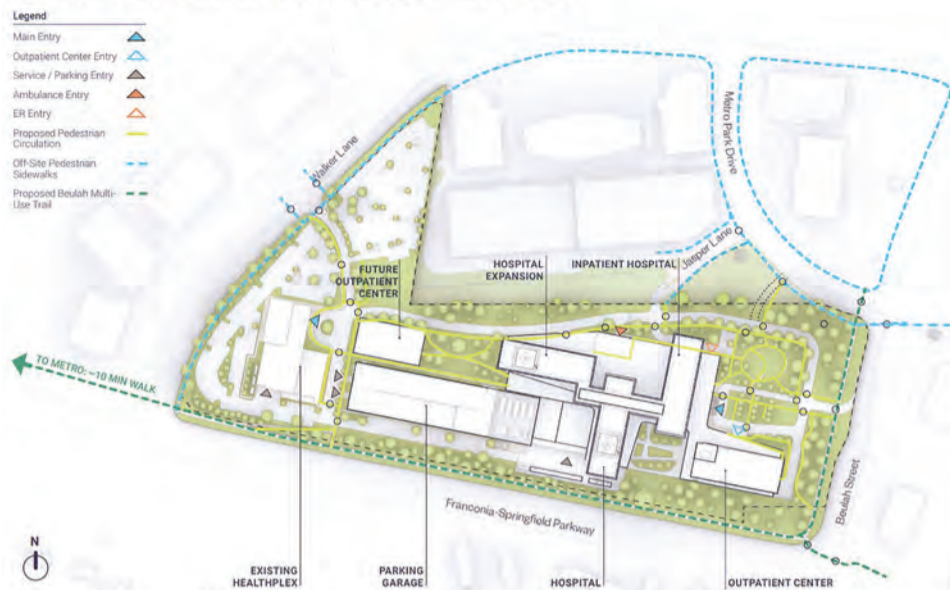
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Campus Site Plan and Pedestrian Access



A proposal for the Bike and Pedestrian bridge.

Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail are Part of the Discussion

FROM PAGE 1

to National Park Service parkland and will span the Potomac River and George Washington Memorial Parkway, connecting Long Bridge Park directly to East and West Potomac Parks.

According to Karina Romero, Communications Manager at the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, the plan has been modified for the pedestrian-bicycle bridge. In Fall 2022, VPRA widened the width of the proposed bicycle-pedestrian bridge from 14 feet to 16 feet based on feedback from the community. This wider width will provide a more comfortable user experience.

The current 16-foot width – which is more than double the width on the existing 14th Street ped-bike bridge over the Potomac – exceeds DOT and AASHTO minimum standards needed for bicyclists to pass each other. According to AASHTO standards, the

16-foot bridge width will accommodate two bicyclists riding abreast with space to comfortably pass a pedestrian or someone stopped on the bridge.

In addition, the 42-foot trail radius at the connection points at each end of the bridge meets the turning radius of an emergency vehicle and exceeds that of various large bicycle types for the design speed. The bridge can structurally accommodate a 20,000 pound emergency vehicle. The design meets Americans with Disabilities Act code (ADA) requirements, Romero said.

Currently the project is in the preliminary engineering phase, and is scheduled to be completed in 2030, the VPRA information said.

Go here for the survey before April 10: Long Bridge Project 2023 Public Engagement Survey (March 06 - April 10, 2023) (surveymonkey.com)

Join the Fun for a Good Cause

FROM PAGE 8

ing individuals affected by homelessness and poverty by providing food, clothing, and emergency and needs-based assistance to many area residents. Your purchase of a prom ticket will allow us to grow our programs to not only reach more people but improve overall conditions for our neighbors. Purchase your tickets at RisingHopeUMC.org/events.

Dinner is at 5 p.m. and the dance begins

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 3

and under who contribute to a culture of innovation and help their organizations achieve and exceed financial, operational and clinical goals.

Under Tinch's leadership, Inova Mount Vernon Hospital has significantly expanded the capacity of its acute behavioral health program, invested more than \$1 million in minimally invasive surgical

systems and transitioned its clinical care model to a 100% hospitalist program to foster consistency. Tinch is also Vice President and Administrator of the Inova Musculoskeletal Service Line. In this role, she plays an active part in safeguarding quality and patient experience across 26 care locations, developing partnerships with several community groups in order to grow programs.

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Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped 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 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. We hope you will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers.

All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

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

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

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

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Wading Into New Territory



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I have been CT-scanned regularly/quarterly for 14 years. Occasionally, given my relatively "stable" existence, my oncologist has suggested increasing my scan intervals to four or even five months, up from the current three months. We have always resisted, especially Dina (being afraid the delay would allow a tumor to grow unchecked or to even get noticed in the first place). This suggestion by my oncologist was not made lightly. Given how well I've done, diagnosis-to-date, and how slowly the tumors in my lungs are growing, adding a month or two to the interval is not going to appreciatively tip the scales against me, according to my doctor. And lessening the amount of radiation, albeit comparatively low, that I'm/have been exposed to over these many years, is a side benefit, in addition to making my life less cancer centric (fewer appointments in hospitals). This suggestion is consistent with what my oncologist has regularly said over the years: that my quality of life was paramount. This new variable seems to have given us (Team Lourie) additional insight into the overall health risks possibly affecting someone who's been scanned as often as I have. (One of the side effects of exposure to radiation is, you guessed it: cancer. And since I already have enough cancer, Team Lourie, more so Dina, has consented to this change in scan frequency.) And in real time, now actually, I'll be getting my first scan after this new, longer interval.

To say I'm anticipating trouble is a bit of an overstatement. To say I'm worried about the consequences of waiting (scanning) an extra month or two longer than usual/normal, to see what's going on inside my lungs – where my papillary thyroid cancer has set up shop (and it's a big shop, apparently), is more accurate. Though the thinking/strategy for extending the scan interval still seems reasonable, faced now with the reality of it, is leading to some sleepless nights and stressful days. If I had it to decide over, I'd make the same decision. Still, this first go-around is a bit more challenging than I anticipated. It's hardly just another day in paradise, is it (as the Brits so often end their sentences with a question mark)? But as long as I'm still in the game, I'll never complain. And even though I've been scanned upwards of 75 times since my initial diagnosis in Feb. 2009, I don't ever take any results for granted. I take them as they come and try to take them in stride.

Still, after 14 years; introducing a new variable to my equation, this very familiar process seems sort of new again. It's as if I'm being scanned for the first time and trying not to think that my life hangs in the balance. Over time, especially considering the number of years I've been a cancer patient undergoing treatment, you develop a sense of rhythm in your life; you learn to navigate and schedule all the cancer-related activities/requirements/appointments so that it becomes routine. And in this routine, you're able (at least I was) live a relatively normal life where the cancer is not totally in control (of course the cancer is in control, but you're able to manage it, sort of, so your life isn't completely cancer centric). Unfortunately, increasing the interval between scans is not an indication that I'm in remission. Though it is an indication that I'm less terminal (if there's such a characterization), but as far as being out of the woods? I'm nowhere near the woods, let alone be out of them.

Though there's a new interval, the process by which I, as the patient learn about the results of the scan, has not changed. By an automatic 'process' scan results are emailed to me by the radiologist, perhaps even before my oncologist has even had a chance to review and even comment on them. What the patient receives is right out of the radiologist's pen. All medical jargon. After a few years of reading these documents, I know where to look for answers. There are two obvious lay-person-type sections. One is called "Impressions." The other is called "Findings." It is under these two headings where, sprinkled amongst the medical jargon, you'll find most of what passes as familiar English. I read it and re-read it trying desperately to discover its meaning. And though I wouldn't want to bet my life on my interpretation of the report, that's exactly what I'm forced to do, since I receive it before my oncologist, and I have spoken about/discussed the results. Granted, it's not perfect, but the release of this information is almost immediate, sometimes even the same day as the actual scan. So even though I'm now waiting an extra month or two for the regular scan than I have been having for years, I am not waiting any longer than usual to receive the report from the radiologist. Thank God! I've spent more than enough time already waiting for results over these last 14 years.

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



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