

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

MAY 18, 2023

Richmond Highway Reduced Speed Limit Begins May 23

New 35 mph speed limit signs to be installed along approximately seven-mile stretch.

By MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

On May 23, the speed limit on Richmond Highway between Jeff Todd Way, Mount Vernon Memorial Highway and the Alexandria City southern limits will be permanently reduced from 45 mph to 35 mph to optimize safety and operations for pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers and transit users, according to the Virginia Department of Transportation and Fairfax County Department of Transportation.

Signs displaying the new 35 mph speed limit will be installed May 23 along the approximately seven-mile stretch of Richmond Highway.

In August 2021, after hearing from communities along the Richmond Highway corridor, VDOT began a study assessing the current 45 mph speed limit, with two public information meetings held in November 2021 and July 2022. The study team formally recommended lowering the speed limit to 35 mph between Jeff Todd Way/Mount Vernon Memorial Highway and the Alexandria City southern limits due in part to the segment's high crash rate. The team also found that Richmond Highway between Buckman Road/Mount Vernon Highway and the Alexandria City southern border had a higher incidence of pedestrian/bicycle crashes and speed-related crashes compared to other sections of Richmond Highway.



Traffic on Richmond Highway will be slower starting next week.

PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE



West Potomac teacher Marianne Vannatta, left, discusses ride options with Dave Richmond.



The golden scissors were in the hands of Delegate Kathy Tran (D-42), Bruce Wright from FABB, Fairfax County Chairman Jeff McKay (D), Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon) and many more. Beforehand they were instructed to hold on to the ribbon pieces and not pollute Dogue Creek.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

New Bridge Opens a Multi-Modal Venue in Mount Vernon

Bridge enables pedestrians and cyclists to safely cross Dogue Creek.

By MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Just as the elected officials were praising the new bicycle bridge over Dogue Creek, a cyclist went over the bridge in the background towing a child carrier, exemplifying the purpose of transportation amenities like this. "That's exactly what we're talking about," said Supervisor Dan Storck, pointing out the cyclist and child. They were

able to use the bridge and get out of the dangerous traffic on the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway that has haunted cyclists for years on this stretch of road.

Now that the bridge is open, it's all bike trail from Richmond Highway to the Mount Vernon Trail along the river and in the bigger picture, the East Coast Greenway Trail. "The county is not going to stop investing in biking infrastructure," said Chairman Jeff McKay who rode his bike to the ceremony

from his house in Franconia. He rode on trails that link Telegraph Road to Jeff Todd Way and then to the ribbon cutting site.

Marianne Vannatta lives in Island Creek and is a teacher at West Potomac High School. The new bridge gives her commuting options. "I can now safely bike all the way," she said.

The \$6.5 million project includes the bridge with custom medallions that match the décor at George Washington's Gristmill

which is about 50 yards away. Back in earlier times, the mill got its wheel-turning power from the creek flow. Elements of this project include a 6,400 foot long, 10-foot-wide shared use path and greenery planted throughout.

This summer, there are also two other bridges along the Mount Vernon Bike Trail that are getting attention too. Starting May 15, the National Park Service began a proj-

SEE NEW BRIDGE OPENS, PAGE 3

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Bridges 23 and 24 Too

On May 15, the National Park Service (NPS) will begin a project to replace Bridges 23 & 24 on the Mount Vernon Trail south of Alexandria within Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve and near Belle Haven Park. During the project, trail users will be detoured around the construction area.

The NPS will replace and widen the bridges from 10 feet to 14 feet. The NPS will also add new pedestrian safe handrails and rehabilitate a bench and overlook on Bridge

23.

During this project trail users will be detoured on the adjacent road (northbound section of the George Washington Memorial Parkway). The NPS will reduce the northbound section to one motor vehicle lane and install temporary concrete barriers between the road and detour on the roadway to protect trail users.

Construction will take place in two phases:

The first bridge to be worked on will be Bridge 24 (the northernmost bridge). Work will begin on May 15 and finish around July.

Work will then shift to the larger

bridge, Bridge 23 in July. Work will occur on this bridge from July 2023 to April 2024, when the project will be completed.

Mount Vernon Trail is an 18-mile paved multi-use trail stretching from George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate to Theodore Roosevelt Island. The trail is a hub for recreational activity and connects with regional trails including the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, Custis Trail, Rock Creek Park Multi-Use Trail, Four Mile Run Trail and Woodrow Wilson Bridge Trail.



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

The bridge and trail improvements were part of Supervisor Dan Storck's agenda for years.

New Bridge Opens A Multi-Modal Venue In Mount Vernon

FROM PAGE 1

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handrails and rehabilitate a bench and overlook on Bridge 23.

Last year, one of the trail bridges was completely rebuilt in the Fort Hunt area, spanning a gulch instead of going around it like it had for years, creating a challenge for cyclists.

Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, participants jumped on their bicycles for a short ride on the new trail portion to the Mount Vernon Plantation.



After the ribbon cutting, Supervisor Storck and Chairman McKay get ready to ride.



"Forget about the ceremony, I want that dog treat"

Something Country Caters to the Line Dance and Country Classics

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/GAZETTE

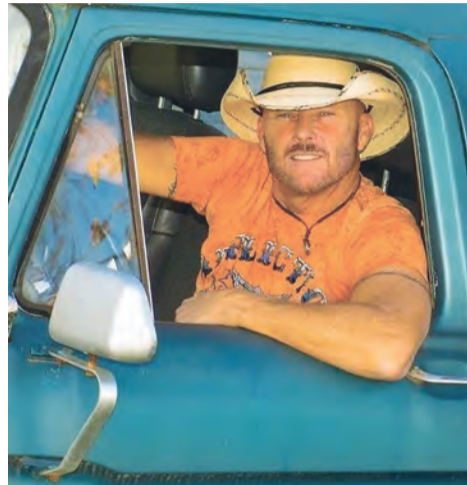
Singer out of Mount Vernon influenced by Garth Brooks.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Country music has something that many other forms of music lack, and that's line dancing. A good song brings out the line dancers and the comradery so the band soaks it up, good times for all.

Mount Vernon resident Dan Futrell sees this happening when he is with his band, Something Country. "We tailor our music to dancing," he said. Dan Futrell is the lead singer and band manager. "There's a line dance for every song, they can all dance together," he added, "we have a large following."

Something Country is accustomed to getting the audience familiar with country line dancing, as appropriate, to increase the fun. They have professional level equipment, including sound and lighting, to fit medium to large event venues. They play hits by all the big country names such as Chris Stapleton, Luke Combs, The Osbourne Brothers, Brantley Gilbert, Dierks Bentley, Randy Houser, Keith Urban, Kenny Chesney, Tim McGraw, Toby Keith, Johnny Cash, Brooks & Dunn, Garth Brooks, Hank Williams Jr., Dwight



Dan Futrell is comfortable in his hat and pickup truck.

Something Country Upcoming Shows

SATURDAY, MAY 20
Vanish Farmwoods Brewery, Leesburg

FRIDAY, JUNE 9
Electric Palm in Woodbridge

SATURDAY, JULY 29
Vanish Farmwoods Brewery, Leesburg

Yoakam, John Denver, Steve Earle, Waylon Jennings, and Willie Nelson.

Garth Brooks is a big influence, Futrell



Country venues around the area feature line dancing but not the Electric Slide.

said. "My passion is music," he added.

In this area, they used to play at Nick's which was a country venue off Van Dorn Street in Alexandria. Now some of their area venues include the Electric Palm in Occoquan, Vantage Brewery in Leesburg and Pete's in Springfield. They've also played at various American Legion halls throughout the area. "They can't get enough of us," Fu-

trell said.

The line up on stage includes Dan Futrell on lead vocals, Larry Orf on guitar and background vocals, Dave "ZMan" Zilinkskas on bass, Tad Ferris on drums and Don Kahl manages the sound. During the work week, the drummer is an international lawyer and the lead guitarist "is one of the best in the area," Futrell said.

Dedicating the Dave Evans Memorial Field

Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck, Mount Vernon School Board Member Karen Corbett Sanders, the Evans Family and the Fort Hunt Softball community gathered on Saturday, May 13 to dedicate the field as the Dave Evans Memorial Field at Walt Whitman Middle School. Dave was a true champion of Fort Hunt Softball – coaching well after his daughters outgrew the program, serving on the Board, instrumental in efforts to light the field at Whitman, laid the groundwork for the improvements to field 2 and so much more. Dave was also a longtime leader on the Board of United Community, Good Shepherd Housing Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber and Burgundy Farm Country Day School; and owner/operator of award winning, certified green catering company La Prima.



The Fort Hunt Softball Community came together to dedicate the Dave Evan's Memorial Field



Supervisor Dan Storck and Teresa Evans remember Dave and his dedication to softball and our community



School Board Member Karen Corbett Sanders, Supervisor Dan Storck, Elizabeth Evans, Teresa Evans, Madeline Evans, Margaret Evans Brown and Family, and Whitman MS Principal Dr. Craig Herring unveil the new sign

NEWS



The ribbon cutting of the Specialty Hospital within Inova Mount Vernon Hospital on May 16.

New 'Hospital within a Hospital' Will Treat Critically Ill Patients Needing Extended Stay

Inova this week opened the new Inova Select Specialty Hospital in partnership with Select Medical. Located within Inova Mount Vernon Hospital, the new hospital celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 16 and will welcome the first patients May 23. The Specialty Hospital is the first of its kind in Northern Virginia, offering specialized treatment to critically ill patients who require an extended stay, but no longer need the intensive care provided in an acute care hospital.

This specialized post-acute service is not currently offered in this region, requiring patients to be transferred to facilities in Charlottesville, Richmond, or out of state. With the opening of the new hospital, patients can now receive specialized care closer to home. All five Inova hospitals will be able to seamlessly transition patients needing this level of care to the Specialty Hos-

pital, expanding Inova's continuum of care.

This 32-bed hospital will serve patients with specialized needs, including post-ICU patients recovering from chronic, critical illness such as infectious diseases, surgical complications, orthopedic, wound or post-trauma conditions. The hospital will also provide ongoing treatment for pulmonary conditions, neurological disorders, cardiac conditions, or renal disorders. Inova Select Specialty Hospital is licensed as a long-term acute care hospital (LTACH), and will operate as a hospital-within-a-hospital.

Select Medical is one of the nation's largest post-acute care providers with more than 130 specialty hospitals throughout the country. Inova's partnership with Select Medical will ensure the highest standards of care for the community.

For more information, visit www.Inova.org.

Take Food Scraps to Farmers Market for Composting

Each of the Park Authority's 10 Farmers Markets now include food scrap disposal sites where customers can dispose of food waste to be composted. This expansion is the result of a highly successful pilot program that experienced strong customer support in 2022.

Composting is a natural process by which organic waste -- anything derived from animal or plant sources -- is broken down into a nutrient-rich soil amendment. Composting lowers greenhouse gases by improving carbon sequestration in the soil and by avoiding methane emissions. It is a sustainable alternative that puts the nutrients from our food scraps back into the earth.

The county's compost program, operated by the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services began in November 2020 with two drop-off sites. In 2022, the program expanded to include a pilot project with collection events co-located with five Farmers Markets. By the end of the year, nearly

37 tons of compost had been collected at the markets, eliminating an estimated 32.5 tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere.

In 2023, the Park Authority will be utilizing Veteran Compost and Future Acres Urban Farming to assist with compost collection at each location. Food waste drop-off is only available during market hours. All food items are accepted, including meat, dairy and leftovers. Food-soiled paper, such as tea bags, coffee filters, napkins, and paper plates, are also acceptable. More than 1,000 food items can be composted. For details on the types of materials accepted, visit the Food Scraps Composting Drop Off webpage.

To find a Park Authority Farmers Market near you, visit the Farmers Market website. For more information about Farmers Markets or the food scrap collection program, please contact the Community Horticulture Office at 703-642-0128

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Virginia Makes Strides Against Human Trafficking

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

Content Warning: Discussion of human trafficking and sexual exploitation throughout.

(This is the second of two articles on Virginia's efforts against trafficking)



Example of an awareness campaign billboard.

To combat human sex trafficking, a proactive and collaborative approach was needed in Virginia to address it. As I wrote last week, it was in 2019, that I took the lead in the creation of a Sex Trafficking Response Coordinator within the Department of Criminal Justice Services through the passage of my bill HB 2576. Since that time, especially thanks to the leadership of this coordinator and further updates to the code, Virginia has made significant strides in combating trafficking. For example, in September 2020, the coordinator applied for, and Virginia was one of only four states to be awarded, a competitive grant by the federal Office for Victims of Crime, which solicited proposals for services for minor victims of sex trafficking. Virginia received approximately \$1.7 million over the period of 2021–2022 to support a wide range of services focused on minors who have been or are at risk of becoming victims of sex trafficking in the western portion of the state.

In the 2021 Special Session, the passage of Del. Karrie Delaney's HB 2133 created a process for survivors of sex trafficking to vacate and expunge some convictions of crimes they were forced to commit against their will. Clearing wrongful convictions and expunging criminal records allows survivors easier access to resources like trauma counseling, housing, education and

employment. That same year, Del. Emily Brewer's HB 2234 established an affirmative defense to prosecution for prostitution for victims of sex trafficking.

To address the decentralization of trafficking-related data collection, in 2022, the coordinator created a data platform called Virginia's Analytics System for Trafficking (VAST). The VAST system allows the Commonwealth to capture the number of human trafficking cases that are being identified and then analyze that information at a deeper level to better understand the risk factors that were identified, the relationship between the perpetrator and victim, the demographics of the perpetrator and victim, the location(s) where the offenses occurred, and more.

In 2022, the Virginia State Police developed a Human Trafficking Unit. Prior to the creation of this unit, there was no official mechanism to report to law enforcement that would support a consistent statewide response. Historically, localities have reported directly to their local law enforcement agencies. Although this is a valid law enforcement reporting process, not all local law enforcement agencies have the knowledge or resources to effectively investigate traffick-

ing cases in a victim-centered and trauma-informed manner. In some cases, investigations of valid cases have not been completed due to the lack of training and resources. The newly established Human Trafficking Unit initiated a public awareness campaign that consists of interstate billboards and a social media presence. This campaign has been designed to be strength-based to encourage community members to report potential human trafficking situations. A reporting tip line will eventually be established; however, at the current time, Virginia State Police is advertising #77 to be used for reporting.

In the recently released 2022 annual report by the coordinator, several recommendations were identified for future legislative sessions, including support for habitual runaways, a state-facilitated certification process for victim services providers, and additional training for school staff on human trafficking and the development of a process for students to request assistance from the school social worker or guidance counselor following lessons on human trafficking. I look forward to continuing these efforts as we do all we can here in Virginia to combat human trafficking and offer necessary support to survivors.

Mental Health on the Minds of Many

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK
MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and we are seeing increased incidents around the country, including the attack this week at Congressman Gerry Connolly's office, that bring urgency to this important topic. This is an opportune time to fight stigma, provide support, increase awareness and remind individuals of the services that exist to support the millions of people impacted by mental health issues. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, nearly one in five people experience a mental health concern each year. If you or someone you know is struggling with a mental health issue, you are not alone and resources are available.

Recently, here on the Richmond Highway Corridor, the Growth & Healing HUB (7686 Richmond

Hwy) opened to serve our younger residents with their own facility for mental health and wellness services. The HUB will serve the 17,000+ children, young adults and families living in our diverse community, an area that is in need of more mental health treatment options. I am especially pleased that the HUB has committed to not turn away anyone who is seeking help, even if they cannot afford it. The HUB will be working with County and community agencies such as schools and nonprofits, to address the mental health equity gaps. Services available at the HUB include Individual & Family Counseling, Medication Management, Group Counseling, Teletherapy, In-Home Services, Client-Centered and Strength-Based Focus and more. Learn more: <https://www.gandh.org/>.

Just this week, Inova Mount Vernon Hospital opened a new behavioral health unit, expanding adult



mental health care along the corridor. The nearly \$10 million facility will increase mental health capacity at the hospital by 67% to 50 beds. The Inova Veatch Behavioral Health Unit features 20 additional beds, private rooms, "quiet" spaces, modernized equipment and enhanced safety features.

Fairfax Falls Church Community Service Board also provides services for people of all ages who have a mental illness, substance use disorders and/or developmental disabilities and can be reached at 703-383-8500. The Fairfax

County Health and Human Services System (HHS) supports the well-being of all who live, work and play in our County. The HHS program services create opportunities for individuals and families to be safe, healthy and realize their full potential and can be reached at 703-222-0880.

I believe strongly that we need to do more to support our youth in their mental health needs, and particularly since COVID, we are not doing enough.

SEE MENTAL HEALTH, PAGE 7

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Thoughts on Civil Discourse in The Wake of Violence

BY KAREN CORBETT SANDERS



I am saddened today as we hear about the violence against two staff members and the destruction of Congressman Gerry Connolly's field office in Fairfax City by a man with a metal bat. When I announced my decision not to run for office again, I cited the increased vitriol, hateful rhetoric, and lack of civility in our public discourse. It is hard to look at a situation such as today, or reflect on the events of Jan. 6, 2021, and not see some correlation between the divisive politics of hate which depersonalize our political foes into caricatures of villains and the acts of violence.

According to her Congressional Testimony on March 31, 2022, Rachel Kleinfeld, a Senior Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment, there was an acceleration of political violence between 2016 and 2020 and the level of acceptance and support for political violence has also increased by members of both political parties. Justifications are steeped in the importance of protecting the traditional American way of life, validity of elections, and other false or misleading narratives. Threats against members of Congress have almost doubled, and hate crimes are increasing, with rates higher in 2021 than in the year following 9/11.

More disturbing than even historic numbers is the broader base of individuals who are involved in these acts of aggression. Acts of aggression like what happened today at Connolly's office are no longer contained to extremist groups, but have spread to lone actors reacting

to the rhetoric they are hearing or seeing online, in public meetings and feeling compelled to take aggressive action.

We do not know the motivation of the intruder in Connolly's office. There have been moments and periods of time, as an elected school board member, where I worried about my colleagues, our staff, and my own safety during official proceedings when emotionally charged issues came before the board.

We do know that each of us can do our part to mitigate these acts. Collectively, we must tone down the divisive rhetoric, vilifying name calling, and character assassination. The issues before our Federal, State legislatures, and local governments are too important to trivialize with destructive and non-productive behavior. We must focus on the issues before our policy making bodies that affect the everyday lives of our community members.

We can realize that there are policy areas where groups or individuals may align on individual issues and others where the makeup of a group supporting an issue may be different. However, this is only possible if the discourse focuses on the content of the policy issues and does not cast aspersions on the character of individuals in a group.

Together we can achieve the American dream of a more perfect union by reinforcing our foundations of civil discourse.

Karen Corbett Sanders is the Mount Vernon District representative on the Fairfax County School Board. Sanders is not seeking reelection.

Mental Health

FROM PAGE 6

In Fairfax County, we strive to provide valuable mental health resources to our residents, and I continue to advocate for more. If you or a loved one need assistance, please visit our Countywide programs here.

RESOURCES:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/mental-health-matters-resources-trainings-and-videos>
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/community-services-board/mental-health>

Hotlines you can call for urgent and immediate assistance:
 Emergency basic needs call 703-222-0880 or TTY: 711
 Mental health or substance abuse emergency (24/7) call 703-573-5679 or TTY: 711
 National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline call 988
 Local suicide prevention (24/7) call 703-527-4077 or TEXT "CONNECT" to 85511
 More: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/sites/mountvernon/files/assets/documents/pdf/mental%20health%20and%20substance%20use%20resource%20list%202023.pdf>



Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Jurisdiction	Fed. Struct. Id.	Route #	Route Name	Consuing	Posted Date
LEE	10897	662	RTE 662	SIMS CREEK	4/12/2023
BOTETOURT	3421	636	BEAVER DAM RD/RTE 636	BEAVER DAM CREEK	4/6/2023
LOUDOUN	11384	850	PICNIC WOODS RD	MILLTOWN CREEK	4/4/2023
ALBEMARLE	875	810	DYKE RD	LYNCH RIVER	4/3/2023

The list above is not a comprehensive list of all structures with weight restrictions in the Commonwealth, but shows only structures that have new or changed weight restrictions within the last 30 days. The list contains only basic structure identification and location information and the date the new or changed weight restriction and signage became effective.

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit <https://www.virginiadot.org> and navigate to Info Center/Trucking Resources. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT's Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730.

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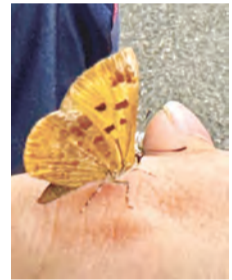
Visit our website: www.twopoorteachers.com

Eagle Festival Brings All Closer to Nature

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE GAZETTE

The Friends of Mason Neck State Park held their annual Eagle Festival on Saturday, May 13. The well-known festival again offered an abundant tribute to nature in a day filled with environmental organization displays, interactive exhibits, bird and critter shows, time paddling on the water, and live music. County, state and federal wildlife agencies, environmental and conservation organizations were well represented providing information on many parts of the natural world from seeds to trees, and birds to small mammals.

Approaching the main presentation tent, one could hear a loud voice saying "he's coiling around my neck." A quickened pace revealed that puppeteer, Caroline Seitz, of Kids Nature Shows LLC, was in the middle of introducing her young audience to snakes and some of their behavior. Although northern Virginia snakes include some climbers, human neck hugging is a problem only for Seitz, who also often experiences Grey Squirrels hiding on her head. Several young audience members revealed the squirrel's location and agreed that she had "messed up" Seitz hair. Not a problem since Seitz shared, "I like it that way." It was all in good fun and much appreciated by the young audience.



A small butterfly, Harvester (*Feniseca tarquinius*) typically enjoys creeks and stream sides

Inside the visitor's center, a few spectacular birds of prey could be seen closer than it's possible to get to them in the wild. Hodor, a Great Horned owl, and Scarlet, a Barred owl, along with four other rehabilitated raptors from Liz Denison's Secret Garden Birds and Bees, were calm though surrounded by admirers. Smokey, a Screech owl with Matt Felperin of NOVA Parks, held up the small owl end of the size spectrum. The three owls are well known in the area, often visiting park events. Injuries sustained as adult birds, which would decrease their chance of survival in the wild, have lead to their extended lives as ambassadors of the bird world.

One can't be sure if the owl's renowned



Harrison West, 11 yrs, of Fairfax Station, gets a distance view of ducks while watching for the area's often spotted Bald Eagles



Eagle Festival goer Erin Carter, of Lorton, took getting close to nature to heart as she walked around the event hosting a Harvester butterfly attracted to her salty hand

keen hearing collected the musical notes of the Difficult Run String Band, playing outside in the morning hours, or the voices of Joe Chiocca and John David Coppola singing in the afternoon. We do know that the bands could be well heard by the human participants circulating between the exhibits outdoors. As hunger for learning turned to hunger for lunch, guests hit a variety of vendors for fair food classics like burgers, hot dogs and fries, plus empanadas, vegetarian treats and the



Barred Owl Scarlet shows off her impressive wing span to the delight of those learning about owls from Secret Garden Birds and Bees handlers

ice cream truck, welcomed on a warm day. A new exhibitor this year was Covina Fairfax, contracted to turn Fairfax County residents' waste to energy. Processing approximately 3,000 tons per day of solid waste at their Lorton facility allows them to sell renewable energy enough to meet the needs of about 80,000 homes. Their process combusts solid waste, producing high heat, turn-

ing water to steam, which is sent to a turbine generator to produce electricity. The solid waste material is reduced to an inert ash that is only ten percent of its original volume, saving landfill space, as well as producing renewable energy in the process.

Friends president and long-time resident of Mason Neck, Hillary Clawson, explained that the Eagle Festival is celebrating its 25th year.



Darlene Pick of Woodbridge compares her reach to the wingspan of common raptors



Great Horned Owl Hodor, a frequent ambassador for raptors, seems as interested in seeing his admirers as they are in seeing him at the annual Eagle Festival at Mason Neck State Park on Saturday, May 13.

Originally begun by Robert Hartwell, son of Elizabeth S. Hartwell, to honor his mother. She campaigned successfully against large-scale development on Mason Neck in order to preserve the peninsula and protect bird habitats here. The reserve in nearby Mason



Cat Young, 4 yrs old, and her sister Eve, 3 yrs old, check the claws of a larger than life Red Fox at the Friends of Mason Neck State Park annual Eagle Festival on Saturday, May 13.



An uncertain Flash, 4 yrs, who often walks at Mason Neck State Park with owner Mina Guevara, of Alexandria, does not usually encounter a Red Fox quite this large

Neck State Park, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, was created in 1969. It was the first refuge created specifically to

protect the Bald Eagle. It was renamed the Elizabeth Hartwell Mason Neck Wildlife Refuge through an act of Congress in 2006.

For more on the Friends group and their events, see <https://friendsofmasonneck-stateparkinc.wildapricot.org/>



Cat and Eve Young traveled over an hour with their grandmother to attend the festival and enjoy a hug with a fox



Truman Farabaugh (left), 9 yrs, of Lorton, finds a shard and an arrowhead while practicing his digging skills under the tutelage of Cynthia Donahue at the Archeology Society of Virginia tent at the annual Eagle Festival at Mason Neck State Park on Saturday, May 13.

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE GAZETTE

Moving Moderately in a Model T

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

To start his car, Ford Chinworth rolls up and removes the fabric cover, lifts the hood, opens the gas line, closes the hood, honks the horn to test the battery, inserts the key, steps on the passenger side running board's aluminum plate, climbs in, retards the spark, chokes the motor, turns the key counter-clockwise, presses the starter button with his right heel and moves the throttle down and up. And the motor roars.

This is his routine for getting his 1927 Model T Ford on the road. The car, which he has dubbed "Mt. T," was originally owned by his Indiana grandfather, Clement Chinworth, who drove it until his death in 1949. Chinworth recalls watching the car smoke and backfire in a 1954 Warsaw, Indiana, parade in his childhood.

He and his cousins have meticulously restored it, which required extensive research to confirm the original paint color, fawn gray. It is a gleaming four-seater (some call it a "Fordor") with original cream pinstriping, crank-up windows and a running board on each side.

To keep it working, Chinworth, a Mount Vernon-area resident, drives the car once a week to Burke and Herbert Bank on Sherwood Hall Lane and various other local spots, including U.S. 1. Its maximum safe speed is 38 miles per hour. It will go 48 to 50 mph downhill, but 38 is the highest safe speed, Chinworth stresses. "The Model T is not safe. That's why you go slow. In a real emergency, you pull the hand brake," he explains.

For car shows, when travels to Centreville or Rockville, he avoids the Beltway and takes backroads like Braddock and Centreville Roads, since he is chugging along at 38 mph or slower. "It is possible to judge when you have reached and are driving at the desired cruising speed based on the sound



Ford E. Chinworth's 1927 Model T.



Ford E. Chinworth and his cherished 1927 Model T.

from the engine compartment," he wrote in a driving guide.

Mass Produced

The Model T was one of the first mass production vehicles. Ford Motor Company made it on the moving assembly line in Highland Park, Michigan, between 1908 and 1927. Ford shipped one to its first

customer in 1908 and priced it between \$260 and \$850, according to the company's website. As car manufacturing competition grew in the mid-1920s and gave consumers more choices, Ford ended Model T production in 1927.

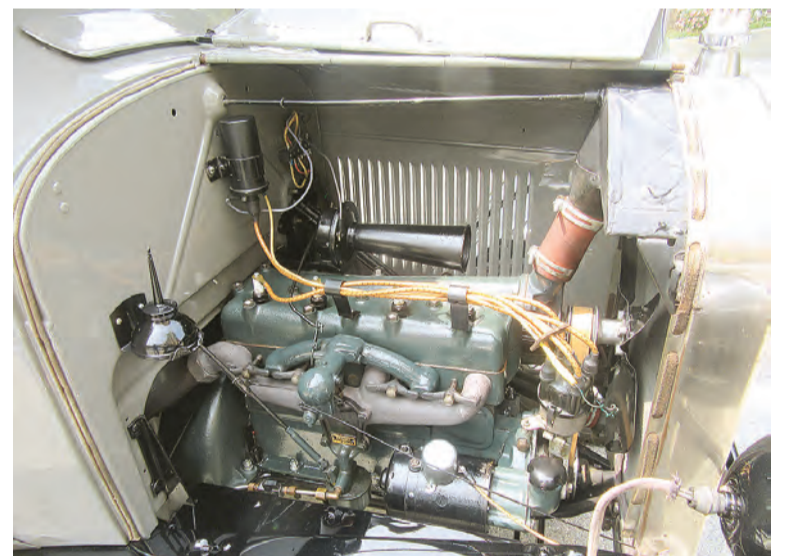
Chinworth has mastered the car's operations, documented in SEE MOVING, PAGE 11

Information and Events

- ❖ May 20, Antique Car Show, Fairfax, <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/special-events/antique-car-show>
- ❖ May 21, Old Town Festival of Speed and Style, Alexandria <https://www.festivalspeedstylealex.com/>
- ❖ June 3, AutoWorks Festival, Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton, <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/auto-works-festival> and Antique
- ❖ Automobile Club of America Show, Fredericksburg, <http://hfraaca.org/>
- ❖ June 18, Annual Classic Car Show and Take Apart a Car, 200 antique cars, Sully Historic Site, Chantilly, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site/>
- ❖ August 12, Nation's Capital Model T Ford Club, 50-mile tour in North Arlington, north George Washington Memorial Parkway and Rock Creek Park, <https://ncmtfc.org/>



Ford Chinworth lifting the hood.



The Model T's engine.

Some Model T-ers participate in what's called "Take-Apart Car," an event with a 1926 Model T pickup truck disassembled to the frame; an eight-person crew must put the vehicle's 13 pieces back together in 15 minutes. Ford Chinworth's team usually does it in eight.



The gas tank cap..



The steering wheel with the spark lever (left) and throttle (right).

Moving Moderately in a Model T

FROM PAGE 10

18 pages of instructions that he penned titled “Starting, Driving and Stopping Mr. T,” after having had only a 30-minute lesson when he first got the car. “Nothing is automatic,” he notes. “You make everything’s that going to happen, happen.”

Mr. T has a four-cylinder, 20-horsepower motor, four roll-up windows and three pedals on the floor, from, left to right, the clutch, reverse and brake. The throttle or accelerator is a stick-like device behind the steering wheel. It has no seat belts, power steering or turn signals. A ten-gallon gas tank is under the front seat. Many Model T’s required inserting a stick in the tank to determine available gas, but Chinworth’s car has a gas gauge.

For the driver and passengers, it’s much noisier inside than today’s vehicles. “There’s only a wooden board between the driver and the engine,” he points out. “There are not many moving parts compared to today’s cars,” he explains.

It always attracts startled looks,

admiration, amusement and applause. Chinworth gets questions like “What is the gas mileage?” The answer: 20 miles per gallon.

Car Collectors

Chinworth is a retired architect who designed private buildings, four Metro stations and U.S. Navy shore facilities. He is secretary of Nation’s Capital Model T Ford Club, a chapter of the Model T Ford Club International, which has members in countries like Brazil and Australia. Among the local club of 50 aficionados, members collectively have 30 Model Ts.

Model T devotees take their cars to shows and the club has tours several times a year in which members drive from five to 30 cars together on preplanned routes, like the Skyline Drive. Chinworth is the Tour Director.

Some Model T-ers participate in what’s called “Take-Apart Car” an event in which they have a 1926 Model T pickup truck disassembled to the frame and an eight-person crew must put the vehicle’s 13 pieces back together in 15 minutes. Chinworth’s team usually does it in



The hand brake lever.



The pedals, left to right, the clutch, reverse and brake.



The left rear tire and running board.

eight.

To Chinworth, the car is a cherished family heirloom. His 15-year-old grandson will visit soon and learn to drive it. “It’s a great hobby, great fun,” he offers, and fondly comments, “I believe he is good to go for another 90 years or so.”

PHOTOS BY
GLENDA B
OOTH

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Alexandria Old Town Springtime Art Festival Returns

John Carlyle Square
May 20 – 21

This weekend, May 20 -21, marks the return of the Alexandria Old Town Springtime Art Festival. The outdoor fine art affair takes place in John Carlyle Square on May 20 - 21 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days.

Featuring a juried selection of artwork from local and national fine artists, visitors to the free, outdoor event will see thousands of handmade, exquisite pieces of art across every medium, including life-sized sculpture, paintings, jewelry, pottery, textiles and more. The popular springtime event mirrors the caliber of works found during the September Alexandria Old Town Art Festival, which has been consistently voted by Sunshine Artists Magazine as one of the top-ranked art festivals in the nation.

WHAT: 3rd Annual Alexandria Old Town Springtime Art Festival

WHEN: Saturday, May 20 and Sunday, May 21 from 10 am to 5 pm

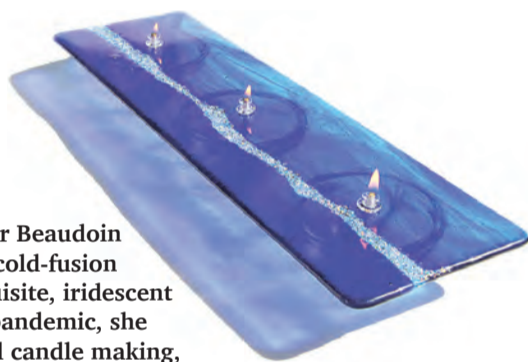
WHERE: Old Town Alexandria in John Carlyle Square, Navigational: 300 John Carlyle Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Free and open to the public
www.ArtFestival.com

Kensington, Md. glass artist Jennifer Beaudoin Moffitt began her artistic career in cold-fusion glass jewelry-making, creating exquisite, iridescent works of wearable art. During the pandemic, she started experimenting with glass oil candle making, with masterful results.

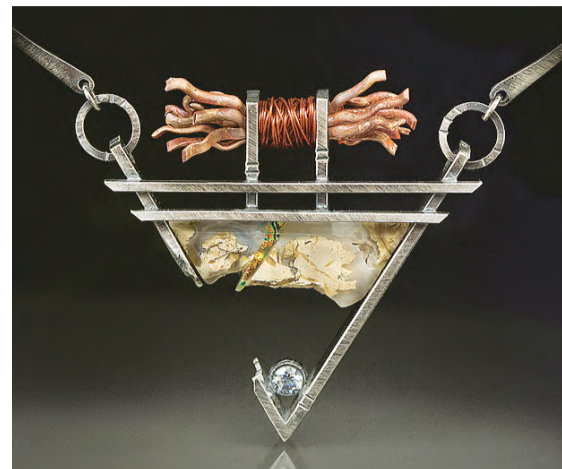


Sidney Carter, painter.



Sculpture by Maduka Uduh

Washington, D.C. painter Tara Good captures local landscapes on canvas through a combination of acrylic and molding paste to add depth and texture to each piece. Every D.C.-focused work – from large-scale paintings to small, gouache framed art – contains her signature impressionistic perspective.



Original jewelry of every style, shape, design and medium will be on display during the Alexandria Old Town Springtime Art Festival.



Off the Menu: Restaurant News and Notes

By HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

A beloved coffee shop returns; a popular restaurant eyes a metamorphosis; and a new-to-town shake shop is looking for your best over-the-top recipe to feature on its menu. There's so much happening in the Alexandria food scene this month; let's dive in.

Abyssinia Market and Café reopens

After a temporary shutdown, Abyssinia Market and Café at 720 Jefferson Street has reopened its doors to customers in need of caf-

feination, treats, and a friendly atmosphere.

"Great news. I'm very happy to announce that we'll be reopening the coffee shop (last) Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. ... Our regular hours will be posted on our door. All beer and wines are on sale (and) everything must go. Thank you for all the love and support you showed us," a café rep posted on social media last week.

The shop, whose faithful following stood at attention during the pandemic when owner Lily Damte's mask policy sparked vitriol and violence from one resident, has become a darling of South Old

Town, and news of its recent closure rippled through its fanbase. Now, customers can breathe a sigh of relief that their beloved shop is back in action.

Café 44 rebranding, to expand into Jula's Café

A victim of its own success? Perhaps. And, thus, Café 44 is expanding its footprint – and changing its name – in a summertime project that, the restaurant promises, will have no impact on customers as work takes place.

"My, how we've grown," begins an announcement on Café 44's website. "... This exciting expansion includes a state-of-the-art

commercial kitchen, a customer-facing raw bar and charcuterie bar, a central bar with a view of the Capitol and the Potomac, a private dining room, a wine room, a social media nook, and so much more."

Phase one of the project at 44 Canal Center Plaza, Suite 401, is underway with a late-June ETA; phase two, which encompasses the existing Café 44 space, is slated for completion by September.

The Crazy Mason looking for special Alexandria creation

As reported in these pages earlier in the year, The Crazy Mason cometh to 716 King Street – and the shop needs your help to con-

coct its "Signature Crazy Creation" for the new Alexandria location. The milkshake shop, which specializes in over-the-top shakes teeming with the likes of cookies, waffles, cupcakes and more, features locally themed creations on its menu – and is looking for the perfect recipe to reflect Alexandria.

To participate, submit your best proposal to the shop's Facebook page – and may the best shake win!

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.

CALENDAR

NOW THRU JULY 15

Alexander D'Agostino: "A Shrine for the Forgotten" Exhibition. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Baltimore-based solo artist exhibition recipient, Alexander D'Agostino, presents "A Shrine for the Forgotten." The work explores queer histories and images, through performance, installation,

and reclaiming material from queer archives and other cultural resources related to the historic marginalization of LGBTQ people.

NOW THRU MAY 27

The "Prints in May@DRA: Exploring the Possibilities" exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans gallery features traditional printmaking techniques such as reliefs, intaglios, monoprints and

handmade prints with mixed media, along with artworks created using computer graphics programs and other objects enhanced with block prints or imprints. View at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed May 28). Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

NOW THRU MAY 28

Tribute Art Exhibition. At The Torpedo Factory, Van Lindingham Gallery, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. The Torpedo Factory Artists' Association's (TFAA) Van Lindingham Gallery presents Tribute, a juried membership show featuring

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 13

Vocal Fellows Combine Diversity and Talent

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE GAZETTE

The challenging week is about to begin for the artists in the Vocal Fellows Program: six-hour long rehearsals, networking, feedback, and mentorship from high-level professionals in preparation for three concerts May 19-21.

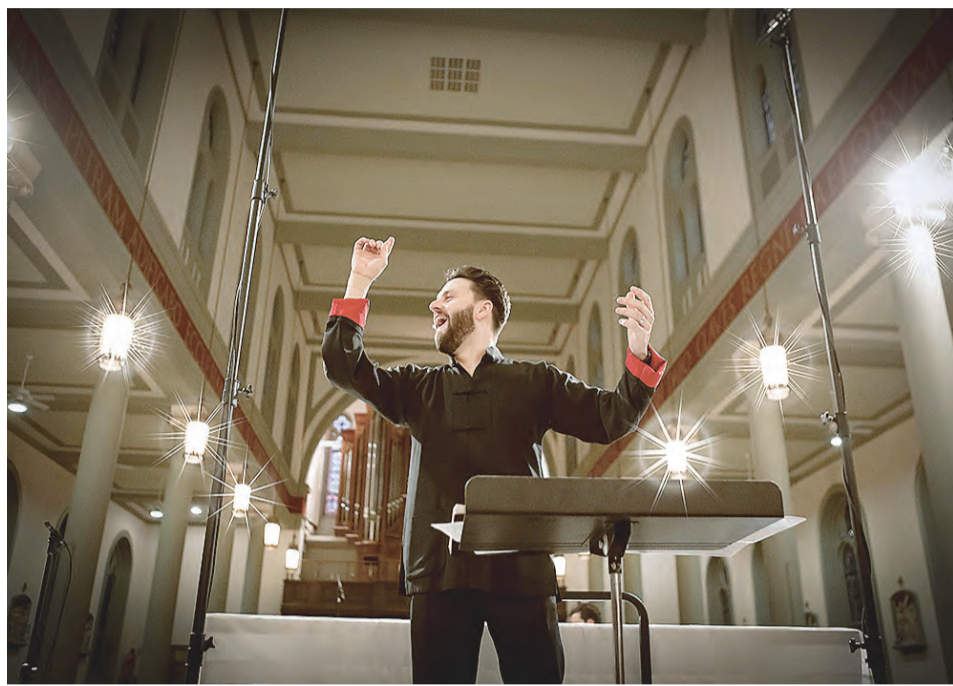
The four Vocal Fellows for 2023 started working with their mentors in January on how to prepare for these concerts. They received their music over a month ago so they could begin to familiarize themselves with the selections. Matthew Robertson, Artistic Director of The Thirteen which is sponsoring the Vocal Fellows program says, "We are busy, busy, busy."

The Vocal Fellows Program was begun in 2019 by The Thirteen. Robertson said this year there were around 15 applications. "It was a competitive year. There are a relatively small number in this field. And he says "There were a number of talented applicants we weren't able to choose."

The Vocal Fellows Program offers fellowships to "early career singers from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural or other demographic groups that are underrepresented among professional singers of vocal ensemble and oratorio music." Robertson says, "We wanted to help our field better look like the people we hope to reach." He explains, "This issue of equity and access isn't apparent especially in oratorio and classical ensembles. This is an existential issue for performing arts."

Robertson says, "From our perspective we go in to share knowledge. The Vocal Fellows are working with a set of musicians at the highest level of their field." But the advantages of participation in this program extend well beyond the performance experience. He explains the fellows make valuable professional contacts.

"Last year's fellows told us how important



Matthew Robertson, Artistic Director of The Thirteen.

Vocal Fellows

The Flowering of Days performances:

- ❖ Friday, May 19 at Episcopal High School Chapel in Alexandria;
- ❖ Saturday, May 20 at St. Paul's Church K Street in D.C. and
- ❖ Sunday, May 21 at Bradley Hills Church in Bethesda.

This year's Vocal Fellows:

- ❖ John Solomon Collins—bass-baritone
- ❖ Sea Han—soprano
- ❖ Jared Marshall—countertenor
- ❖ David Morales—tenor

Sea Han says, "I would like to learn tools to maintain a sustainable but fulfilling collaborative music career. I would also like meeting new, cool people — as this group seems to have a surplus of."

John Solomon Collins says, "I have the platform to show that diversity within classical music performance should be embraced and respected more. Through this program, I can show children who look like me that we can be part of this industry as well, and that we can do anything we put our minds to."

Robertson has long focused on performing music by underrepresented, women and people of color.

The Thirteen is in its 11th season. It was originally envisioned by Robertson as a group with 12 singers and a conductor. But he says since then ambition has outstripped the name, and now they perform with 8-50 as required by the specific music. Robertson's creative programming has been recognized by a number of critics, and his performances are part of concert series and college programs throughout the United States.

Robertson concludes, "This program is near and dear to my heart. Hopefully we can play a role in their early careers as we make sumptuous beautiful music."



David Morales, Vocal Fellow.



John Solomon Collins, Vocal Fellow



Jared Marshall, Vocal Fellow



Sea Han, Vocal Fellow

this program is and how much they felt appreciated and valued.

They admitted there is a problem." Robertson explains this referral-based economy is difficult.

The Vocal Fellows will perform with The Thirteen in concerts featuring Frank Martin's Mass for Double Choir and works by

Nathaniel Dett, Amy Beach, Maurice Ravel and more. Robertson says, "It is a pretty sophisticated program." The Flowering of Days performances will take place on Friday, May 19 at Episcopal High School Chapel in Alexandria; Saturday, May 20 at St. Paul's Church K Street in D.C. and Sunday, May 21 at Bradley Hills Church in Bethesda.

CALENDAR

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artworks that pay tribute to a cause, event, or subject that has special meaning to them personally. The following artists are participating: Diana Papazian, Samantha Shelton, Guido Zanni, Jon Kandel, Nancy Ramsey, Rebecca McNeely, Lisa Schumaier, Gregory Dunn, and Ileen Shefferman. Artworks include original hand pulled prints, original paintings, multimedia works, photography, ceramics, and sculpture.

NOW THRU JUNE 11

Women's Work. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. In Women's Work three artists, Kirsty Little, Donna McCullough, and Kathryn McDonnell use non-traditional media to explore concepts related to the role of women in the arts and society. Each with a strong

voice, the artists come together to offer a surprising and cogent statement about the place females have in our current world. Artist Talk: Sunday, June 11, 2 p.m.

THURSDAY/MAY 18

2023 MVBA Free Offensive Development & Shooting Clinic. 5:30-7:30 p.m. At Walt Whitman Middle School, 2500 Parker Lane, Alexandria. For Boys and Girls ages 9-14 years old. Visit the website: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-mvba-free-offensive-development-and-shooting-clinic-tickets-626514380377>

THURSDAY/MAY 18

Solo Lights. 7 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Join composer-pianist Martin Graff (Trips for Piano) and singer-songwriter Taisha Estrada (Nostalgia Ajena) for a luminescent evening of original music made to move your soul and light your imagination.



The Spring Wine Festival & Sunset Tour will be held May 19-21, 2023 at George Washington's Mount Vernon.

FRIDAY/MAY 19

Flowering of Days, Martin: Mass for Double Choir. 7:30 p.m. At Episcopal High School, 1200 North Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Written in

1922 at the beginning of the inter-war period, Frank Martin's Mass for Double Choir was to sit in a drawer unperformed for more than forty years until its premiere in 1963. Of

his decision to let this modern monument lie dormant, the Swiss composer remarked: "I considered it... as being a matter between God and myself." Filled with political turmoil and societal optimism in equal measure, the interbellum was also a time of artistic innovation. In addition to the Martin Mass, The Thirteen and our Vocal Fellows explore the art of this period through works by Dett, Beach, Ravel, and more.

SATURDAY/MAY 20

Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic. 3 p.m. At George Washington Masonic National Memorial. The Ulysses James Celebration Concert Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Music Director Laureate Ulysses James returns to the podium for a Season Finale program of his favorite

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 14

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 13

works with musician friends. Visit the website: wmpamusic.org.

MAY 19-21

Spring Wine Festival & Sunset Tour. 6-9 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Now is the time to purchase tickets, as Saturday already has sold out. Bring a blanket and relax on the east lawn overlooking the Potomac River while sampling wines from Virginia's finest wineries. Guests also will enjoy live music from Bruce Ewan and the Solid Senders. Doors open at 6 p.m. each night, and The Shops at Mount Vernon and Wine Valet Service are open until 8:45 p.m. The first floor, second floor, and cellar of the Mansion will be open until 8:30 p.m. Admission: Friday: \$49 for members; \$59 for non-members; Saturday: \$53 for members; \$63 for non-members; Sunday: \$43 for members; \$53 for non-members. Visit: mountvernon.org

SATURDAY/MAY 20

Port City Brewery's Pop-Up Spring Makers' Market. 12-5 p.m. At 3950 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria. Featuring over 30 Artists, Creators, and Makers. Port City Brewing Company in partnership with Made in ALX announced a Spring Pop-Up Market, featuring local artisans and makers showcasing their handcrafted products, perfect for providing a spring refresh for the home as we welcome the upcoming season and kick-off summer. The event will feature over 30 artists displaying their crafts in a diverse family-friendly local pop-up market that will take place in Port City's parking lot. Items available range from jewelry, home décor, woodcrafts, candles, wellness items, children's play and much more. For a full slate of artisans scheduled to participate in the pop-up visit, MadeInALX.com.

SATURDAY/MAY 20

Green Spring Gardens: Spring Garden Day - The Big Plant Sale. 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Rd., Alexandria. Here's your chance to work with Arlington/Alexandria Extension Master Gardeners to choose the perfect plants for your garden! If you are planning to start or add to a native plant collection, they will help with plant selection, planting advice, and answer all your questions. In addition, there will be artists, food vendors, and bake sales. This event is hosted by Friends of Green Spring Gardens (FROGS). Free. Questions? Telephone FROGS at 703-642-5173 or email info@friendsofgreenspring.org.

SATURDAY/MAY 20

Green Spring Garden Day - The Big Plant Sale. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens Park, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. What gardeners in the know call 'THE big plant sale' - a highly popular event with over 40 vendors of popular, rare, and unusual plants including natives, edibles, and trees. Attendees also enjoy local artists, on-site food vendors, and a bountiful FROGS Bake Sale. Visit the website for a complete vendor list at www.friendsofgreenspring.org

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Obituary

Joseph Vincent McKenna, 40, of Alexandria, VA, passed away of natural causes on May 3, 2023. He was born to Antoinette McKenna on November 4, 1982 in Alexandria, VA. Joseph was a lifelong Alexandrian. Joseph McKenna is survived by his identical twin brother, Edward McKenna, sister-in-law, Nanette McKenna, step-nephew, Gavin Newell, mother, Antoinette McKenna, stepfather, Kiernan Corbett, sister Genevieve "Nina" McKenna, and brother-in-law, Max Rickard. A viewing will be held at Everly Wheatley Funeral Home in Alexandria, VA on Monday, May 22nd from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. A funeral mass will take place at St. Rita's Catholic Church in Alexandria, VA on Tuesday, May 23rd at 11:30 a.m. The interment will be at Ivy Hill Cemetery on Tuesday, May 23rd at 2 p.m. All are welcome to a reception following the interment at Sheraton Suites Old Town Alexandria from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Flowers and condolences may be sent to Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home, 1500 W. Braddock Rd, Alexandria, VA 22302. Donations may be sent to Habitat for Humanity in Joseph's name. <https://www.everlywheatley.com/tributes/Joseph-McKenna>

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CALENDAR



BrewWorks will take place on Saturday, May 20, 2023 at Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton.

BrewWorks

12-6 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Drink with the Workhouse Arts Center sampling beers, wine, and spirits! Delicious food and lawn games, listen to local bands. Browse galleries, artist studios, gift shop and Lucy Burns Museum. Cost: \$5-\$75. Visit the website: workhousearts.org/brewworks

NOW THRU JUNE 25

Falls Church Arts All Member Show.

More than 155 artists will be featured in the All Member Show at the Falls Church Arts gallery from April 22 to June 25. To handle the expansive show, the exhibit will be held in two parts this year: submissions from members with last names from A-K will be on view from April 22 to May 21. Submissions from artists with last names from L-Z will be on view from May 27 to June 25. The show features the work of emerging and established member artists from Falls Church Arts and encompasses an extensive range of media from the more traditional watercolor, acrylic, mixed media, pastel, fused glass, oil, photography, and sculpture to a wide variety of mixed media and printing techniques. The Falls Church Arts gallery is at 700-B West Broad St. (Route 7), Falls Church. Admission is free and the gallery is open Tuesdays-Fridays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Artworks can be viewed online at www.fallschurcharts.org. All pieces can be purchased at the gallery or on the website.

NOW THRU 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.

THROUGH JULY 27

Senior Slow-Pitch Softball Seasons. 9 a.m. to noon. At Braddock, Wakefield, and Nottaway Softball Fields. Join NoVa Senior Softball, men 50+, women 40+, average age 66. Skill-level assessment. 24 teams, three levels of play. Tuesday/Thursday morning double-headers. Begin Spring Training now. 703-663-7881. Visit the website: www.nvss.org

NOW THRU JUNE 3

"Urinetown." 7:30 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. In a Gotham-like city, a terrible water shortage, caused by a 20-year drought, has led to a government-enforced ban on private toilets. The citizens must use public amenities, regulated by a single malevolent company that profits by charging admission for one of humanity's most basic needs. Amid the people, a hero

decides that he's had enough and plans a revolution to lead them all to freedom! Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/urinetown>

NOW THRU OCT. 28, 2023

Vienna Optimists' Farmers Market. 8 a.m. to noon. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. Premiere local vendors feature fresh, seasonal produce, beautiful flowers, hardy plants, sweet and savory treats, free garden advice and free live music. Admission is free.

Each week at the Farmers Market, different talented local musicians perform. Here is May's schedule.

On May 20, Accotink Rising performs; On May 27, Carter Farm Band performs; For more information about the Farmers Market or the Optimists, visit <https://www.optimist-clubofgreatervienna.org/>

NOW THRU AUG. 23

Art Wednesdays. 5 p.m. At The Plaza at Tysons Corner Center, McLean. The first four Wednesdays starting May 3 watch live graffiti art come to life. The Lorton Workhouse and Live Art International introduces alternating art concepts for participants to take a drawing class, take home personalized airbrushed swag and more. All materials will be provided.

NOW THRU AUG. 31

Game Night Thursdays. 6 p.m. At The Plaza at Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Starting May 11th, DC Fray will host a free game night every other Thursday. Game concepts will rotate between Cornhole, Roller Skating, Ping Pong, Bingo, RC Racing and Pickleball. Prizes will be awarded!

NOW THRU MAY 25

Open Life Drawing. 6-9 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Life drawing and painting group, on the first four Thursdays of every month. Bring your own drawing and/or painting supplies- easel, stools, and tables are provided. *Note: This is not a class. A monitor will be present to take the model through different poses but no instruction will be provided. Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/visual-arts-classes>

NOW THRU AUG. 11

Music & Dance Fridays. Classes: 6 p.m. or 6:45 p.m. At The Plaza at Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Join Silvia and La Musica the first two Fridays of each month starting May 5 through August 11 for salsa lessons and a musical workshop. For beginners, Salsa lessons start at 6 p.m. and bachata lessons begin at 6:45 p.m. The La Musica: World of Encanto music workshop for kids will feature

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

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

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A Break in the Action



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

When all is scheduled and done, it will have been four months between my last scan in early March and my next regularly scheduled scan in early July. As of today's date, April 26, 2023, I am approximately seven weeks past that early March scan and 10 weeks or so from the next scan. I am, to invoke a formerly familiar "CB" phrase, "in the rocking chair, good buddy." Meaning that I am enjoying being in the middle. Other than taking my 50-plus daily pills and getting my obligatory every-four-week lab work, I am on easy street: minimal cancer-related activities or responsibilities. For a cancer patient undergoing treatment and being scanned regularly, this kind of stress-free interval is as good as it gets. (Though I certainly realize that being told by your oncologist that you're in remission would be ideal, I live in the real world of managing expectations. Being told you have a "terminal" illness will do that to you. Moreover, having your cancer diagnosis change from lung cancer to thyroid cancer - after surviving nine years of treatment will likewise make you steady-on and cautiously optimistic. Still a cancer diagnosis looms large and is unpredictable. And each scan presents a patient with reminders of how tenuous one's grip on life can be. Minimizing this anxiety and/or rationalizing any cancer demands to allow you to try and live a semi normal life - without being totally preoccupied with your disease/life expectancy is the true prescription for success. No guarantees of course but as the doctor in Miles City advising Augustus McCray said in the third night of "Lonesome Dove" as to whether Gus would allow "sawbones" (as he called him) to cut off his remaining leg: "I assure you, sir, the alternative is grim.")

Aside from the 10 days my wife, Dina and I spent in Ne-gril, Jamaica in 1978, this interval is yet another honeymoon - of sorts: an escape/diversion from the everyday which for a cancer patient undergoing treatment might be more like every minute. Nevertheless, it's not as if I'm totally preoccupied with my health status (as in every second), but one is never far, emotionally, from the underlying, all-encompassing circumstances of your life: having an incurable form of papillary thyroid cancer for which the life-sustaining medication I take every day has a three-year-ish shelf life/effectiveness. And my three years-ish are up in the fall. What happens then? God only knows, literally. (I know from experience not to ask/discuss scenarios with my oncologist and endocrinologist. It's generally wait and see. I imagine, they know the options. Sharing them with me now however seems premature. They don't like to get too far ahead of the patient vis-à-vis options/what's next? I've asked and this is the answer I've received most often.)

Fortunately, that three-year timeline is not hard and fast. It's a median-type measure. Some shorter, some longer. And most importantly, every patient is unique and the miscellaneous interactions between your medicine and your body/tumors is not cast in stone either. Everyone is different, and the doctors don't really know if your differences are enough to win the day and survive past your window which supposedly is closing. This reality permeates my subconscious - and consciousness as well. And even though I've been told and understand all of this, somehow, I've got to ignore it, and somehow delude myself into thinking I'm more than a statistic and the fall of '23 has no more meaning to me than any other than it's around my birthday, wedding anniversary, my brother's birthday, and my parent's birthdays and their respective dates of death and even the time of my Bar Mitzvah all those years ago. Adding my cancer-medicine-affected timeline to this rather impressive list of significant events in the fall seems a bit too much to bear. As such, I will choose not to. (Though I realize that ignoring any of this won't really solve the problem/inevitability of it, I likewise don't see how focusing on a negative - me dying, can have a positive impact on me living. And I refuse to be a victim of my own circumstances.)

And right now, being/living in the middle of an extended interval between scans when I'm not stressing nor waiting for results, enables me to damn the torpedoes and live (try to anyway) full speed ahead. I will not be dragged down - nor bogged down either. I will enjoy any port in this unexpected storm (no cancer history in my immediate family as well as being a lifelong non-smoker) and let the scan results and the presumptive ineffectiveness of my cancer medication fall where they may. As I've often said, if and when anything bad happens, it will be bad enough when it does happen so that I'd rather not put the cart before the horse and make it bad now. I'd just as soon ride off into the sunset after something bad happens, not before. I don't see any advantage to getting to the front of the line. Until that line becomes obvious to me, I'm happy to bide my time, mind my own business and try (quoting Richard Pryor) to "keep some sunshine on your face."

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



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