

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

AUGUST 3, 2023



Xavier Scheeler the tattoo artist puts a tattoo on Harper Hanks, age 6, enjoying National Night Out at Mount Vernon Park.



What's a country band without a fiddle?



Jacob Kline, 5, listens to a paramedic in Ambulance 409 at National Night Out at Mount Vernon Park on Tuesday, Aug. 1..

Ice Cream, Fire Trucks and Bluegrass

Residents gather for National Night Out at Mount Vernon Park on Tuesday, Aug. 1.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

The residents of Mount Vernon Park and Hollin Hall Villages combined efforts this year for a National Night Out celebration that featured a country band, fishing, ice cream and the fire trucks which were big draws as they pulled into the parking lot.

Captain Andrew Snell arrived in one of the trucks. "We're building trust with our community," he said as the families gathered around the trucks and the children climbed aboard. "It's great that they get to see our first responders," he added.

Ryan Battle, the vice president of Hollin Hall Villages civic group agreed. He was one of the residents instrumental in pulling it all together. "It's a good opportunity for the residents to meet the police and firemen," Battle said.

"Each year it kind of expands," said Mary Godbout, one of the other organizers and a member of the Mount Vernon Park Association board of directors. It's their sixth year doing it together with Hollin Hall Villages.

At Mount Vernon Park, there is room to



Sam and Brandon Zerante hear all about the fire nozzle at National Night Out at Mount Vernon Park.

expand in this privately owned facility that got its start in 1954 when the land was donated by St. Luke's Episcopal Church. It now has three swimming pools, a pond, a pavilion and lots of room for the families to set up barbecues and enjoy the evening. For the National Night Out event, a bluegrass band called the Trenton Porch Pirates played at the pavilion, two food trucks were set up by the front gate, people were fishing in the pond and Xavier Scheeler was manning the tattoo table.

Scheeler was in his eighth year at the event doing the removable tattoos, and his

mother was out at another event with her tattoo kit, so it's a family thing. "Usually most popular is the princess, followed by the dolphin," he said.

NNO 2023

National Night Out began in 1984 when Matt Peskin, founder and executive director of National Association of Town Watch, introduced it in Philadelphia as a way to break down the boundaries between law enforcement and the community. Peskin started promoting the sense of community with a newsletter, and as he met with community

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION



Plain vanilla hit the spot for Janet and Eric Utgaard and their grandson William Albrittain.

leaders, the first gathering was born to replace the newsletter. The first annual National Night Out involved 2.5 million neighbors across 400 communities in 23 states.

It was designated as an annual neighborhood-based crime and drug prevention event and an opportunity to show neighborhood spirit and strengthen partnerships with local police. It demonstrates neighborhood commitment to fight crime and is observed in thousands of communities in all 50 states, U.S. territories, Canadian cities and military bases around the world. In Virginia, there are nearly 150 cities and towns participating.

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HOLLIN HALL VILLAGE



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NEWS

Does FCPS Have Enough Air Purifiers?

Deadline passed for more free help for classroom air.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

Time ran out Monday, July 31, for schools in Virginia and across the United States to access free portable certified, High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) air purifiers through a state-run, federally-funded grant program.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention distributed \$62 million to Virginia, part of billions across the country. The program, which started as a strategy to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other infections, was overseen by the Virginia Department of Health.

While COVID-19 emphasized the importance of improving school indoor air quality to help prevent disease and avoid disrup-

tions to education, air filtration at optimized levels is a critical part of a multilayered strategy to enhance and protect educational opportunities through healthy environments.

"Two separate programs" for air purifiers were available to schools, said Maria Reppas of the Virginia Health Department, adding the Virginia Department of Health offered the opportunity and the funds to Virginia schools to purchase the air filters. Many schools chose to participate, while others did not. Local school districts made the decision on how many air filters to get. Fairfax County Public Schools received "2,200 units, which is the amount they requested," Reppas said.

FCPS reports online that 198 schools and centers serve a diverse population of more than 181,000 students in grades prekindergarten through 12.

This number of air purifiers amounts to about 10 per school. Other school districts have taken a different approach. The Erie County Department of Health purchased 10,600 air filtration units last year for every k-12 public and charter classroom in Erie

County, where there are about 130,000 students in the system.

Keri Rodrigues Langan is co-founder and president of the National Parents Union. She said on Friday, July 28, the Centers for Disease Control released updated guidelines around what air filtration is supposed to look like. Rodrigues Langan stressed that it is not just about COVID-19 anymore. The air quality is a concern, "terrible because of the wildfires."

The values of the Air Quality Index (AQI) correlate with levels of health concern. The EPA represents air quality with six colors, ranging from green, which indicates good air quality conditions, to yellow, orange (unhealthy for sensitive groups, including young children and older people), and red (unhealthy for all). Then as conditions worsen, purple, which is very unhealthy, and maroon for hazardous.

"At the end of June, I saw [parts of Fairfax County] were in the purple. This is something that is not going to go away; it is not a one-time thing. What is going to end up happening is that air quality is going to dete-

riorate," Rodrigues Langan asserted.

"When we were in COVID, people were trying to guess: should we close schools, should we open, what about [distancing], six feet, three feet, all of this stuff? School administrators are not doctors. They're not epidemiologists. And frankly, they're not indoor air quality experts," she said.

FCPS responded in an email on Monday, July 31, that it had "maximized the benefits of the HEPA air purifier program and procured as many air purifiers as our system was able to afford or practically accommodate in terms of space availability."

"While the individual air purifiers may be technically free of charge under this program, each unit carries with it operational costs (maintenance, running costs, space constraints) that can run into the millions," said Kathleen Miller, media outreach specialist at FCPS, in an email.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) states in its Reference Guide for Indoor Air Quality in

SEE CLEAN AIR IN FCPS, PAGE 8

This Summer, We All Scream for Ice Cream

Bruster's Ice Cream set to open next month in Hilltop Shopping Center.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Getting "brain freeze," from drinking an icy beverage in the summertime is a right of passage for many, whether it be a Slurpee from 7-11, Pina Colada or a frappuccino coffee drink.

When Bruster's Real Ice Cream opens next month in Hilltop Shopping Center there will be another option they call the "Brain Freeze," that's made with sherbert.

That will just be one of the options this newcomer in the local ice cream world has to offer. Bruster's is a newcomer to the Hilltop area of Alexandria, but they've been around up in Pennsylvania for a while.

A passerby was fully versed in Bruster's dishes from her experience in Pennsylvania. "I love it," she said, "the chocolate peanut butter something, that's my go-to," she said. In fact, there are lot's of concoctions they make including shakes, sundaes and waffle cones.

Franchise owners Jim and Jessica Winland are racing against the summer to get their store open before fall comes. While looking at a franchise to open, they noticed there weren't many places to get good ice cream around the south county near Fort Belvoir. "It was hard to find good old ice cream," Jim Winland said. Their ice cream is a premium, hand-dipped variety.

Jim was in the Army and liked the fact that the Hilltop location is just outside Fort Belvoir. During the week, lots of workers from Belvoir and offices nearby flock to the Hilltop center to eat at the Wegmans, The Green Turtle or the Mission Barbecue restaurant so

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There will be three walk-up windows when Bruster's Ice Cream opens.

Bruster's

Hilltop Village Center in Kingstowne
6463 Old Beulah St, Alexandria, VA 22315
571-223-6822
Will Be Open daily 11am-10pm

the ice cream will be an option too. "This is a lunch destination," he said.

At Bruster's they offer 24 flavors of premium ice cream that has a certain level of butterfat in it, and they have three walk-up windows that will cater to the mobile diners.



Get the scoop at Bruster's.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION



Franchise owners Jim and Jessica Winland with daughter Manuella, age 7. They are racing to get their shop open while it's still summer.

MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE ♦ AUGUST 3-9, 2023 ♦ 3



Fifteen year employee Jorge Maldonado, of Fairfax, stands at a wet-well access pipe while completing a weekly inspection of the Workhouse Road pumping station.



Hundreds of miles of sewer pipes are inspected annually with cameras, sensors, and lasers to assess pipe condition, sometimes requiring entry into the system to retrieve entangled equipment



Deep below, sewage under pressure is flowing to the station's tank to be pumped to the next high point, so gravity can assist the movement toward the treatment plant

Pumping Wastewater for Clean Water

The unseen system that completes the circle.

By SUSAN LAUME
THE GAZETTE

You've likely seen these small, sometimes larger, unassuming buildings, or sometimes just a fenced cabinet, near your home. There'll be a discrete sign identifying them — pumping stations. They are part of Fairfax County's wastewater collection and treatment system. Have you ever wondered exactly what's inside and how the system works? Here is a look at this part of Fairfax County's wastewater infrastructure.

The Wastewater System

The wastewater system, one of the largest in the country, serves over a quarter of a million customer accounts, protecting public health by treating wastewater to meet or exceed state and federal water quality standards, and once cleaned, releasing it back into the region's waterways. What is wastewater? It's the water used in households and businesses that comes from drains, sinks, bathtubs, showers and toilets. Since the earth's water system is closed, meaning we have all the water on earth we will ever have, this wastewater is cleaned for continual reuse. Stormwater, from rain and snow, moves through a separate system, cleaned by soil's natural filtration.

In order for wastewater to be cleaned, it must be collected. That's what about 3,300 miles of sewer pipes and 63 pumping stations accomplish every day of every year, round the clock. About 100 million gallons is conveyed through the pipe network daily. The majority moves through use of gravity sewer, using the energy that results from a difference in elevation, to move the flow. Most sewers are gravity sewers because they offer dependable movement of the water

with no energy costs wherever the grades are favorable. This is the reason one often sees sewage manholes along stream beds, as all water naturally moves to the low points of topography. The system uses pressure pipe meaning the water is always full and flowing, and at a speed that keeps solid waste moving without creating blockages. Wastewater moves under pressure, by gravity, to a low point where there's a pumping station to move the wastewater to another high point. Eventually, the wastewater moves to one of five wastewater treatment plants. The Noman T. Cole Jr. Pollution Control Plant is owned and operated by Fairfax County. (For more on the Cole treatment plant, see "Local Naturalists Tour Cole Pollution Control Plant", Mount Vernon Gazette, Oct 14-20, 2022.)

Pumping Stations

Crews from the pumping station branch of the county's Wastewater Division visit the pumping stations weekly to perform inspections. There are 26 employees in the branch involved with the inspections, including mechanics, instrumentation technicians and electricians. They check to assure the pumps, located deep underground, 10 to 50 feet depending on location, are working and the wastewater is flowing without obstructions. They clean and sanitize the pipe entries into the main pipe system's wet-well. They also check the operation of the above ground generators which are used to keep the pumps working in the event of a power outage. While one might expect unpleasant odors from the large wet-well access pipes, only a mild aroma of pine-sol cleaner is detectable from the regular cleaning regimen. Carbon filters scrub air at stations located close to backyards.

Two new pump stations are in the design

phase, five pump stations are currently undergoing rehabilitation, and 15 are in various phases of design for rehabilitation. Customers pay for the sewer base system and service usage as part of their water bill received quarterly, not through taxes.

The Pipe System

The pipe system, too, is inspected regularly. Employees conducting inspections fall under a separate management branch under the Wastewater Division. With so many thousands of miles of piping, inspections can cover only about 250 to 300 miles of the 3,300 total each year. Six in-house crews, sometimes supplemented with contract help, use cameras, multi-sensors and lasers, to see below the flow line and assess pipe conditions to determine if upgrades are needed.

Making new sewer connections which are needed at a distance from existing county main piping, is no small task to accomplish. Consider the new rest room facility being built at Laurel Hill Park's Central Green in Lorton. Contractors are working now to connect new pressure piping to the nearest sewer line connection point. They are using a boring method, accomplished using ditch witch machinery. This method avoids having to open a trench and disrupt Lorton Road to lay pipe to connect the new line to the nearest pressure piping and pumping station. The work is slow, requiring several test pits to assure that pipe is laid near, but without disturbing or damaging, existing gas lines. Work started near the Workhouse Road pumping station and has continued for more than two months with piping now approaching the new restroom facility. When the line connection and building construction is completed next year, the park will have full restroom facilities.

These unpretentious pumping sites, miles of pipeline, and the crews who maintain the

Do Not Flush or Put in Drains:

- Fats, Oils, Grease
- Medicines or other pharmaceuticals
- Baby wipes or disinfectant wipes, even if they are labeled "flushable"
- Rags, cloth or clothing
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- Cotton swabs
- Napkins or paper towels
- Contact lenses
- Plastic
- Food items
- Hair
- Diapers (cloth, disposable or "flushable")
- Facial tissues
- Dental floss
- Limit or eliminate your garbage disposal use, instead compost food waste items

system are parts of a huge, but little thought of complex, that makes life easy and pleasant. There are a few things each of us can do to help the 134 employees in the wastewater division to keep the system flowing smoothly, says director Shwan Fata. In addition to remembering what things should not be flushed or poured into drains, Fata asks if you see or smell anything abnormal happening with the system, call the 24 hour Trouble Response Center at 703 323-1211, where employees are dispatch ready to handle those issues that start at the curb connection.

For more on the county's wastewater treatment system, see The Connection, "Down the Toilet. Down the Drain. Then What?", Dec 22-28, 2022.

COMMUNITY

United Community Back to School Drive 2023

This year, United Community has a goal of supplying 900 children with backpacks and school supplies. United Community needs help to ensure local children return to school prepared and equipped.

How can you help?

❖ Make a Donation Online <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/WebLink.aspx?name=E3464&id=151>

❖ Donate Gift Cards, Backpacks and Schools Supplies

Gift Cards: \$25 gift cards from Walmart or Target

New Backpacks: elementary, middle and high school age appropriate; large enough to accommodate pocket folders, notebooks, and pencil boxes; no wheels; no corporate branding

New School Supplies: download the flyer for a complete list of suggested supplies <https://www.unitedcommunity.org/drives/>

Collection extended through 8/31/2023
7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria
<https://www.unitedcommunity.org/>

Back-to-School Community Day

Aug. 19, 10am – 2pm
Lorton Community Center

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mount-vernion/back-school-community-day>

Join Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck, Neighborhood and Community Services, Fairfax County Public Library, Fairfax County Public Schools and more for Back to School Community Day. The event will take place at the Lorton Community Center, Library and Park (9520 Richmond Hwy) on Saturday, Aug. 19 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. There will be a moon bounce, face painting, free food, school supply distributions, and more fun activities for students and families to enjoy before the start of the new school year.

A special highlight to this event is the Health & Human Services Fair that will include agencies such as the Fairfax County Health Depart-

ment, Community Services Board (CSB), Inova Health System, Fairfax County Department of Family Services (DFS) and more. These agencies will share information about the services they provide to students, youth and families. They will also be onsite to assist with obtaining public assistance services such as Medicaid, Medicare, SNAP, etc. and there will be Vision and Hearing Screenings provided by INOVA Lions Care and Dental Screenings provided by Medical Care for Children Partnership. The Fairfax County Health Department will also be on-site providing vaccines and assisting with immunization appointments. We will also be joined by the Lorton Volunteer Fire Department and the Franconia District Police Station.

We hope you'll attend this wonderful event where we will all come together as a community before school starts.

Register for 8th Annual Tour de Mount Vernon

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK

The early bird gets the worm — or should I say, the early rider gets the best deals. Register for the 8th Annual Tour de Mount Vernon by Sept. 1 for a cheaper price and Tour de Mount Vernon socks. This year, ride will travel on the closed George Washington Memorial Parkway with beautiful views of the Potomac River. Don't miss the opportunity to ride through many Potomac Banks historic, ecological and cultural sites in the northern and central parts of the Mount Vernon District.

Join Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck for a community bike ride on Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023, at 8 a.m. — starting and ending at George Washington's Mount Vernon.

This year's ride will be super exciting and scenic as riders will ride on the closed George Washington Memorial Parkway with beautiful views of the Potomac River. The TdMV takes riders on a fun ride through the many Potomac Banks historic, ecological and cultural sites in the northern and central parts of the Mount Vernon District. The route consists of paved roads, paved trails and has some challenging sections. Ride monitors and Fairfax County Police will help with directions and keep everyone safe.

Route Highlights include: George Washington Memorial Highway; George Washington's Mount Vernon; River Farm; Gum Springs; Fort Belvoir; National Museum of the US Army; Woodlawn and Pope-Leighey House; Fort Hunt Park; Hollin Hills; Dyke Marsh

The 8th Annual Tour de Mount Vernon is dedicated to friend and inspiration, Dave Evans.

Early Bird Special until Sept. 1: Fee is \$30 per rider. Registration includes Tour de Mount Vernon Socks, 1 free day pass to George Washington's Estate and a \$5 donation to Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling.

Registration from September 2-October 21: Fee is \$35 per rider. Registration includes a \$5 donation to Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling, 1 free day pass to George Washington's Estate and MAY include Tour de Mount Vernon Socks while supplies last.

Volunteers:

Volunteers are needed the week before and the day of the ride; stuffing rider packets and marking the route, to set-up, check-in, ride support and post event clean up volunteers.

Register:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/8th-annual-tour-de-mount-vernon-tickets-689417174327?aff=oddtcreator>

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OPINION

NVMS Conflict Resolution Center

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

We in the Mount Vernon area are incredibly lucky to have so many excellent local nonprofits dedicated to improving lives in our community.

Today, I will highlight the work of the Northern Virginia Mediation Services (NVMS) Conflict Resolution Center, an organization for which I recently joined the Advisory Council.

NVMS has its origins in the late 1980s when graduate students at George Mason University's Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution crafted a framework to address the need for mediation training to provide alternative ways for disputants to resolve conflicts in lieu of going to court.

Now a 32-year 501(c)(3) nonprofit, NVMS creates safe spaces for family members and individuals in the community to talk through interpersonal conflicts. Their services include civil mediation for community members, organizations, and businesses, as well as training that enhances individual conflict resolution competency. Since its inception, NVMS has solved thousands of civil and domestic issues between parties.



Mediation allows disputing parties to be heard and encourages a positive environment to work through difficult issues, seeking a workable solution for both parties. Mediation is much less costly than a court case. NVMS has worked to find solutions to disputes between families, landlords and tenants, neighbors, coworkers, businesses and customers, and in small claims court

disputes in Fairfax, Arlington, Loudoun, and Falls Church district courts. Just in 2022, NVMS successfully mediated two private workplace disputes, 27 child visitation and child support cases, nine private family mediation sessions involving separation, divorce, and elder care, and 55 small claims disputes.

Another key program offered by NVMS is restorative justice, based on the understanding that a crime harms not just the victim but also the offender, the families of both, and the communities in which they live. This practice encourages the offender to accept accountability while allowing the parties to understand each other's perspectives. In 2022, NVMS supported 190 community members through restorative conversations.

NVMS offers skill-based coursework for par-

ticipants to work towards a Virginia Supreme Court mediation certification, and also offers continuing mediation education (CME/SHRM) and legal education (CLE) credits approved by the Virginia Bar.

NVMS also offers exclusive group training to universities, corporations, and government agencies on myriad topics around conflict resolution, organizational development, communication, restorative justice and practices, and equal employment opportunity (EEO) in the workplace.

Finally, NVMS offers community conflict training to empower residents to have the tools to manage and de-escalate conflicts in their daily lives. A recent training took place at the Gum Springs Community Center.

While access to NVMS programs is usually through referrals from designated channels, such as by the court or law enforcement, anybody can access most mediation services and trainings at a sliding scale fee.

If you would like to learn more about NVMS and their mission of mediation, restorative justice facilitation, and conflict resolution training, you can visit their website (<https://nvms.us>) or join me at their community picnic on Sept. 21 from 1-4 pm at Van Dyck Park, 3720 Blenheim Blvd, Fairfax, VA 22030. Experienced practitioners will be available to meet with community members.

Lesson Zero Performs at Fort Hunt

Free Sunday Concert Series continues through August.

Lesson Zero, a musical group hailing from Northern Virginia, performed July 30 as part of a Family Music Night at the Fort Hunt Pavilion and the Fort Hunt Sunday Concert Series.

Playing original roots rock and classic covers, their music featured a touch of various musical genres ranging from indie, alternative, country, Cajun, blues, to roots rock. They can next be seen Aug.

19 at the Arlington County Fair.

The Fort Hunt Sunday Concert Series is a free series of performances at the Fort Hunt Park Main Pavilion that runs Sundays at 7 p.m. Next up is Capital Horns on Aug. 6. Founded in June 2017, the Capital Horns of Washington Conservatory of Music is a horn choir created in order to provide players of the instrument a supportive environment

to gather, rehearse and perform.

The community concerts continue every Sunday through the end of August. All concerts are free and open to the public. No ticket or reservations are needed. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/gwmp/planyourvisit/forthuntconcerts.htm

— JEANNE THEISMANN



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Lesson Zero performs July 30 in the Fort Hunt Park Sunday Concert Series.

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Local Student Chosen To Attend American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation

Sara Fenimore of Alexandria is one of 94 high school seniors selected to attend American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Girls Nation July 22-29 in Washington, D.C. The weeklong program, founded in 1947, has provided exceptional civic education to thousands of students, teaching them about how the federal government works.

Fenimore is one of two participants who will represent Washington D.C. as a "senator" at ALA Girls Nation. Two delegates from each ALA Girls State program are chosen to represent their state after participating in an ALA state-level program held across the country. At ALA Girls Nation, senators will participate in mock Senate sessions complete with caucuses and debating bills that range from personal to political interests.

Other activities on the agenda include a visit to Arlington National Cemetery where they will place a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a visit to Capitol Hill to meet with real-life U.S. senators from their state, and a tour of D.C. monuments.

Fenimore, a rising senior at St. John's College High School in Washington D.C., was active in many ways during her week at ALA Washington D.C. Girls State. She also participates in many activities in her school and community. Some of her activities include Cadet Colonel in Cadet Corps Leadership Program, Color Guard Commander, student government, Best Buddies, soccer, and rugby.

Students leave the program with increased confidence and leadership skills for college and in their future career paths. Some participants of the program go on to have careers in public service at the local, state, and national levels. No matter what their future holds, all leave with a better understanding of civic responsibilities.

The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) is a community of volunteers serving veterans, military, and their families. Members also support the mission of The American Legion in improving the quality of life for veterans. To learn more and to volunteer, join, and donate, visit www.ALAforVeterans.org.

Tax Preparer Pleads Guilty to \$1.4M Fraud Scheme

An Alexandria man pleaded guilty today to defrauding the U.S. government of approximately \$1.4 million in tax revenue by preparing false tax returns on behalf of his unsuspecting clients.

According to court documents, between 2016 and 2020, Lawrence Appiah-Osei, 58, ran a tax preparation business called New Look Enterprise out of his home in Alexandria. From at least 2017 through 2020, Appiah-Osei executed a scheme to fraudulently inflate the tax refunds of his clients. To do so, Appiah-Osei falsely claimed that his clients operated businesses that lost thousands of dollars each year.

These fraudulent losses drove down the clients' taxable income and increased the clients' tax refunds. The Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) estimates the Appiah-Osei's actions resulted in a tax loss of approximately \$1.4 million to the federal government.

Appiah-Osei is scheduled to be sentenced on Nov. 3. He faces a maximum penalty of six years in prison. Actual sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after taking into account the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

NoVa Family Service Back2School Drive Collects School Supplies for Students in Need

NVFS Back2School Drive ensures students are prepared for school and in the Fall with everything they need to be successful.

Each school year, families spend an average of \$864 on school supplies and clothing, which is \$167 more than in pre-pandemic times, according to the National Retail Federation. As inflation continues to rise, many families live paycheck to paycheck and the annual cost of school supplies is an added expense and stressor.

To relieve this burden and bridge the school supply gap, the annual Northern Virginia Family Service (NVFS) Back2School Drive provides new school supplies to over

1,200 NVFS clients in kindergarten through 12th grade living in Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties, as well as the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park. Eighty-four percent of the students NVFS works with live at or below the federal poverty level.

An estimated 135 volunteers from two nonprofits, nine corporate partners and individual volunteers, will stuff backpacks and unload and organize backpacks, to support this effort over a two-week period in August.

The community can continue to support this effort by donating to NVFS online at <https://www.nvfs.org/donate-online/>.

14TH ANNUAL Alexandria SIDEWALK SALE SATURDAY AUGUST 12TH OLD TOWN & MORE



MORE THAN 40 BOUTIQUES

See the full list of participating boutiques and a map to guide your stroll at:



AlexandriaSidewalkSale.com
#ALXSidewalkSale



VISIT alexandria



NEWS

Clean Air in FCPS

FROM PAGE 3

Schools, 2023, that “understanding the importance of good indoor air quality in schools is the backbone of developing an effective IAQ program. Good IAQ contributes to a favorable environment for students, the performance of teachers and staff, and a sense of comfort, health, and well-being. These elements combine to assist a school in its core mission — educating children.”

According to the EPA’s report, failure to

prevent or respond to school IAQ problems can increase long- and short-term health problems, including coughing, headaches, and allergic reactions.

“Nearly 1 in 13 school-age children have asthma, the leading cause of school absenteeism due to chronic illness. There is substantial evidence that indoor environmental exposure to allergens, such as dust mites, pests, and molds, plays a role in triggering asthma symptoms. These allergens are common in schools. There is also evi-

dence that exposure to diesel exhaust from school buses and other vehicles exacerbates asthma and allergies.”

Some schools in Virginia may lag behind recommended ventilation or have low rates. While no federal, state, or local agency sets the rate for schools to target, Harvard University’s School of Health targets at “least five total air changes per hour (ACH).” Their stated bare minimum is three to four total air changes per hour.

Among Harvard’s strategies, if the class-

room does not meet the target air changes is to “use MERV 13 filters (or greater) on re-circulated air and add portable air cleaners with HEPA filters to the classroom.

The Connection contacted FCPS about their target airflow rates for maintaining healthy indoor air quality — the number of times the total air volume in a classroom or school space used by students or staff is replaced each hour and information about rates per school. This information was not available by the Connection’s deadline.



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ENTERTAINMENT

4 Dates to Circle in August

BY HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

Take heart – there's still plenty of time left to enjoy summer! Here are four of the city's best food and drink events for August.

Alexandria Summer Restaurant Week, Aug. 18-27

It's a highlight of the summer for local foodies: Restaurant Week returns! Nearly 70 restaurants around town will offer up special tasting menus and deals for lunch and dinner ranging from \$25 to \$45 per person. Visit alexandriarestaurantweek.com to peruse the participating eateries and scope out their menus in advance. (And don't forget to make a reservation!) <https://visitaalexandria.com/restaurants/restaurant-week/>

Bands and Brews Bar Crawl, Aug. 19

Del Ray's Bands and Brews Bar Crawl is back for a third year. More than 15 restaurants are taking part in making the crawl a success, featuring live music at each venue, food and drink specials, raffles, a photo booth and more. Not in the mood to stroll

 <p>Elaine's</p> <p>\$45 Dinner for One Person Elaine's offers modern Mediterranean food and...</p> <p>208 QUEEN STREET ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA</p> <p>LEARN MORE →</p>	 <p>Evening Star Cafe</p> <p>\$45 Dinner for One Person The Evening Star Cafe is a rollicking neighborhood ge...</p> <p>2000 MOUNT VERNON AVENUE ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA</p> <p>LEARN MORE →</p>	 <p>Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana</p> <p>\$25 Dinner for One Person At Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana of Alexandria,...</p> <p>3231 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA</p> <p>LEARN MORE →</p>	 <p>Glory Days Grill</p> <p>\$25 Dinner for One Person Glory Days Grill® is a full-service, sports-themed...</p> <p>3141 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA</p> <p>LEARN MORE →</p>
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A sample of the alphabetical list of restaurant week participants. Alexandria Summer Restaurant Week is Aug. 18-27

APPETITE

the avenue? Not to worry; trolley service is available. 12:30-6 p.m. Advance tickets \$15; \$25 at the door. Check in begins at 12:30 at Northside 10 (10 E. Glebe Road), Lena's Wood-fired Pizza and Tap (401 E. Braddock Road) and Pat Miller Square (2312 Mount Vernon Ave.). <https://www.visitdelray.com/events/bandsandbrews/>

Around the World Cultural Food Festival, Aug. 26

Take a tour of global cuisine without ever picking up your passport. Pile your plate high with samplings from a variety of countries, including China, Jamaica,

Ecuador, Nepal, Turkey and more, and be sure to save room for a dessert from one of the more than half-dozen sweets vendors. Looking for a gift for that special someone? A plethora of arts and crafts shops will also be on hand to help you out. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Oronoco Bay Park, 100 Madison St. <https://aroundtheworldfestival.com/>

Dog Days of Summer at Lost Boy Cider, Aug. 26

What could possibly make a day at the cidery even sweeter? Adopting a dog, of course! Lost Boy Cider has teamed up with the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria

to help facilitate just that. Adoptable pups will be on hand for meet-and-greets, and local vendors will also be on site to provide all the accoutrements. Already have a pup and aren't looking to take on another? Bring your favorite Fido along and let him do some shopping (and splashing on the splash pad). 317 Hooffs Run Drive. 1-6 p.m. <https://www.lostboycider.com/event/dog-days-of-summer/>

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 AUGUST 31

Creative Summer Programs. At Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Creative Summer Programs is a series of workshops exploring the arts. Learn techniques in drawing, mixed media, mosaic, jewelry, watercolor, and more from local artists. Delve into creative exploration solo or with friends. For children and/or adults, free and paid programs are offered. Sign up for what inspires you! Visit the website: DelRayArtisans.org/creative-summer

WEDNESDAYS THROUGH SATURDAYS

Tours Aboard Tall Ship Providence and Sen. John Warner Maritime Heritage Center. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Alexandria's Waterfront Park, 1A Prince Street, Alexandria. Guests of all ages are recruited into the Continental Navy aboard Tall Ship Providence with legendary Captain John Paul Jones. Recruits are assigned jobs on the ship, learn where they will work and live, how to load a cannon, etc... Tours conclude in the Naval History Theatre with a film about the ship. The Heritage center is a floating museum on the Alexandria waterfront. Visit <https://tallshipprovidence.org/>

JULY 25-SEPT. 17

Captured: Plants and Places. 1-4 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens Center, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Step into the world



Take a tour aboard the Tall Ship Providence and Sen. John Warner Maritime Heritage Center in Alexandria's Waterfront Park.

of plants across the region and in still life at a season-spanning photography exhibit July 25 to Sept. 17 at Green Spring Gardens Horticultural Center. The lyrical collection "Captured: Plants and Places" features botanical imagery drawn from the Washington area to Maine, including studio photos, intimate outdoor vignettes and landscape scenes. The photographers' varying visions and styles in color and black-and-white invite viewers to explore the wonder of wild and horticultural lands. An opening reception with the artists is July 30 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Atrium at Green Springs Gardens Horticultural Center.

JULY 27 TO SEPT. 3

Obscura: Tinam Valk Exhibit. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Reception on Sunday, Aug. 13 from 4-6 p.m. Tinam Valk's work explores the ambiguity of subjects such as oceans, rivers, landscapes, sometimes a combination of land and water, and figures or animals depicted within a land and water environment. Photographs, ranging from 60 to 100 years old in combination with sketches and memory and made-up environments, serve as a source for much of this work.

AUG. 4-26

The "Treasures of the DMV" exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery,



The Treasures of the DMV exhibit will be shown Aug. 4-26, 2023 at Del Ray Artisans Gallery in Alexandria.

2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features art that celebrates the wonders of DC, Maryland, and Virginia. Come see famous and overlooked regional gems from the perspective of local artists. Opening Reception: Friday, August 4, 7-9pm. Open Thursdays 12-6pm, Fridays 12-9pm, Saturdays & Sundays 12-6pm (Closed on August 27). DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

AUG. 5, 2023

Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

Legals

Legals

Legals

**PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE OF VOLUNTARY REMEDIATION**

Pursuant to the Virginia Voluntary Remediation Regulations, Virginia Administrative Code section 9VAC20-160-120, South Alex Subsidiary LLC c/o Combined Properties, Incorporated, 7315 Wisconsin Ave, Bethesda, MD 20814 hereby provides notice of voluntary remediation at the following site:

South Alex Redevelopment (Mixed Use)

2803 Poag Street, Alexandria, Fairfax County, Virginia 22303

VRP Number 00630

South Alex Subsidiary LLC ("South Alex") is providing this notice pursuant to the public participation requirements of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP) Regulations 9VAC20-160-120. South Alex has enrolled the "South Alex Redevelopment" (the "Site") in the VRP as VRP Site 00630. The Site consists of approximately 8.1 acres of land consisting of new ground floor commercial-retail tenant spaces, an above ground multi-level parking garage, and residential apartments on the upper floors. A former dry cleaner, Penn Daw Cleaners, operated on-site in the former Penn Daw Plaza from approximately 1960 to 1997. The dry cleaner operation utilized tetrachloroethylene (PCE) as a cleaning solvent during that time period. A gasoline service station also operated on the subject property from 1960 to 1982. Previous site investigation activities have documented the presence of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including PCE and several petroleum compounds in soil, soil gas and groundwater at the site at levels which may pose risk to human health or the environment. In accordance with the VRP requirements, site characterization and human health risk assessment have been performed and a Remedial Action Plan is being implemented. Voluntary remedial activities consisting of removal of contaminated soil, in-situ treatment of groundwater and follow up monitoring of sub-slab vapor have been completed at the Site. Engineering Controls (EC), consisting of active vapor mitigation systems (sub-slab depressurization systems and vapor barriers), have been installed and are operating throughout the Site's structures. Institutional Controls (IC) placed on the property will include: (1) a prohibition against use of groundwater beneath the Site, and (2) specific requirements for future construction (e.g. vapor barriers, construction worker health and safety plans). These will be recorded in the Fairfax County land records to ensure long term protection to occupants of the Site and to protect the public.

Persons wishing to comment on the voluntary remedial action or request additional information should contact the following person who is familiar with the Site:

Mr. Charles Harrison
Apex Companies, LLC
2101 Gaither Road, Suite 500
Rockville, MD 20850
Telephone: (240) 499-7322
Fax No: (301) 975-0169
Email: charrison@apexcos.com

Written comments will be accepted until September 2, 2023

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THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

The Friendship Firehouse Festival returns Aug. 5 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on the 100 block of South Alfred Street.

Friendship Firehouse Festival Returns Aug. 5

The Friendship Firehouse Festival returns to the 100 block of South Alfred Street Aug. 5 from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. in celebration of Friendship's 249th year.

The free festival provides an opportunity to learn about fire safety today, and yesterday, and see Alexandria Fire Department equipment up close. There will be booths by the Alexandria Police Department and Sheriff's Office, music performances, displays by community organizations, vendor booths, and food and beverage sales.

Join in water play and please-touch arti-

fact activities. Children will receive free toy Friendship firefighting helmets. This family event is presented by the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association and the Office of Historic Alexandria.

The Friendship Fire Company, established in 1774, was the first fire company in Alexandria. Today the Friendship Firehouse, built in 1855, is a museum open to the public. Friendship's restored 1858 hose-reel carriage will be on exhibit.

For more information see <https://www.alexandriava.gov/FriendshipFirehouse> and www.friendshipfireco.org

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 9

SATURDAY/AUG. 5

Open House at Woodlawn. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Featuring free self-guided tours of the Woodlawn mansion, arts and crafts tables, lawn games, and more! Bring your family to learn about this unique local historic site and enjoy our outdoor space. Visitors are encouraged to bring a blanket and enjoy a picnic on the lawn. Drinks and snacks will be available for sale.

SUNDAY/AUG. 6

Running Strong Powwow. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

At Waterfront Park, 1 Prince Street, Alexandria. Come join the 2nd Annual Running Strong Powwow to celebrate Native American cultures with others and create long-lasting memories with one another. Be a part of the growing awareness of Native American Communities, History, and Culture of the region. Be a part of remembering how Native American People, Communities, Contributions, History, and Land will always be the heritage of the United States of America.

TUESDAY/AUG. 8

August Networking Breakfast. 8:30-9:30 a.m. Share your brand across Northern Virginia from your home or office. Join the Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce for this virtual installment of its Networking Breakfast Series. Develop new prospects and share a 60-second commer-

cial with all the attendees. Each attendee will get to address the group and share their business. Virtual - Zoom Link Available After Registration. Go to <https://web.alexchamber.com/>

TUESDAYS, AUGUST 9, 16, 23, 30

Simpson Park Demonstration Garden: Tuesdays@10. 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., Simpson Park Demonstration Garden, 420 E. Monroe Ave., Alexandria. When Mother Nature can't do it all....Simpson gardeners step in to offer a helping hand. Free. Contact mgv.org for more information.

MOUNT VERNON NIGHTS

Fridays at 7:30 p.m. at Grist Mill Park, 4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria

AUGUST
4 Kadencia Orchestra (Bomba, Plena, Salsa)
11 Collaboration featuring Lori Williams (Jazz)
18 Crack The Sky (Rock)
25 Deanna Bogart (Blues, R&B)

FRANCONIA NIGHTS CONCERTS

Wednesday evenings from 7:30-8:30 p.m. At Leonadus K. Plenty Amphitheater, 6601 Telegraph Road, Alexandria.

AUGUST
2 Pablo Perez El Alcalde de la Salsa (Salsa)
9 Alexandria Harmonizers (Chorus)
16 The Nighthawks (Blues)
23 Dave Kline Band (World Jazz Fusion)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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"Triple Dog Dare"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As a long-surviving, hopefully evolving cancer patient, (14 years and counting; you bet I count), over whatever time it takes the patient to integrate his or her cancer and all its related tentacles into their life/routine/goals and objectives, eventually you reach an accommodation. In so doing, you no longer plan for it; rather, you plan around it. At some indeterminate length of time, you decide, almost consciously, that you are going to live what's left of your life and consider less and less the consequences and impairments/challenges of your disease.

Cancer, however, often has something to say about your best laid plans. One's schedule, particularly months ahead, especially if airline tickets, hotel accommodations and the like are required (to make the best of your bad situation), are subject to change and not by your own choosing. One blip in your lab work, physical examination/video appointment, an irregularity in one of your recurring scans (PET, CT, MRI and/or body/bone) or just feeling lousy, can play havoc with your commitments. Commitments which are not so easily – or inexpensively, changed. A re-test in any of your regular diagnostic requirements has a cascade effect down your scheduling line. What dates were once windows of opportunity can quickly become impossible/unrealistic doors slamming shut.

As such, during conversations with my oncologist about more than my papillary thyroid cancer, he often asks about any future plans. This is asked in the context of, and in relation to, a scheduled scan whose results might be disappointing, shall we say – and downright life-changing shall we never say, especially if known before one's departure – thereby ruining any positive vibe. Sensitive and considerate of the razor's edge on which I and many cancer patients live, my oncologist will typically ask if I want to schedule the scan after I return from wherever I'm going, just in case.

To that hopefully-not-premature end, I elected during this most recent cycle to keep my scheduled scan in place before I left town on vacation. Given that the usual and customary turnaround in which the results are emailed to me, it's very likely I'll know the details before I leave town. And though keeping this scan appointment was absolutely my decision ("it was my idea, but I don't think much of it," to invoke a Moe Howard quote from a long-ago Three Stooges episode when the boys grabbed off a doorstep what they thought was an abandoned baby), I do have some anxiety about it.

On the one hand, am I being arrogant and inconsiderate of my fellow vacationers – potentially concerning my last-minute news which might not be for the best? Or am I trying to control my cancer with a sort of false bravado-type confidence in my results thinking that if I remain positive about the possible negative, I will win the day (quarter, actually) and not "earthquake" our vacation plans? I sure hope it's the former and not the latter so I can go on pretending the latter won't soon be happening.

But that's exactly what a cancer diagnosis does to your life. Topsy-turvy, up and down, in and out, all-around; "here, there, and everywhere" (our wedding song, by the way) and who knows what, are your daily (not really minute by minute) emotions. It's sort of like having an upset stomach but your brain is what's upset. And unfortunately, rest or a bromo seltzer won't change how you feel or even offer any relief from your pre-existing condition. Cancer is the big dog, and it absolutely doesn't want to get off the porch. But if you don't make friends (sort of) with your cancer and don't learn to expect the unexpected and work that unpredictability into your life's equation, then your future will be one gigantic hassle. Finding a path forward where you can live with it, maybe even live because of it, is the key. However, it's nearly impossible to make light of such a heavy load. There are so many reminders, both internally and externally that trigger your "canceritis" that finding some kind of mechanism to get you through the day is paramount. Otherwise, you'll become a very dull boy. And whatever fight you have in you; finding something funny, something positive, something to be grateful for; are all methods to the madness that a cancer diagnosis creates.

I've found that planning a future – even one with all the inherent risks I've described, is an attempt at normalizing an abnormality (cancer, especially "terminal" cancer, certainly qualifies). It may sound simple but as one of my best friends, Lynne, said to me at the beginning of what has become a 14+ year journey: "Being diagnosed with cancer will be the toughest thing you've ever had to do." As a former cancer patient herself, I took her words to heart. When you're right, you're right; and Lynne was right.

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



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