

CONNECTION

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They're Back!

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Principal Janice Dalton of Laurel Hill Elementary welcomes students with open arms on the first day of school, Monday, Aug. 21

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PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

AUGUST 24-30, 2023

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Tip Over Causes Traffic Headaches

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

A tractor trailer belonging to Payne Trucking, a bulk hauling service based in Fredericksburg, tipped over while traveling north on the Fairfax County Parkway near the Rolling Road exit on Monday, Aug. 21. No other vehicles were involved and there were no injuries to the driver or others, according to Fairfax County Police. Fairfax County Police responded at 9:05 a.m., closing the parkway's northbound lanes for cleanup. The lanes reopened at 11:45 a.m. after large crane tow trucks were able to right the trailer.

Tractor trailer overturns, shuts down Fairfax County Parkway.



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New third grader Mila Hicks shows her excitement with a few jumps of joy at the arrival of the first day of school.



First year crossing guard Bushra Sarfra shows poise as she directs vehicle traffic and pedestrians near busy South County High School, where students arrive driving and on the school bus.



Laurel Hill Elementary PTA members Ajie Velasquez, Susanne Hiscock and Becca Halton raised first day enthusiasm with their “Yahoo or Boo Hoo” event.

School Year Begins for Area Schools

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Accompanied by parents to elementary schools, bused to middle schools, or driving to high schools, area students again took up their roles as architects of their own futures with the start of another school year. Parents, crossing guards, teachers and school staff lent a hand.

First year crossing guard Bushra Safr works the crossing near South County High School. For the first day, she has back up from motorcycle and patrol police. With a heightened presence for the week to counter the confusion, traffic and new drivers near schools that come with school’s start, Fairfax County police are helping to keep students safe. With a shortage of crossing guards in the system, Safr and guards at other locations serve at multiple schools with staggered starts by school level.

At Laurel Hill Elementary School Principal Janice Dalton, now in her ninth year, comments that the first day is “always, always” special. “Success of the first day is when all kids are excited and that momentum carries from the start to the end and all get home safe.” Laurel Hill PTA members came with pompoms and enthusiasm to help parents either “Yahoo or Boo Hoo” about the first day.

Some parents, students or teachers, may think an Aug. 21 school start feels early. Reading specialist teacher Rachel Morris, of Laurel Hill Elementary, says she is used to an early start and appreciates a calendar filled with school holidays. Looking well past the first day, she points out that an early start makes for an earlier last day of school in June.

Enthusiastic seven-year-old third grader Mila Hicks, may have summed up the morning’s energy the best, sharing she is excited about the first day, her favorite subject is reading, and “I like learning.”

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Those big yellow buses roll again, an unmistakable reminder to us all that school has begun.



At elementary schools across the area many students arrived hand in hand with parents for their first day.



Principal Janice Dalton of Laurel Hill Elementary welcomes students with open arms.



Teachers Megan Oxendine, 3rd to 6th grade and autism, in her second year teaching, and assistant reading specialist Oneitha Givens, at her school since 2009, make their way toward the school door with classroom supplies.

SENIOR LIVING



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE VIRGINIAN

91-year old Leila Brown, a resident of the Virginian, works out with the community's Fitness Director Maria Leonor Malca three days each week.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE VIRGINIAN

Earl Brown, 95, says that he maintains his current level of fitness by working out with The Virginian's Fitness Director Maria Leonor Malca.



Leila Brown, 91, a resident of the Virginian in Fairfax, has exercised regularly since she was in her 20s.

Fit After 90

Working out six days each week is what one couple attributes to their longevity.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

On most days you are likely to find Earl and Leila Brown lifting weights, doing chest presses or using multifunction strength machines. What makes the feat remarkable is the Earl is 95 and Leila is 91.

Married for 70 years, the Browns credit engaging in a regular exercise regimen to maintain their physical wellbeing with their longevity.

Fitness plays a vital role in maintaining physical and mental health, especially for the elderly population. Many seniors struggle with health issues and reduced mobility due to age-related factors.

Earl and Leila Brown work out six days a week, with three of those days spent training with Maria Leonor Malca, the fitness director at The Virginian, the independent living facility where they reside.

"Working with Maria over the last few years has been extremely helpful with regards to keeping us strong and in balance which helps us with our daily activities," said Earl.

A lifelong commitment to staying fit has also played a role in the current state of health.

"I have been exercising doing calisthenics since I was in my 20s and continue to do so every day," says Leila. "We do our own exercises, but we go together."

Earl attributes his current health to a lifetime of physical activity. "I played sports all my life. Even through my 70s, I played volleyball."

A commitment to exercise and a healthy diet are foundational to maintaining fitness in older adults, said Malca. Her work with seniors at The Virginian includes focus on improving balance, providing guidance on proper footwear, and encouraging her clients to consume lean protein with vegetables while practicing portion control.

Malca, who believes that 20 minutes of exercise a day is important, concentrates on four key components of longevity in her fitness programs: dynamic movement, breathing for wellness, pelvic training, and increasing muscle mass. The elements are tailored to meet the specific needs and capabilities of each person.

When a person is injured, a consistent exercise program is vital to their recovery process, stated Malca. "People who exercise regularly can recover from an injury much faster than someone who is a couch potato," she said.

The Browns say that their careers and continued engagement in the community also contribute to their overall wellbeing.

Earl, a Rear Admiral in the US Navy, served as a physician and psychiatrist. His Navy service included organizing and participating in sports activities, fostering a passion for physical fitness. After retiring from the Navy, he worked in private industry, fo-

cusing on health policy research.

A former medical technologist, Leila paused her career to raise their children before pursuing modeling at the age of 50. She worked for John Robert Powers Modeling School and participated in fashion shows in New York.

Passionate about art, Earl began taking oil painting lessons. His apartment showcases two of his paintings, while others were given to the couple's children and grandchildren.

Leila immersed herself in the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), conducting tours of historic period rooms and playing an active role in the organization. She joined the Capital Speakers Club of Washington D.C., teaching public speaking to women visiting the capital.

"I've been active always and that has helped with my longevity," said Leila. "A lot has to do with my genes, diet and exercise and willingness to participate in life – I want to live a life that's fulfilling."

BULLETIN BOARD

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

GIRLS ON THE RUN REGISTRATION OPEN

Registration for the fall 2023 season of Girls on the Run is open! Registration will close on Friday, Sept. 15 at 11:59 p.m. Girls on the Run (GOTR) is an out-of-school program designed to help young girls build key life skills through dynamic lessons. Teams are led by trained volunteer coaches who lead by positive example and have a passion for helping others be

the best version of themselves. Teams typically meet twice a week for 75-90 minutes and are led by volunteer coaches. The 10-week season will begin the week of September 11th and conclude at the celebratory 5K events the weekend of November 18-19. Each practice has a corresponding lesson from the Girls on the Run research-based curriculum, which focuses on building social, emotional, and physical skills while encouraging healthy habits for life.

While many teams meet at schools, GOTR NOVA also offers community teams based out of neighborhoods, community centers, and parks. If a team is not offered at your school, make sure to check out GOTR NOVA's interactive map to find a team near you! Girls on the Run programming is specifically designed for elementary school girls starting in grade 3 while Heart & Sole programming is created for middle school girls. Visit www.gotrnova.org.

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR CAR FREE DAY 2023

World Car Free Day 2023 will be held Friday, Sept. 22 in the metropolitan Washington region, and registration is now open. This annual event organized by COG's Commuter Connections program encourages residents, commuters, and students to choose a greener way to travel by going car free or car lite on Friday, Sept. 22. By taking the free online pledge at carfreemetrodc.org, participants contribute to reducing traf-

fic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, improve their health, and qualify for great prizes. Interested residents can simply take the pledge to reduce their single occupancy trips on Sept. 22 by choosing an alternative travel option such as public transit, bicycling, carpooling, vanpooling, scootering, walking, or simply teleworking. Each registrant will be entered into a raffle for a chance to win great prizes from this year's sponsors.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11



First Day of School

Eager students and parents line up for first day photo ops and opening of the school doors for the start the 2023 school year.



Neighboring Methodist church adds an "Amen" of well wishes for South County High School.

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/
THE CONNECTION

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"Learning knows no age limit! At OLLI Mason, our programming rewards curious individuals with fun experiences and deeper knowledge. For more than 30 years, OLLI Mason has provided its members with top-notch cultural and educational lectures as well as engaging social and trip opportunities."
— Executive Director Jennifer Disano

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Turning Trash to Energy

Trash is a massive problem.

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

For more than 30 years, travelers in the Lorton area have noticed large puffy clouds and white mist rising above a tall patterned smoke stack, visible for many miles. Most do not know what makes the clouds, who owns the building, or its purpose. Yet for that 30 plus years the facility has helped county residents protect the environment in multiple ways. The operation is Covanta Fairfax's energy resource recovery facility. And while not quite medieval alchemists' long sought transformation of base metal to gold, the plant does make electricity, and money, from garbage.

The biomass burned after removal of recyclable paper, cardboard, plastics, rubber, textiles, metals, and glass from municipal solid waste, also is defined by the Environmental Protection Agency as renewable. The Lorton plant has the capacity to process 3,000 tons of trash per day - about one million tons per year; generating 724,000 megawatts hours of renewable energy. Put in practical terms, that's enough electricity to power 68,000 homes, or charge 168,000 electric vehicles, for a year. Generating this energy through combustion reduc-

es carbon emissions by offsetting the need for energy from fossil sources, oil and coal. Covanta estimates, "Approximately, one million barrels of oil would be needed to produce the same amount of electricity produced by this facility in one year."

The plant uses a combustion process that does generate a variety of pollutants, including CO₂, heavy metals, dioxins, and particulates. However modern technology processes capture these pollutants at very high rates. At Covanta, combustion emissions, monitored closely, are at a rate of from 32 to 99 percent below allowable federal emission standards. For each ton of refuse it combusts, the landfill's potential lifecycle emissions are reduced "by one ton of net carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) [CO₂e: a measurement of the total greenhouse gases emitted] compared to landfilling." In addition to making energy, diversion of the waste from the landfill lengthens the time until our landfill reaches capacity and there is a need to find, and lose, more land to landfill use.

So, while using this method of waste management certainly ranks below trash reduction, recycling, and reuse, it is deemed by the EPA as a better method than treatment and disposal.

The Process

How does Covanta transform municipal waste, commonly called garbage or trash, to electricity?

Covanta explains, "Collection vehicles and transfer trailers deposit solid waste on the tipping floor of the facility. Front end loaders then push the waste into the refuse pit where it is fed into the boiler feed chutes with overhead grapple cranes. The refuse is then metered into the reverse reciprocating grate system, where the combustion process occurs. As a result of the combustion process, heat is released and transferred to the boiler tube surfaces, where water inside the tubes is turned into high pressure steam. The steam is then sent to a turbine/generator where mechanical energy is converted to electricity."

That electricity is sent through an on-site transformer into the wholesale grid system operated by PJM, the nation's largest electric grid operator, running the biggest wholesale power market. Traditionally, most of the power supplied to the PJM grid came from electric generators fueled by coal, natural gas, nuclear, and oil, but renewable and alternative energies are growing components of the energy mix.

History of Municipal Solid Waste Incineration

The first incinerator in the United States was built in 1885 in New York City. By the mid-20th century,

hundreds were operating with little understanding of the environmental impacts of their water discharge and air emissions. When the Clean Air Act was passed in 1970, existing incineration plants fell under new standards with restrictions on particulate emissions. Plants installed new technology, and combustion of garbage continued to grow. By the early 1990s, the United States burned more than 15 percent of all of its garbage. The majority of plants were recovering electricity as well. In the '90s, the recognized threats of mercury and dioxin emissions required retrofitting of plants with enactment of the Maximum Achievable Control Technology regulations. The local Covanta plant, built after the MACT, was built with the required technology.

Plant construction and emission technology is expensive. So landfilling in the United States is often considered a more viable option due to the low economic cost of building an MSW landfill versus an MSW combustion facility. The Lorton plant is one of 75 plants across the country in 25 states.

Virginia also has plants in Alexandria and Hampton Roads. Plants are more likely to be built in areas with dense population and limited available land.

How does the money work?

Customers pay a trash service



Vapor clouds form over Covanta's energy resource recovery facility and uniquely patterned emissions stack in Lorton.

company for curbside trash removal service. Independent collecting service companies, and Fairfax County's, trash service, pay a "tipping fee" by weight, to Covanta to drop waste at the facility. Nearby hauler routes bring trash directly from customer pick-ups, or more distant trash runs are combined at the I-66 transfer station into larger capacity trucks to run to the combustion plant. The company earns money by performing the combustion service through tipping fees, and by selling the electricity it generates but does not use for running the plant. Their third revenue stream comes from sale of metals in the commodities market,

gleaned from the post-combustion ash. The facility pays a tipping fee to the county for the remaining post-combustion ash that is deposited in the landfill.

How Big is the Trash Problem?

The United States has a large trash problem, and it's growing. "Total municipal solid waste generation increased by 93 percent since 2018, to 292 million tons per year. That's 4.9 pounds per person per day, compared to 2.7 pounds in Sweden, and 3.8 pounds in Germany," according to the University of



Overhead grapple cranes operate on sliding gantries moving large quantities of trash to begin the combustion process.

Michigan's Center for Sustainable Systems. Recycling and composting is about 32 percent of recovered "municipal solid waste" which diverts 93.9 tons from landfill and combustion. Virginia's processed municipal solid waste rose slightly in 2021 to 10.7 million tons; also handling 4 million tons from out of the state. The local landfill in Lorton, which serves mainly as a recycling and disposal center since the Covanta plant processes local municipal solid waste, has an expected remaining life of 29.7 years. Fairfax County is ahead of many municipalities since only 18 percent of cities have curbside recycling programs to separate items like glass

and compostable materials before a recycling plant's single stream.

What More Can Be Done

Each household contributes substantially through efforts to separate recycling items including cans, glass, newspapers, plastics, cardboard, yard debris, and food waste, to keep those materials out of our landfills. More separation effort is needed given Covanta's success in collecting metals from the trash stream. In 2022, they recovered enough metal for reuse to make 29,000 cars, 338 million aluminum

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

What more can be done? - Consider these consumer driven solutions

- ❖ Identify opportunities to reuse materials
- ❖ Select efficiently packaged products or buy in bulk (packaging 28% of SMW)
- ❖ Purchase products with post-consumer strategies
- ❖ Encourage companies to implement source reduction programs
- ❖ Choose reusable bottles, cups, plates, etc, over disposable (2.5 million tons of MSW)
- ❖ Plan meals efficiently and compost food scraps (21.6% of SMW)
- ❖ Advocate for 'Pay-as-you-throw' programs to charge residents for waste by weight
- ❖ Advocate for laws to encourage return of empty beverage containers

Recycling Materials Accepted

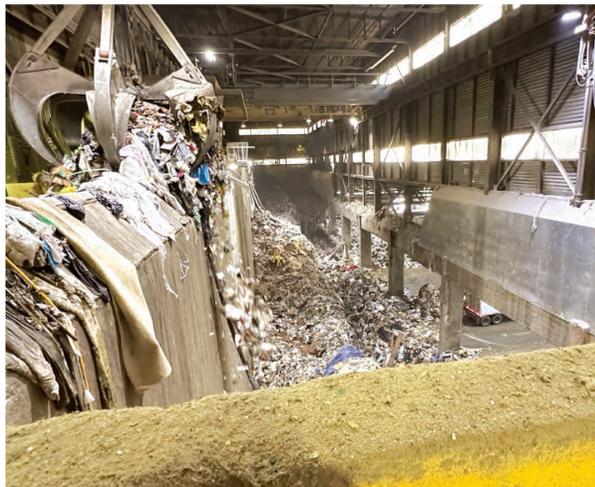
- I-66 Transfer Station/I-95 Recycling Center (Separate at appropriately labeled collection areas)
- Food waste
- Household hazardous waste
- Electronics / computer waste
- Aluminum & Steel Cans
- Plastic Bottles and Jugs
- Glass Bottles
- Mixed Paper
- Cardboard
- Antifreeze
- Used Motor Oil
- Automobile Batteries
- Metals
- Cooking Oil
- Milk & Juice Cartons
- Clean brush/yard waste (without plastic)
- Metals/white good (appliances)

cans, or to create a paper clip chain that would wrap around the earth 53 times.

The newest county separate effort is collection and composting of food waste. Collection is accepted at all county farmer's markets and at the Route 66 and I-95 transfer stations. In June, about 13,000 pounds of food waste was collected. Private companies are offering weekly, for fee, food waste curbside collection services; some provide compost return for gardening.

Composting keeps organic waste material out of the combustion and landfill streams, returning the materials to replenish soils.

As a safety note, consumers can significantly reduce hazards for the Covanta plant by disposing of lithium batteries properly, says Covanta manager Don Cammarata. Lithium batteries in the trash stream are a serious fire risk. Lithium and other batteries should be disposed of as hazardous waste at the recycling centers.



Starting on the "tipping floor," trash trucks (lower right) bring garbage from collection routes or the I-66 transfer station to the Covanta plant where the amount of trash and dust would drive any determined housekeeper insane.



In a control room reminiscent of NASA or a futuristic starship, technicians constantly monitor process flows, combustion temperatures, and pollution control equipment and assure emissions of cooled gases released through the stack stay within or below state and federal emission standards.



Cooling towers, on the left, expose water to ambient air after its use to cool furnaces that reach temperatures near 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit; some water evaporates and appears as clouds, most is recirculated to the power plant's condenser. Emissions stack, on right, releases cleaned gases generated after lime, carbon, and fabric filter out acid-forming gases and particulate matter



Covanta manager Don Cammarata, points out one of the plant's two turbine generators which convert steam to electricity.



The facility's campus includes an electricity transformer to move energy sold into the regional wholesale power market, completing the trash to energy treasure process. Shown Covanta employee Nicole Robles.

Mount Vernon District Supervisor's Office: Through an Intern's Lens

BY PAIGE HUMPHREYS

This summer, I had the opportunity to intern at Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck's office. As my last week comes to a close, I wanted to reflect and share with you my time at the District office and what I have learned.

As a public relations and political science major, I have always had an interest in government, and living so close to D.C. only increased it. I had learned about the federal and state government in school, but never anything relating to the local level. After I got this internship, I was eager to see what I had been missing. It's safe to say that this experience has opened my eyes to all that happens in local government and how involved teens and young adults can be.

Quickly I learned that I never quite grasped how big Fairfax County is and how local governing works. Interning for a Board office provided me with the knowledge about how this County functions and what my role is, not just as a resident, but as a young adult.

One of the projects that I worked on was expanding the Supervisor's social media by making posts and videos geared toward teens and young adults. This was hands down one of my favorite parts about this experience. I love all things social media, so playing around with different types of posts and videos was a highlight of this summer. It started with posting the Mount Vernon Favorites summer series and quickly morphed into making intern "day in the life" videos and much more.

Coming into this office was intimidating, I didn't know what to expect. From reading the job description, I knew it would be a fast paced environment, but I wanted to challenge myself. Team MVD welcomed me with open arms, and I have gained invaluable lessons from each one of them. It was the perfect internship experience for what I am studying in school. Each member of the team was extremely welcoming and gave me the opportunity to learn and ask questions about projects and their



Paige Humphreys

roles. I have become more well-rounded not just in my District but with local government in general.

This job gave me the opportunity to work on multiple projects, sit in on meetings with other County agencies and officials, and make connections with residents. I have had the pleasure of working with Neighborhood and Community Services, Fairfax County Department of Transportation, Fairfax County Park Authority and many more. During my time, I worked on the monthly newsletter, wrote to constituents, planned events, created posts for social media platforms and learned office skills. I know that the knowledge and advice I have taken from each staff member will greatly benefit me in my future career endeavors.

One of the greatest lessons I have learned from my internship is the art of connection. Local government is all about connecting with people and making them feel heard. In the Mount Vernon District Supervisor's office, I wit-

nessed this firsthand. Team MVD is immensely dedicated to their jobs and want to connect with each resident and community group. They are here to help you!

Over the weeks that I've been here, I have learned how easy it is for young people to get involved in local government. It is a great place to start if you are interested in your community or just want to learn more about Fairfax County in general. There are tons of meetings and events you can attend if you want to talk to officials, learn more or make your voice heard. I have found that on a local level, it is easier to make genuine connections with staff and officials than it is on a state or federal level.

As I finish my reflection, I want to thank the Mount Vernon District team for giving me this opportunity to learn more about local government and more about my community. I encourage young people and anyone in the community to connect with Team MVD through social media, the website and the monthly newsletter. All can be found on www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/

Virginia Conservation Assistance Program

Cost-share program offers up to 80 percent of eligible project funds.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Virginia Conservation Assistance Program presented by the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts is offering property owners in Fairfax County an urban cost-share program. It is also offered to independent cities not covered by a Soil and Water Conservation District, such as the City of Fairfax and the City of Alexandria.

The retrograde program offers financial and technical support for eligible best management practices in areas experiencing erosion, poor drainage, excessive rooftop runoff, steep slopes, insufficient vegetation, and more. The goal is to "slow down the water and not carry pollutants," according to Blair Blanchette, Virginia Conservation Assistance Program Coordinator.

Nonpoint source pollution runoff from lawns, paved driveways and concrete walkways from col-

lecting natural and human-made pollutants and depositing them through storm drains into groundwater, streams, lakes, rivers, wetlands, and coastal waters. Storm drains do not filter runoff.

Meghan M. McGinty, Ph.D., of Great Falls, is a botanist and ecologist. She is the creator of @CultivateNature on Instagram and is well-versed in preserving clean water sources from stormwater runoff, nurturing ecosystems, and with the program. McGinty confirmed that property owners can receive financial assistance for up to 80 percent of qualified project costs.

Among the many qualified projects are impervious surface removal and permeable pavements, conservation landscaping, rain gardens, dry wells, bioretention, and planting native flora, thereby fostering wildlife habitats.

A permeable paving surface can be pea gravel which allows stormwater to flow through it, or partially porous paver blocks spaced

Find Out More

Meghan McGinty tells it all at the Old School House at the Great Falls Grange, 9818 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, on Sept. 10 at 1 p.m. Register by September 3 at Meghan@cultivatnature.com. Visit the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program website at <https://vaswcd.org/vcap/> for more information and application.

so water drains through the areas between the blocks.

Find out more about the program, as McGinty tells it all at the Old School House at the Great Falls Grange, 9818 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, on Sept. 10 at

1 p.m. Register by September 3 at Meghan@cultivatnature.com. Visit the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program website at <https://vaswcd.org/vcap/> for more information and application.

Officer Arrested for DUI

On Aug. 19, an officer assigned to the Mount Vernon District was arrested for driving under the influence following a two-vehicle crash on Route 50 near South Manchester Street in Seven Corners. Seven occupants from the other vehicle were taken to a nearby hospital and treated for minor injuries. The officer was off-duty and driving his personal vehicle at the time of the arrest. Officer Justin Faison, sworn since 2022, has been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of an Internal Affairs Bureau investigation.

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ENTERTAINMENT

JULY AND AUGUST

Pups in the Pavilion. Wednesdays from 5-7:30 p.m. At Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. Reston Town Center Kicks Off "Pups in the Pavilion" this Summer; Pavilion transforms into a leash-free play area during the dog days of summer. Enjoy treats, toys, areas to cool off, pet-friendly giveaways, and more. Visit <https://www.restontowncenter.com/>

JULY 31 – AUGUST 28

FUNDAY MONDAY in the heart of Fairfax City! 10:30-11:15 a.m. Enjoy free family programming that's perfect for the preschool set, but is open to children of all ages! On any given Monday there will be music, movement, storytelling, crafts and more. All performances and programs are held inside Old Town Hall located at 3999 University Drive, in the heart of Fairfax City. Visit: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts> for more information. Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts.

August 28: My Gym

JULY 29 – AUGUST 26

KIDZ KORNER in Old Town Square in Fairfax City! 10:30-11:15 a.m. Join us outside for a morning of Free Family Fun on Saturdays in Old Town Square (near the Splash Pad!) located at 10415 North Street in historic Fairfax City. Visit: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts> for more information. Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Department of Parks and Recreation.

August 26: Miss Mollie's Musical Fun

THURSDAYS THRU OCT. 19

Weekly Farmers Markets. Thursdays 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. At The PARC at Tysons, 8508 Leesburg Pike, Tysons. Celebrate Fairfax, a nonprofit organization dedicated to building community in Fairfax County, is excited to announce the launch of a weekly farmers market at The PARC at Tyson. The market is run by Potomac Farm Market, which has over 20 years of experience connecting communities to local farmers and artisanal food producers. Each week, residents can expect to find seasonal fruits and vegetables, fresh cut flowers, and other locally sourced specialties.

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/>

SATURDAY/AUG. 26

East Meets West Festival. 2-8 p.m. At Arts Herndon, Arts Herndon Lawn Stage, 750 Center Street, Herndon.

Fusion of Eastern and Western music, performance and culture at Herndon's East Meets West Festival. Organizers SaRaGaMe and Arts Herndon are delighted to introduce Green and Beyond, Soil Save, Natyamargam Indian Dance, Art of Living, Drumming with Daniel, and SaRaGaMe Band with Live Music, Arts, Dance, Food, Games, Henna, meditation and more. Visit www.artsherndon.org.

SATURDAY/AUG. 26

Celebration Day. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. At Lake Accotink Park, n7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. Enjoy the summer season with free amusements, boat rentals, exciting nature hikes, workshops and fishing! Explore the trails, enjoy the scenic views and relax with your family in a beautiful park setting. This one-day celebration is free for all participants and all activities are first-come, first-serve. Call 703-569-3464.

SATURDAY/AUG. 26

David Bach Consort 7:30-9 p.m. At Arrowbrook Park Concerts, 2351 Field Point, Herndon. Featuring David Bach in concert.

SUNDAY/AUG.27

Honey Harvest Festival. 11 am. to 5 p.m. Outdoor Festival; 3 p.m. Symphony Concert. At Christ the King Lutheran Church, 10550 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Featuring local honey, petting zoo, craft vendors, baked goods and Rocklands BBQ.

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SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

The East Meets West Festival, Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 in Herndon.

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Obituary

Laurie Flint

July 17, 1960 - August 4, 2023

Dr. Laurie Ann Flint of Annandale, Va., daughter of K.S. and M.E. Flint, died 8/4/23. Dr. Flint was born 7/17/1960 and resided in Annandale, Va. Dr. Flint practiced in Bedford, Va. and N.Y. before returning to Va. She was an active member of Springfield Christian Church and a school volunteer. A private memorial service for family only will be held.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 9

Featuring Cecelia McKinley, Washington National Opera.

SEPT. 2-3

30th Annual Middle Eastern Food Festival. 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday; 12:30 to 5 p.m. Sunday. At Holy Transfiguration Church 8501 Lewinsville Road, McLean. The festival will feature authentic Middle Eastern food, pastries, music and dancing, as well as vendors, church tours, and activities for both children and adults. Smell the aromas from the outdoor grills, partake of Kibbee, Chicken Shish Kebab, Roast Lamb, Falafel, Fattoush, Hummus, and Stuffed Grape Leaves, or any number of other delicious menu choices. Be sure to save room for dessert and coffee. Some of the mouth-watering Arabic pastries include Baklawa, Maamoul, Namoura and Ghraybeh. Children can enjoy the moon bounce, face painting, pony rides and the petting zoo, as well as participate in some of the many games going on throughout the festival. Visit www.MiddleEastern-FoodFestival.com.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 3

5K Run/Walk. 9 a.m. Registration/10 a.m. Race/Walk. At Fairfax Memorial Funeral Home & Fairfax Memorial Park Cemetery, 9902 Braddock Road, Fairfax. Proceeds from the 5K will benefit the local Make-A-Wish chapter, the organization that makes wishes come true for terminally ill children in our area. Visit Fairfaxmemorialfuneralhome.com

SEPT 4-10

Fairfax City Restaurant Week. At restaurants in Fairfax City. Some 30 participating restaurants will offer prix fixe menu experiences at set prices of \$25 for brunch/lunch and \$40 for dinners. Additionally, specialty restaurants offer a Two for \$10 Deal, providing food lovers the opportunity to further explore the rich variety and eclectic flavors of Fairfax food and drink purveyors. Fairfax City Restaurant Week allows diners to experience flavors from Azerbaijan to Vietnam. The ever-popular program will feature more than 30 participants, including Audacious Ale Works, Baku Delicious, Bellissimo, Bollywood Bistro, Cameron's Chocolates, Capital Ale House, Coyote Grill and Cantina, Curry Mantra, Draper's Steak and Seafood, Dolce Vita, El Pollo Rico, Hamrock's, Jas & Fam Caribbean Flavor, Kims Pho Kitchen + Bar, Marco's Pizza, Marumen, Meokja Meokja, Merkado Mexican Grill and Bar, Ned's New England Deck, Old Dominion Pizza Company, ONE Bar and Grill, Ornerly Beer Company, Patriots Pub and Grill, PJ Skidoos, Red Hot and Blue, Roots Natural Kitchen, The Auld Shebeen, The Wine House, and Vivi Bubble Tea. Visit fairfax-cityrestaurantweek.com.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 9

Memorial Benefit Concert. 2 p.m. At Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria. Benefitting United Community and in memory of Phil Bolin, come to a Memorial Benefit Concert/Recital. Join in this enchanting performance honoring the memory of Phil Bolin featuring

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Fairfax City Restaurant week Sept. 4-10, 2023 in the City of Fairfax.

mezzo-soprano, Caroline Nielson, and pianist, Eddie Rothmel. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students. All ticket purchases are non-refundable and will be donated to support United Community. Visit unitedcommunity.org/concerts.

NOW THRU AUG. 23

Art Wednesdays. 4 p.m. - 8 p.m. Summer on The Plaza at Tysons Corner Center. Enjoy the rest of summer watching live graffiti art come every Wednesday. The Lorton Workhouse and Live Art International hosts a free event showcasing alternative art concepts for participants. All materials will be provided to engage in a drawing class, take home personalized airbrushed swag and more.

'DRIVE-IN' TO THE STARLIGHT CINEMA

Enjoy an all-new season of family-friendly entertainment at the Starlight Cinema at Trinity Centre, in Centreville, every Saturday evening in August. Come to watch the movies "drive-in" style from your car or bring chairs and blankets to watch from the lawn. As part of the Summer Entertainment Series, the Starlight Cinema brings the community together for wholesome family entertainment with live pre-show entertainment and feature film after dark. The schedule features:
 Aug. 26: "DC League of Super-Pets" at 8 p.m. (pre-show by Marsha and the Positrons at 7 p.m.)
 Grab your picnic and enjoy the free entertainment that your family will remember. Gates open at 6 p.m., so come early to get a good spot. The Starlight Cinema is hosted at Trinity Centre, 5860 Trinity Parkway, in Centreville. For details, visit the Summer Entertainment Series' Starlight Cinema webpage.

FREE CONCERT SERIES AT BURKE LAKE PARK

Every Wednesday night from June 28th through August 23rd at 7p.m., Supervisor Pat Herrity (Springfield District) along with the Fairfax County Park Authority will be hosting the fifth annual Free Concerts in the Park series at Burke Lake Park. The series has expanded to nine shows with pop, rock and R&B music. Peterson's Ice Cream, 2 Silos beer and food trucks will be on site at all concerts. Attendees are encouraged to bring blankets and/or a lawn chair.

AUGUST 23 Riptide

SATURDAY CONCERTS AT WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER

9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton • 7:30 p.m. Aug. 26, The United States Army Field Band Six-String Soldiers (Country)

ARTS IN THE PARKS

Experience free, fun, family-oriented alternatives to cartoons and video games with performances in parks this summer. Part of the Park Authority's Summer Entertainment Series, Arts in the Parks entertains children, teaches the importance of protecting our natural resources, introduces them to live entertainment in an informal, kid-friendly atmosphere, and forges a connection between kids and parks.

Don't miss memorable shows starring The Great Zucchini, Marsha and the Positrons, Mr. Lilo Gonzalez, 123 Andres, Groovy Nate, Uncle Devin and Geoff Marsh! Free performances featuring comedy, children's songs, magic, puppets and juggling are hosted at the following locations:

- Burke Lake Park Amphitheater (7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station), Saturdays at 10 a.m.
- Frying Pan Park Visitor Center Pavilion (2739 West Ox Road, Herndon), Wednesdays at 10 a.m.
- E.C. Lawrence Park Amphitheater (5040 Walney Road, Chantilly), Saturdays at 10 a.m.
- Mason District Park Amphitheater (6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale), Saturdays at 10 a.m.
- Trinity Centre (5860 Trinity Parkway, Centreville), Saturdays in August at 7 p.m. (followed by outdoor movies)
- Wakefield Park, in front of the Rec Center, (8100 Braddock Road, Annandale), Saturdays at 10 a.m.

For a complete calendar of summer performances for Arts in the Parks, visit the Summer Entertainment Series Arts in the Parks webpage.

9-11 REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

Great Falls Freedom Memorial. On Monday, Sept. 11, at 7 p.m., the annual 9-11 Remembrance Ceremony will be held at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial to honor the six residents of Great Falls and all others who lost their lives and suffered in the attacks and their aftermath. The event will feature patriotic songs, a Boy Scout color guard, a keynote speech by Great Falls native Vitale Christy, and a candlelight vigil. The Freedom Memorial is located behind the Great Falls Library at 9830 Georgetown Pike. Updates to the schedule will be posted at www.gffreedom.org.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 4

ST. MARK'S ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM FALL 2023 TERM

English classes for all levels of English learners are offered in person at St. Mark Catholic Church, 9970 Vale Rd., Vienna, from 8-9:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning Sept. 26 through Dec. 5, 2023. Extra classes in Conversation, Writing,

and Citizenship are offered 7-7:45 p.m. the same evenings.

Registration in person for the Fall 2023 term is Tuesday, Sept. 19, and Thursday, Sept. 21 at St. Mark. English Classes, offered at all levels, are \$25 per term. Conversation, Writing, and Citizenship classes are \$10 per term. Cost of the textbook is extra. Call Monica at 703-980-9380, or visit www.stmarkesl.org or email stmarkesl@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

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

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us 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, 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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And So "The Dance Begins"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

So said my roofing contractor when I told him of the total amount my homeowner's policy/company has agreed to compensate us for the damage to our house caused when a tree crashed onto my roof on July 14. Not that I have much experience with such matters, but even though the adjuster was as understanding and reassuring as a homeowner in distress would hope, I realized after that initial Sat. morning "adjustment" when he arrived at my home and assessed the damage, that it matters less what he says and more what he/the company does (as in valuing the agreed-upon repairs/replacement and compensating me reasonably). At this juncture, all we do is wait and see. However, it doesn't make it any less frustrating. In fact, it kind of makes it worse. I don't want to push, or should I pull, or vice versa.

Sure enough, 15 days after filing the claim (Maryland law mandates that claims must be paid/settled within 15 days), I received a phone call from my adjuster (finally) advising me of the settlement. Given what we all had discussed on that first Saturday – and the damage done: one entire roof including gutters and downspouts, two central air-conditioning units, exterior whole house painted, one interior room painted, two rooms of wooden floors refinished, a new chandelier and associated electrical work to install/repair the chandelier and related switches in the den, and a 6 x 9 Oriental-type rug and pad, all adversely affected by the water leaking through the ceiling/electrical fixture – in Montgomery County Maryland in 2023, and \$38,500 "ain't gonna cut it." (Exactly what my wife, Dina said to me on concerning our presumptive fancy dinner plans to celebrate our 10th wedding anniversary all those many years ago.)

So now, apparently, the burden falls on me, according to my roofing contractor, to up the ante and present my evidence (estimates, and invoices already billed/paid – by us) to the adjuster/company and hopefully prove my loss. I didn't think the financial resolution was as simple as the adjuster seemed to indicate/say during his on-site visit on Sat. July 21, but his manner was so matter-of-fact/agreeable that a part of me was fairly hopeful/convicted that what has actually happened: very little, and an awfully low settlement to boot was not inevitable. Live and learn, or buyer beware; I'm not sure which. But I fear I may soon find out.

Though I'm hoping (expecting not so much) that once the company has reviewed the actual estimates and invoices I will have supplied, that all will be right in my homeowner's policy's world and the company will have no contractual recourse other than to pay what I've been led to believe – by experts, that I'm due. And the process/negotiation likely occurring from now until the damages are fairly valued and settled to my financial satisfaction (as in I and our house are made whole) are likely to be characterized by a series of ups and downs, and fits and starts; all absolutely consistent, as it so happens, with the last 14 and half years of my life as a cancer patient undergoing treatment for an originally-diagnosed-as-terminal, stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer. As such, if anybody can assimilate what I presume lays ahead – with respect to this moving-target-type homeowner's insurance claim, it would be me, my oncologist's self-proclaimed "third miracle." I have not only been there and done that, but I am still doing it going on nearly 15 years. I might even say that this kind of uncertainty is exactly how I roll. Still, I never completely know if I'll be rolling over a cliff as in cancer patients are rarely given guarantees about their future. In fact, my oncologist is usually hesitant to even discuss scenarios; he'd rather wait and see and then assess whatever presents. It's not ideal, but as I've said many times before: "It's a living and it sure beats the alternative."

However, I do have my limitations and the fewer hurdles and blips as possible would be preferred. I don't exactly have an unlimited capacity for such pursuits. I use most of it to withstand the vagaries of my current thyroid cancer diagnosis. After all, I didn't cause the tree to fall on my house anymore than I caused my original diagnosis of lung cancer by smoking cigarettes or generally neglecting my health, et cetera. Nevertheless, as much as one must accommodate a cancer diagnosis, I really don't want to do the same concerning a homeowner's claim. To the company/adjuster: please don't make a bad situation worse. Follow the evidence and follow the money. I'm simply a claimant. Don't make me a victim too.

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



The inside was full of activity on opening morning.



At the register, Jennifer Contreras holds the hummingbird cookie.

New Crumbl Cookies Opens For Cookie Monsters of Kingstowne

For the tollhouse fans it's just how the cookie crumbles.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

When Jennifer Contreras held a cookie from the ovens of Crumbl Cookies in Kingstowne, it was clear that these cookies were a little different from the tollhouse variety that Mom cooked back in the day. Contreras had one they call the “hummingbird,” cookie “topped with pecan, banana and pineapple,” she said.

Pineapple on a chocolate chip cookie? Is this an offshoot of the pineapple-on-a-pizza

controversy?

“It tastes good in my opinion,” she said.

Crumbl opened on Friday morning, Aug. 18 and when the doors opened at 8 a.m. Contreras confirmed that there was a line out front. The hummingbird is just one of their 200+ flavors which rotate every week so the cookie fans from the area won't get bored. In addition to the hummingbird, Crumbl has the milk chocolate chip, cookies & cream, snickerdoodle and caramel shortbread. They are rich in flavor and rich in calories but those adhering to a strict diet are generally not looking for the latest cookie shop either.

Maddie Mickey and Potter Hopfensperger



The Crumbl logo.

came in from their home in Alexandria for the grand opening. Maddie got the chocolate chip, hummingbird, brownie and snickerdoodle. “It will be my breakfast,” she said. They found out about the opening on the internet. “We Googled it and thought it would be good,” she added.

Bakers Dozen

Crumbl got their start a few years ago when two cousins, Jason McGowan and Sawyer Hemsley, teamed up and started experimenting with cookie recipes. After developing the perfect recipe, the duo and their family opened Crumbl's first store in Logan, Utah in 2017 while Sawyer was at-

tending Utah State University, company information said.

The Kingstowne store is a local franchise owned by Joel and Deenie Frary. “We just knew Crumbl would be perfect for this area,” they said. “Our family spent several years living just minutes from Kingstowne so we knew that it would be a hit. As natives of Northern Virginia, we love this community and are excited to bring our delicious cookies to new and familiar customers.”

This location is on a strip of stores in the center with a few food places that do not fall in the health food category. A few doors down are Subway, Dairy Queen and Chick-fil-A. Right next door though is Club Pilates to burn it all off. On Crumbl opening day, Danielle Bierzynski was in the Pilates lobby waiting for her class to start. “Everything in moderation, a cookie after a workout is fine,” she said.



The large chocolate chip variety goes for \$4.68.



Alexandria residents Maddie Mickey and Potter Hopfensperger with their cookie stash.