

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

OCTOBER 26, 2023

## American Horticultural Society Gala Raises \$350,000



PHOTOS CREDITS: SANDY SCHAEFFER PHOTOGRAPHY

From left, Young Friends After Party Co-Chair Pamela Wurst-Vetrini, Marna Ringel, Paul Miller, AHS Board Member and Gala Chair Laura Dowling, Andy Hopper, David Anthony Parker, II and Young Friends After Party Chair Cameron Hardesty.

### Celebrating 50 Years at River Farm.

**B**ouquets of vibrant flowers outshined the grey clouds and rain at the American Horticultural Society's annual Gala on Sept. 23. Despite the inclement weather, over 250 members, neighbors, elected officials, horticultural experts and gardening enthusiasts from across the nation joined the AHS in celebrating 50 years at River Farm. Themed "Simple Pleasures of the Garden," the magical night raised \$350,000 for River Farm's maintenance, critical improvements, beautification, and preservation and reaffirmed AHS's enduring commitment to its beloved historic headquarters.

Led by Gala Chair and AHS Board Member Laura Dowling and Gala Co-Chairs Cindy Conner and AHS Board Member Amy Golden, the celebratory evening featured a cocktail reception, magnificent dinner, and dancing. Renowned designer, author and philanthropist Charlotte Moss served as the Gala Honorary Chair and was awarded the prestigious AHS National Achievement Award, and Scott Arboretum Director Claire Sawyers was awarded the AHS Liberty Hyde Bailey Award, AHS's highest award for significant life-



From left, Holliday Hurd, Kenneth Hill, Barbara Beckwith.

time achievements across numerous horticultural fields. Emcee Barry Dixon skillfully conducted the night's activities, and auction host and local Alexandrian Bill Coffield's high energy and humor kept the audience entertained, resulting in enthusiastic participation during the live auction and paddle raise. For the first time, the Gala featured an After Party, hosted by Young Friends After Party Chair Cameron Hardesty and Co-Chair Pamela Wurst Vetrini, concluding the evening on a sweet note with desserts and dancing.

Suzanne Laporte, AHS President and CEO, expressed her gratitude for the overwhelming support and enthusiasm of the attendees. The gala "brought together individuals

who share our passion for horticulture and the beauty of River Farm. The funds raised will support the continued maintenance and preservation of the community's cherished River Farm."

River Farm is located on 25 acres of George Washington's original farmland along the Potomac River. Through a visionary gift of \$1 million in 1973 from philanthropist Enid Annenberg Haupt, who loved gardens and horticulture, AHS found a home where it could live its mission. The property, with stunning gardens, historic buildings, and breathtaking views, serves as a hub for horticultural education and inspiration. The Gala highlighted the importance of preserving and enhancing this



Margot and Gates Shaw pose with "Teal," a 1963 Ford F100 Fleetside transformed for the Gala. Teal's appearance was made possible by Jamie and Anne Craig and Beechtree Group Conservation Consultants.



From left, Emcee Barry Dixon, Gala Chair Laura Dowling, and FLOWERS Founder and Editor-In-Chief Margot Shaw took a moment to stop and smell the beautiful flowers.



Claire Sawyers received the 2023 AHS Liberty Hyde Bailey Award in recognition of her transformative work at the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College where she served as director for more than 30 years.

unique historical and horticultural gem as a cornerstone of the community.

Additional notable attendees included: Society of American Florists CEO Kate Penn, Rizzoli publisher Charles Meirs, FLOWER Magazine Founder and Editor-in-Chief Margot Shaw, Historic Alexandria Foundation Executive Director Mary Sterling, and AHS

Board Members Scott Plein (Chair) Doug Barker, Skipp Calvert, Tim Conlon, Holly Shimizu, Phil Tabas and Marcia Zech. Local officials attending included State Senator Scott Surovell, State Delegates David Bulova and Paul Krizek, Franconia District Supervisor Rodney Lusk, and Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck.

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# NEWS

## Storck Shows Off Mount Vernon Via the Bicycle

Tour de Mount Vernon riders greeted with sunshine and blue skies.

By MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

Riders were greeted with blue skies on the morning of Saturday, Oct. 21 when they set out to highlight the local bicycle network on Supervisor Dan Storck's eighth annual bicycle Tour de Mount Vernon.

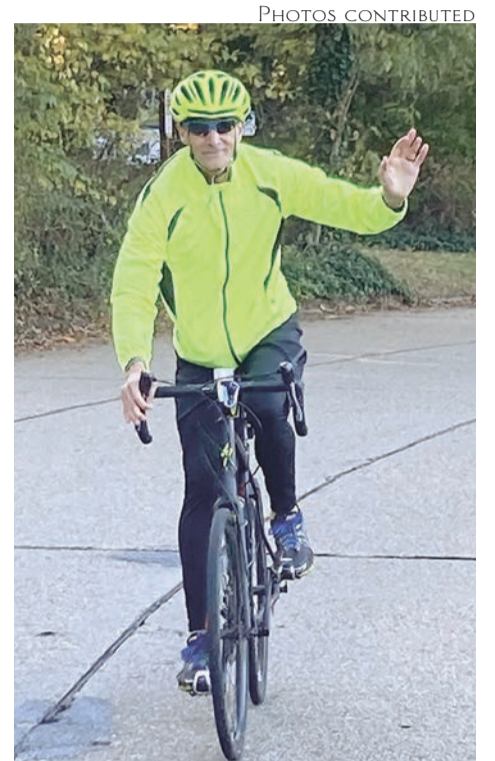
This year, officials temporarily closed a portion of the George Washington Memorial Parkway for the ride and riders got views of the Potomac River as they pedaled north. The bicyclists traveled on a combination of paved roads and trails that had some challenging sections. Ride monitors and Fairfax County Police were out along the route to help with directions and keep everyone safe.

The long route was 40 miles while the shorter route was 24 miles. Highlights included River Farm, Gum Springs, Fort Belvoir, the National Museum of the US Army, Woodlawn and Pope-Leighey House, Fort Hunt Park, Hollin Hills and Dyke Marsh.

This year, George Washington Memorial Parkway superintendent Charles Cuvelier was there for the ride.



At Mount Vernon Estate, cyclists get a rest after the Tour de Mount Vernon Saturday, Oct. 21.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Supervisor Dan Storck has been organizing this ride for years; the 8th annual Tour de Mount Vernon was Saturday, Oct. 21.

## Supervisor Candidates at Chamber Breakfast

Discuss economic development, crime, affordable housing.

Local Supervisor candidates gathered at the October Business Breakfast, hosted by the Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce to discuss their platform and issues facing Fairfax County.

Stating that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has more direct influence on the daily operation of businesses in the county than any other elected body, Mark Viani, chair of the legislative affairs committee, introduced the candidates.

### Franconia District

Candidates Paul Beran (R) and Mark Welch (I) are challenging incumbent Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D).

When asked what the most important issue is facing the district, Supervisor Lusk said finding good talent for businesses and people to fill workforce vacancies was his top issue. "We have over 100,000 job vacancies in Northern Virginia, 70,000 of which are in Fairfax County."

Lusk also said access to capital was an important issue. "Companies need access to dollars to grow and expand," Lusk said.

Mark Welch stated that the biggest problem facing the area was housing affordability, mentioning how redevelopment and more focus on mixed-use developments with housing can help.

Paul Beran also echoed that housing affordability is the biggest issue as well as



Candidates for the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors are (left to right) Richard Hayden, Albert Vega, Corazon Foley, Christopher Morgan, Mark Welch, Dan Storck, Paul Beran.

businesses being able to raise capital. He said the current county strategy of replacing retail areas with apartments needs to be reconsidered as many local retailers are thriving.

On the Richmond Highway widening, all three candidates spoke about the importance of mitigating disruptions for businesses and coordinating with VDOT and FCDOT

for a smooth process. Beran favored providing incentives to help businesses improve the appearance of their buildings.

### Mount Vernon District

For Mount Vernon, Richard Hayden (R), Christopher Morgan (I), and incumbent Supervisor Dan Storck (D) were all in attendance.

Christopher Morgan opened with concern about crime in the area, mentioning recent shootings and robberies, and saying Fairfax County leadership did not support local law enforcement when carrying out their responsibilities.

Citing police statistics, Morgan said that one-half of the murders in Fairfax County take place in Mount Vernon, along with one-third of the assaults and one-third of kidnappings. Crime can prevent potential businesses from investing in the area, Morgan said.

Morgan also questioned the location of the proposed homeless shelter which will be near West Potomac High School and within a mile radius of eight schools. He expressed concern that some drug or sex offenders live in homeless shelters.

In response, Storck said that people are not worried about crime but are moving into the Mount Vernon and Richmond Highway area, referencing how high housing prices along the Potomac River reflect that increase, which means there is a need for more affordable housing.

"We are the safest jurisdiction of our size in the country ... that's a fact," Storck said. He said Mount Vernon has had a decrease in crime over the past 9 months because issues are being addressed and while we still do not have the amount of police officers we would like, our police officers are some of the highest paid in the area.

SEE SUPERVISOR CANDIDATES, PAGE 5



Franconia District Supervisor Rodney Lusk with Lady Sharron Dreyer and Lord Dr. Bryon L. Garner.



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The Gum Springs Historical Society and Museum would like to thank last year's sponsors of the Gum Springs 189 Anniversary Dinner. This year's event promises to be even more enlightening as we examine, and celebrate the oldest African American Community in Fairfax County Virginia, a window into African American History. George Washington's Mount Vernon has once again partnered with the Gum Springs Historical Society and Museum for this year's Event. The evening events will start at 6:00 P.M. ending at 9:00 P.M.

For Sponsorships info and Tickets for 2023 Dinner : gshsfva@gmail.com or call (703) 799-1198 (703) 340-6051- gshsfva@gmail.com

The Society is trying to make it just a little easier for you to buy your 190th Anniversary Gum Springs Dinner Tickets, When you point your camera at the QR Code, it shows a link to eventbrite, on which you can click to get to the dinner tickets.



# 2023 Lords and Ladies Fairfax Celebrated

The 2023 Salute to Lord and Lady was held at the Fairfax County Government Center on Tuesday, Oct. 3. Each Fairfax County Board of Supervisor recognized two honorees from their district who have demonstrated exceptional volunteer service, heroism, community spirit, or other special accomplishment.

### MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT Lady Shirley Short

Shirley Short, or as we call her – our Volunteer Extraordinaire – is an amazing asset to Team MVD and Mount Vernon residents. Shirley is a retired Fairfax County firefighter and played an integral role helping residents during the 2006 Huntington flood. Shirley works tirelessly in assisting with the many community events we host each year, volunteering thousands of hours. To name a few, Shirley helps lead the Ides of Bark Dog Festival each year and single-handedly organized a new addition to our Town Meeting – Taste of Mount Vernon. Shirley's dedication, willingness to jump in at all times and her can-do attitude makes a difference for all of us.

### Lord Ron Fitzsimmons, Alice's Kids

Ron Fitzsimmons and his sister Laura Fitzsimmons Peters created Alice's Kids to anonymously help children in need in our community, and across the country. Alice's Kids provides gift cards to teachers and counselors who have identified a child's needs. The teacher then gives the gift card to a parent or caregiver who takes the child to buy the needed item, or is able to purchase it and surprise the child. Through Alice's Kids, Ron has helped put smiles on the faces of thousands of children. It is efforts like this that make Ron deserving of this recognition. <https://aliceskids.org/>

### FRANCONIA DISTRICT Lady Sharron Dreyer

Sharron Dreyer has been a Franconia district resident since 1972. She is a registered nurse and was a founding staff member of Hospice of Northern Virginia (now Capital Caring). She then served as Director of Senior and Specialized Housing for Fairfax Dept of Housing for 16 years and has served



Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck with Lady Shirley Short, retired firefighter and Volunteer Extraordinaire, and Lord Ron Fitzsimmons, founder of Alice's Kids.

as the Franconia district representative to the Commission on Aging since 2014. Sharron is an elder in her church, a volunteer with a variety of service organizations, and has served on both the Virginia Housing Study Commission and the Fairfax County Communitywide Housing Strategic Plan Task Force. She has resided at Greenspring since 2011 where she has discovered working with clay and is a co-leader of the Greenspring Pottery Workshop.

### Lord Dr. Bryon L. Garner

A veteran of the U.S. Navy, Bryon Garner has lived in Alexandria VA since 2019. Bryon exemplifies a culture of service having served on the Fairfax County Redistricting committee in 2021. In 2020, he served on the City of Alexandria Commission on HIV/AIDS Awareness and since 2022, he has served as a board member of the Police Civilian Review Panel. Bryon is a 2023 graduate of the Union Institute & University PhD program where his research focuses on patriotism and veteran identity. Bryon and his wife of seven years, Dr. Sidra Smith, are active members of Metropolitan AME church in Washington DC.

# Supervisor Candidates At Chamber Breakfast

FROM PAGE 3

Widening Richmond Highway and the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project were hot topics. Storck said the widening of Richmond Highway is essential because of the continuous increase in population and said these projects are “transforming our community for the better.”

Morgan said that he is very skeptical about the BRT improvements, calling it the “billion-dollar line to nowhere” and mentioning how many of the people along Richmond Highway are in the trades and need to drive their vehicles in order to pick up supplies, carry tools and materials, or that workers in service industries don’t want to spend three hours every day commuting in public transportation.

Hayden said he is not excited about the road widening and said it might have made sense prior to covid, but now there’s a different work pattern and different kind of traffic. He pointed out that there are currently 36,000 riders daily on Metro buses that serve Richmond Highway and when the cost is broken down, that’s about \$50,000 per rider for the road widening improvements which is money that may be better spent on teachers and classrooms.

Fairfax County now has the option of implementing a meals tax without a public referendum as was required in the past. Morgan has stated he is against a meals tax asking if it’s really necessary on top of the current sales tax. Storck says he is in favor of the

meals tax and believes it will help local restaurants. Hayden wants to lower taxes across the board, including taxes on gas, bags, meals, and property.

### Springfield District

The Chamber welcomed candidates Corazon Foley (I) and Albert Vega (D) to the breakfast. Supervisor Herrity was unable to attend due to a scheduling conflict.

Foley spoke about the importance of seniors and the need to provide more services for the increasing number of seniors in Fairfax County.

Vega said that as a Hispanic he could understand and serve the growing number of Hispanics in the community. He said it was time for a change in the Springfield District.

### Braddock District

Without his opponent present, Supervisor Walkinshaw provided an update on Lake Accotink and the different proposals for the future of the lake. He said that he is committed to working with the community to find the best possible way forward for this important resource.

*Election Day is Nov. 7 with early voting open now thru November 4. Confirm your precinct and voting location using the Department of Elections Citizen Portal <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation>*

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# Policy on Transgender Kids Supports Parent Involvement

BY KRISTEN AMUNDSON

One of the big talking points for the Republican-endorsed candidates for school board this year is the charge that Fairfax County is engaged in a deliberate attempt to drive a wedge between kids who identify as transgender and their parents. Many early voting locations now include a sign reading, "Never trust anyone who says, 'Don't tell your parents.'"

It's a clever political catchphrase. But it is utterly incorrect.

Earlier this year, Fairfax County adopted Regulation 2603.2, "Gender-expansive and Transgender Students." The regulation itself was a response to a 2020 Virginia law requiring the Department of Education to "develop and make available" model policies regarding the treatment of transgender students in schools. The law also required that "Each school board shall adopt policies that are consistent with but may be more comprehensive than the model policies developed by the Department of Education."

In developing its own policies and regulations, FCPS did what it does best: it consulted experts. From experts in child development to legal authorities, the school division worked to create a policy that would, in the words of Superintendent Michelle Reid, foster "a safe, supportive, welcoming, and inclusive school environment for all students and staff, including our transgender and gender expansive students and staff."

Parent involvement is integral to the policy. Section IV (E) states it most clearly: "Every effort shall be made to encourage and support communication between gender-expansive or transgender students and the student's parents. Schools may offer to meet jointly with the parents and the student at school."

Parent involvement is mentioned several other times throughout the regulation. FCPS

clearly had read the research, which sums up several studies by noting: "Parental support is a protective factor for transgender and gender diverse youth." The FCPS policy is research-based and built on the principle that students and their parents are the ones who should make decisions.

There is, however, one section of the regulation that deals with how schools can help students whose parents are not supportive. Section (B)(5) says, "School staff should provide information and referral to resources to support a student in coping with a lack of support at home and seek opportunities to foster a better relationship between the student and their family."

That's it. The language that's being described as encouraging students not to tell their parents actually calls for the schools to "seek opportunities to foster a better relationship between the student and their family."

It's language that needs to be there. Because the reality is that for some small group of FCPS students, including some transgender students, parental support is not a reality. And that can lead to harsh consequences.

That's a lesson I learned very early in my teaching career, when my classroom management skills were, to be honest, a little shaky. One day, a kid simply lost it in my class. His behavior ended up making it impossible for anyone to learn anything for the rest of the period.

After class, I told him, "You know I have to call your parents." He looked dejected and asked if I really had to. I told him I did. That night, I spoke with his dad, who told me he would take care of it.

The next day, when the student walked into my classroom, he had a black eye and bruises on his face and arms. I asked him what happened and he said, "This is how my dad takes care of things." Other kids in the class later said

to me, "Ms. Amundson, we could have told you that."

I'm sharing that story because it reflects a reality for some students in our schools. Some kids live with abusive parents and stepparents. It's why laws now make teachers "mandated reporters" for child abuse. It's why at least one School Resource Officer I knew went to court to testify in support of a high school girl whose stepfather was sexually abusing her.

And it's why FCPS provides a way in Regulation 2603.2 to support students even when their parents do not. School policies simply acknowledge the reality that not every student is safe at home.

So why are the Republican endorsed candidates parroting this line? Most likely, the reason is politics. For a small number of infrequent voters (those who do not vote every year), even the word "transgender" triggers an increase in the likelihood to vote.

We saw the same thing in 2021, when political activist parents accused the schools in Loudoun County of teaching "CRT," even though that wasn't true. Later, exit polls showed that while the charge didn't make much of an impact in Loudoun, it juiced turnout in the far southwest — mostly among older, Republican, voters.

So maybe these Republican-endorsed candidates (the ones who say they are "independent" when asked) are just taking one for the team.

But you don't have to. Read the regulation yourself and you'll see that FCPS, instead of working to divide parents and their kids, is trying to help students and families as they deal with a very challenging issue.

*Kris Amundson is a former Board Chair of the Fairfax County School Board, a former member of the Virginia House of Delegates, and the former CEO of the National Association of State Boards of Education.*

## What is on the Ballot?

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK the Commonwealth.

### Fiscal accountability is on the ballot:

The \$5.1 billion surplus last fiscal year in Virginia was a sign of both prudent fiscal management and critical federal assistance. Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R), with pressure from Democrats in the Virginia Senate, wisely decided to allocate \$3.7 billion in new spending and to cut taxes by \$1.05 billion. This 3-to-1 spending-to-tax cut ratio demonstrates a commitment to investing in our future. The surplus in the first quarter of the new fiscal year shows that Virginia is thriving economically. The upcoming election will determine whether this responsible approach to managing any excess funds continues, with Democrats prioritizing wise and prudent investments for

### Investment in the labor force is on the ballot:

Approximately 40% of Virginians now live in areas that have approved collective bargaining for public employees. This decision empowers workers and ensures they have a voice in their workplaces. It does not divert public funds but rather supports the rights of employees to negotiate for fair wages. In areas like Fairfax, Loudoun, Alexandria, and Portsmouth, the cost is a worthwhile investment in workers' well-being. This important trend promotes higher wages, improved working conditions, and a stronger, more inclusive labor movement. Governor Youngkin's opposition to collective bargaining puts the rights of workers at risk.

### Your right to drive an electric vehicle is on the ballot:

Virginia's mandate that electric vehicles (EVs) must make up a significant percentage of automak-

ers' sales within a few years is a forward-thinking approach. While EVs have the benefit of federal tax

SEE KRIZEK, PAGE 7

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A Connection Newspaper



# Krizek

FROM PAGE 6

incentives, more importantly, they are a step toward environmental sustainability and reduced reliance on environmentally harmful fossil fuels. Governor Youngkin's efforts to repeal this mandate hinder progress toward cleaner and more sustainable transportation options.

**Abortion access is on the ballot:**

Virginia is the last southern state without severe restrictions on abortion. Should Republicans take con-

trol of the House of Delegates, we can expect that they will pass an arbitrary 15-week or less abortion ban. Governor Youngkin has stated that he would "gleefully" sign any such legislation that comes across his desk. In fact, he issued a press release last week comparing Virginians' rights to seek abortion care with the ability to purchase a gasoline-powered vehicle. Virginians need the freedom to make their own informed healthcare decisions.

**Reliable, affordable, clean energy is on the ballot:**

The Virginia Clean Energy Act sets important targets for renewable energy, fostering a more sustainable future. The transition to renewable energy creates jobs and mitigates the harmful effects of carbon emissions. Governor Youngkin's efforts to repeal the act are regressive and risk further environmental degradation.


**The future of public education is on the ballot:**

Virginia's education system faces significant challenges, with reports of learning loss and dispar-

ities among students. The gap in academic performance, especially among minority students, is a critical issue. Parents have valid concerns about what their children are taught, school safety, and transparency in decision-making. But Governor Youngkin's pledges to "defend parents' rights" and support school vouchers do not address these challenges effectively or fairly. Focusing on increasing funding for public schools, expanding early childhood education, and promoting equity and inclusion, offers a more comprehensive solution to these pressing issues.

The results of this election will determine the direction Virginia takes on many crucial issues, including responsible fiscal management, expanding workers' rights, sustainable transportation, abortion access, energy policy, and excellence in education. The choice between Governor Youngkin's MAGA-like approach, which hinders economic progress for all, and the progressive vision of Democrats running for the General Assembly will shape the future of Virginia. Your vote

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- ✓ **Restore commonsense discipline.** Schools must be safe. We should expect good behavior of all students. Safer classrooms help retain good teachers.
- ✓ **Respect parents.** Parents have right to instill and nurture values and beliefs in their own children and to make decisions consistent with their customs and faith.



Vote Early: Now - Nov. 4; Election Day: Nov. 7

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MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE ♦ OCTOBER 26 - NOVEMBER 1, 2023 ♦ 7

## CANDIDATE CONNECTION

# District Members, Board of Supervisors

## Braddock, Franconia, Mount Vernon, Providence & Springfield Districts.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

**T**he Nov. 7 election includes the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Nine members are elected by voters in local districts to serve four-year terms. Twenty-one district candidates are in the race, with seven incumbents.

Candidates were asked to provide a short bio and share a story of their interaction with a voter that led them to a commitment to take action, with a tight word limit. District races are in alphabetical order. Candidate responses are printed in the order they appear on the ballot.

For information on how and where to vote, including voting early, see <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/>

As of Monday, Oct. 23, 2023, 35,669 Fairfax County voters have already voted, out of more than 714,000 active voters on the rolls. More than 670,000 active voters have yet to vote. If you are one of those who have yet to vote, make a plan to get out and vote, and bring friends and family along.

You can vote early in person until Nov. 4.

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If you received a ballot in the mail, you must bring it with you and surrender it to vote in person

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❖ Dropboxes are available during satellite operating hours

❖ Email [earlyvoting@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:earlyvoting@fairfaxcounty.gov) with questions about early voting

Or vote at your assigned polling place on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 7.

## Franconia District Supervisor Candidates

### Paul F. Beran (R)

I'm Paul Beran, 69 years young, and a candidate for Supervisor, Franconia District. I'm a home-loving family man whose entire life has been dedicated to serving God, family, and community. My campaign strategy is "Beran Good News!" That is, I wish to be the "Bearer of Good News" for the people of Franconia that provides viable solutions to important issues without condemning those who may have caused, exacerbated, or perpetuated the problems and without raising taxes.

Professionally, I had a half-century career in marketing, supporting thousands of businesses, large and small, and understanding their concerns, desires, and needs. My campaign



Paul F. Beran

strategy is to work with others as I worked with entrepreneurs, identifying with them.

Response: Cost of living — Shortly after filing, I started receiving calls from constituents complaining they could no longer afford to live here despite already paying off their home. Property and vehicle taxes are too high; utilities and the overall cost of living have grown unmanageable. They asked me to do something and provide viable solutions to important issues without raising taxes.

Lower taxes — I've discovered "There's a Marketing Solution to Virtually Every Problem." Someone is willing to help financially, provided a benefit is built for them. You just need to be a little creative. That's what I do. I will always explore all other revenue sources first. My idea of "affordable housing" is to keep the cost of living in our district low enough that people don't feel the need to move away.

A safer place to live — We're down by 200 officers; police officers left their jobs during the current supervisor's watch. My job as supervisor will be to get those numbers back where they need to be without raising taxes. One way is to convince HOA's to lower or eliminate HOA fees for active duty law enforcement. This immediately raises their income and adds 24-hour security to our most densely populated communities. We need a prosecutor who prosecutes, not criminals who go to repeat their crimes. Prosecutors who do not do their job will pay me a political price. I'll call them out every time. [www.berangoodnews.com](http://www.berangoodnews.com)

### Rodney L. Lusk (D)

Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk was sworn in as Fairfax County Franconia District Supervisor in January 2020 and is the first African American male elected to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

He currently serves as Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, Vice Chairman of the Personnel and Reorganization Committee, member of the Audit Committee, member of the Successful Children and Youth Policy Team, and Secretary Treasurer for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

Prior to being elected as Franconia District Supervisor, Rodney served 32 years as a Fairfax County employee, which included roles delivering human services along the Historic Richmond Highway Corridor, serving on the staff of two former Board of Supervisors, and as National Marketing Director for the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. Additionally, Rodney served as a member of the Fairfax County Planning Commission and the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Lusk's priorities while in office include opening a workforce development center on Route One, reforming police policy, addressing the county's affordable housing crisis, improving our pedestrian and bicycle safe-



Rodney L. Lusk

ty network, and implementing a bus rapid transit project on Richmond Highway. In addition, his office coordinated with Fairfax County government agencies, local nonprofits, and Franconia District residents to organize food distributions across the community in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, over three million pounds of food and supplies were distributed to residents in need.

Rodney is a native Virginian, a Franconia District resident for 22 years, and a graduate of the University of Virginia. Rodney and his wife Jacquelyn are proud parents to their two daughters, Addison and Sheridan.

Response: One of the efforts that I've undertaken as Chairman of the Board's Public Safety Committee has been to organize a series of public safety listening sessions where members of the community could come forward in a public forum and share directly with me any public safety concerns that they have.

One piece of testimony that I heard during the first session had a particular impact on me. A community member who represented an advocacy group comprised of first responders spouses shared with me her frustration with the lack of responses she had received to her previous outreach to the county.

In response, I met with her personally the following week, and as a result of our subsequent conversations, I led an effort to launch a new public safety transparency website (<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/police-updates>), which includes a community input matrix where members of the public and first responders can submit publicly viewable policy questions and recommendations.

In my next term, I plan to continue to move forward with generating responses to every item submitted to the matrix, as well as implementing many of those that will make our public safety infrastructure more effective and transparent.

### Mark T. Welch (I)

Mark T. Welch (I) 62, is a candidate for Board of Supervisors, Franconia District. He holds a Master of Business Administration degree from GMU.

I retired from the Senior Executive Service after more than 30 years with the Federal Government. My professional background was primarily in the budgeting and finance areas. At my last job, I was responsible for developing the agency's budget, which was submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and then defending the budget to both OMB and Congressional staff. I also worked at the Department of Transportation (DOT), receiving the Secretary's Distinguished Service Award for helping set up the Transportation Security Administration from scratch after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. I started my government career with the Department of the Navy, where I analyzed and negotiated multimillion-dollar Harpoon



Mark T. Welch

missile production contracts.

Highlights of volunteerism in the community include serving as vice president and treasurer for ten years in civic associations and tax preparation with the AARP Tax-Aide program at the Financial Empowerment Center. He has been a county resident for 30 years with his wife and three FCPS children, all graduates of Virginia public universities.

Response: I recently met a local business proprietor who complained about panhandling in the county and how "something had to be done about it." He insisted panhandlers were not truly in need but instead part of an organized "ring" to solicit money under false pretenses. Having also encountered panhandlers and being curious about his assertion, I began researching the issue.

Having also encountered panhandlers and being curious about his assertion, I began researching the issue. The county website indicated that some panhandlers come from outside the county to solicit money but also that many do not and are experiencing hardship.

Upon further research, I learned that Loudoun County has adopted an ordinance that prohibits curb-to-curb exchanges between pedestrians and motorists on public roadways, a violation of which results in a traffic ticket.

However, they rarely initially issue tickets to violators; instead, they issue warnings and refer people in need to county social services. The result is that the ordinance has significantly reduced panhandling by imposing a financial disincentive on those who panhandle to solicit money with no real need while enabling people experiencing financial or other difficulty to obtain appropriate social services.

I plan to introduce a similar ordinance and would inform any opposing elected officials of the experience and benefits seen in Loudoun County. [marktewelch21@outlook.com](mailto:marktewelch21@outlook.com)

## Mount Vernon District Supervisor Candidates

### Richard T. Hayden (R)

Richard T. Hayden (R) Candidate for Member of Board of Supervisors, Mount Vernon District. I have lived in Mount Vernon with my wife and family since 1986. I'm 65 years old, a real estate attorney, and a tireless volunteer. I currently serve on the board of the nonprofit

Columbus Club, Inc., part of my Knights of Columbus Council 5998.

Response: I was knocking on doors on a Sunday afternoon, and a homeowner and voter, sitting in his front yard, asked me about the lane widening project on Route



Richard T. Hayden



## CANDIDATE CONNECTION

# Chairman-Board of Supervisors

**T**wo candidates are on the ballot for Chairman of the Board of Supervisors; vote for one. Candidates were asked to provide a short bio and share a story of their interaction with a voter that led them to a commitment to take action, with a tight word limit. Candidates are printed here in the order they appear on the ballot.

Envisioned and compiled by Mercia Hobson.

For information on how and where to vote, see <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/>

More than 22,000 Fairfax County voters have already voted, out of more than 700,000 active voters on the rolls.

### Arthur G. Purves (R)

Arthur G. Purves (R) grew up in Washington, D.C., and has a BA, MS, and MBA from the University of Pennsylvania. He retired after 40 years as a computer programmer.



Arthur G. Purves (R)

He and his late wife, Carol, moved to Vienna in 1976. They had two children, who attended Fairfax County Public Schools in grades K-12, and eight grandchildren. He was president of the Marshall High School lacrosse and Thomas Jefferson High School crew boosters. For 26 years, he has been president of the Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance. Arthur was Scoutmaster for a small Latino troop, helped a refugee family with asylum applications, was treasurer for the Fairfax Committee of 100, and served on the 2014 Fairfax County Meals Tax Task Force and the schools' Family Life Education Advisory Committee.

Response: Years ago, I reached out to a gay activist whom I had opposed and with whom I've since been able to discuss LGBTQ issues, including the role of parents and schools in respecting transgender children. This is important to me because, in my 40-year career as a computer programmer, I worked with two transgender women, one for six years. Both were conscientious and capable.

Parents should have an open line of communication with their children, assuring them of unconditional love. Create a climate in the home where an LGBTQ child can feel

safe coming out to their parents. That way, schools don't have to get involved and can focus on academics.

In the 1990s, I would have accused a child of making the wrong choice. It took me decades to conclude that people can be born LGBTQ. If only one percent of Fairfax County Public Schools students are LGBTQ, that's still about 1,800. Rather than using punishment, the school board should help parents like me understand that, for many, it is not a choice. [www.VOTEPURVES.ORG](http://www.VOTEPURVES.ORG)

### Jeffrey C. McKay (D), incumbent

Jeffrey C. McKay (D). Age: 48; James Madison University; Franconia District Supervisor, 2007-2019; Chairman since 2020

Response: I am thrilled to be running for another term as Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. We have been able to accomplish so much in four years, despite all that happened, including a global pandemic.



Chairman  
Jeff McKay (D)

FROM PAGE 8

One, initially known as the Richmond Highway BRT, now named The One. He was upset, as were many in the community, at the closing of the Hybla Valley Veterinary Hospital after 75 years. He wanted to know the status and scope of the program and whether it was necessary. We both agreed that Route One needed some improvements, but at what cost and for whose benefit?

I researched the closure of the hospital and found that it was designated as a whole property acquisition to be used as a stormwater management area. The BRT will affect 209 parcels in total or in part, down from 225 originally. The projected ridership of 18,000 by 2040 is for residents not currently living along Route One. The project has a price tag of about \$1 billion and will urbanize Route One.

The pandemic changed work patterns, creating opportunities to work from home, thus altering the need for mass transit. I will persuade my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors to revisit and examine the BRT project and the new workforce transportation needs, protect businesses and residents as much as possible, and minimize disturbance areas and overall disruption. [www.hayden4mv.com](http://www.hayden4mv.com)

### Daniel Storck (D)

Daniel G. "Dan" Storck (D) is running for reelection as Member of Board of Supervisors, Mount Vernon District. I bring a voice of experience, thousands of community connections, and a proven track record for getting things done in Mount Vernon District. I am running again because I have the right values and de-



Daniel Storck

cadecades of experience working with you, from the Huntington community to Lorton. I will continue fully investing in our children, education, and public safety, revitalizing Lorton and Richmond Highway, implementing a BRT system to relieve congestion and extend Metro, supporting and empowering our seniors to remain independent in their homes, requiring smart, green land use policies and development, and growing more jobs. As a decades-long business entrepreneur, leader of community non-profit organizations, twelve-year school board member, three-term chairman, and now two-term supervisor, I have more than three decades of living in and serving our community. I look forward to continuing to be a leader and a strong advocate for you, delivering on the needs of the Mount Vernon District.

Response: During my first days in office in 2016, it was brought to my attention that our community had no area domestic violence support or center. I immediately challenged county staff to do more to protect these predominantly women and children from their abusers.

Domestic violence support was soon added in 2017 at the Gerry Hyland (South County) Government Center, but it was advised that no centers could be available for many years. At about that time, I happened to have individual conversations with three strong community women, Mattie Palmore, Lisa Sales and Karen Stone, who, because of their own personal experiences, were deeply committed to righting this wrong and quickly addressing this need. They were fierce advocates, calling themselves the 'three musketeers,' working tirelessly with county staff and me, proposing a variety of creative solutions, funding options, and locations to get a local area facility opened quickly.

We all proudly opened Artemis House Region 1 in 2019, and they have since gone on

to raise donations that have helped provide furniture, supplies, and support for the families residing there. Their energy and drive were crucial to supporting our residents during their time of greatest need. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month to bring attention to this family, community, and public health issue and available resources. <https://danstorck.org/>

### Christopher T. Morgan (I)

Christopher T. Morgan (I), - Candidate for Member of Board of Supervisors, Mount Vernon District is 41, lives in Mount Vernon, Fairfax County, with his wife Sumrall and 5-year-old son. A former U.S. Army officer, he works in the tech sector. Morgan chaired the Mount Vernon Council's Environment and Recreation Committee for two years and serves as Stratford Landing Citizens' Association president. He has a B.S. in business and economics from Lehigh University.

Morgan is a former small business owner as well as a former Business Improvement District and Maintenance Assessment District board member, where he managed \$2.5 million in community funds. He coaches T-ball with Fort Hunt Little League and participates in numerous wetland cleanups. He is a member of the Izaak Walton League's Arlington-Fairfax Chapter and the Basilica of St. Mary's in Old Town Alexandria.

Morgan plans to work toward increasing safety, reducing crime, especially along Route 1, and increasing school safety, including stopping the proposed homeless shelter next to West Potomac High School and within a 1.3-mile radius of nine other schools. The shelter

Since I became Chairman, we have built our environmental office from an office of 1 person to a team of 16. We have instituted a Zero Waste program, adopted an Environmental Vision, pledged carbon neutrality by 2040 for County operations, and launched CECAP - the Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan. We have doubled the affordable housing goal and have 4,000 units in the pipeline or built just since the Board took office.

We were once again found to be the safest jurisdiction of our size in the country by the Major Cities Chiefs Association (which uses real data from police departments in 70 large localities).

We have instituted meaningful policing modernizations and are setting records for recruiting classes, both in number and diversity.

We have made strong investments in mental health, especially in our youth, and are seeing results including in the most recent Youth Survey. There's more work to be done on all these issues, and I trust the voters of Fairfax County to choose experienced, tested leadership to keep moving forward. [WWW.MCKAYFORCHAIRMAN.COM](http://WWW.MCKAYFORCHAIRMAN.COM)

facility [could house ex-offenders] and this is the wrong location.

He intends to work toward saving old-growth trees, regulating infill development, and mandating practical transportation projects that prioritize private car travel.

Morgan will advocate for a strict guidance policy to remove politics and bias from the county budget. This will cut wasteful programs and excess spending. He will also advocate for a 3-1-1 Citizen Request Portal and App for County Services to improve citizen interaction.

Response: As president of my community, I remember a call I received earlier in the year from a retired woman in tears who had received her property tax assessment. She lives in the same home where she grew up and was terrified that she could no longer afford the county taxes on it.

I acted then as I would in my job in the tech industry. I researched the issue. I found the facts. I learned that, on average, property taxes in our area were up 50 percent in the past three years. I read every page of the county budget and researched the process by which it is passed. I traveled to the county center to testify in front of our Board of Supervisors. I wrote about my experiences and posted them on social media for my neighbors to read. I knew I could not sit on the sidelines when people needed my help and perspective. Taxes and spending weren't my only motivation. I was concerned with several environmental issues, transportation, school policies, and rising street crime. I entered the race for Mount Vernon Supervisors as an independent to fix problems, not play politics. As a supervisor, I will be a steward of my neighbor's money, and I'll work backward from a maximum spending amount and be completely transparent about where each dollar is spent. I'm running for my family and all our neighbors who are struggling and know that we can do better. [Votechristophermorgan.com](http://Votechristophermorgan.com)

# Member School Board by District

## Franconia, Mount Vernon Districts.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE GAZETTE

In November, Fairfax County voters will choose 12 school board members to serve four-year terms starting Jan. 1, 2024. Nineteen candidates are running for the nine magisterial district seats. There are also three at-large seats in the November election. Virginia's School board elections are nonpartisan, meaning that party affiliations can not appear on the ballots for school board candidates. Nevertheless, parties may publicly endorse their candidates.

Candidates were asked to provide a short bio and share a story of their interaction with a voter that led them to a commitment to take action, with a tight word limit. Candidate responses are printed in the order they appear on the ballot.

For information on how and where to vote, including voting early, see <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/>

As of Monday, Oct. 23, 2023, 35,669 Fairfax County voters have already voted, out of more than 714,000 active voters on the rolls. More than 670,000 active voters have yet to vote. If you are one of those who have yet to vote, make a plan to get out and vote, and bring friends and family along.

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Or vote at your assigned polling place on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 7.

## Franconia District School Board Member

### Marcia St. John-Cunning

Marcia St. John-Cunning, Candidate for Member of School Board, Franconia District. Marcia's career highlights include legislative aide for Congressman Ronald Coleman and Congressional Border Caucus staff coordinator, administrative assistant to the Hispanic Magazine publisher when it launched; Fairfax County Public Schools family liaison; Spanish interpreter; and Family Engagement Region 3 Representative. John-Cunning was



Marcia St. John-Cunning

the on-site Community School Coordinator (CSC) at Mt. Vernon Woods Elementary.

As a community advocate, Marcia spearheaded converting the parent liaison role from an hourly to a contracted, unified pay scale position with the inclusion of full benefits. She worked with the Successful Children and Youth Policy Team to create the Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) community school model template. Marcia most recently represented the Hispanic Education Association Hispanic Leadership Alliance on the FCPS Core Strategic Planning Committee.

Response: As a parent/family liaison in FCPS, I worked hourly without health or retirement benefits for years. My husband covered all my benefits, so this arrangement did not affect me. However, many colleagues often reminded me they were not as fortunate. I realized how hard it was for them to work without a safety net. I organized with three other parent/family liaisons to bring the issue to the school board. We received community and parent support, including testimonials about the profound impact the parent/family liaison had on families, students, and communities.

The role was converted to a contracted, unified pay scale position with the inclusion of full benefits. Ironically, I was promoted to an hourly supervisory position without any benefits the year after the battle was won. However, the advocacy was not for me but for the parent/family liaisons who needed the benefits. Since then, the family/parent liaison position has been elevated to a more secure status. As a result, the family-school partnership bond continues to be strengthened, elevating student success.

[marcia@marcia4schools.com](mailto:marcia@marcia4schools.com) Marcia 4 Schools

### Kevin R. Pinkney

Kevin R. Pinkney, Candidate for Member of School Board, Franconia District. In 2003, Kevin and his wife moved to Washington, DC, and settled in Franconia. They are proud parents of two current FCPS students and three FCPS graduates.

Kevin is a Harvard Law School graduate and a 20-year private practice lawyer. He prioritizes listening to the needs of others, communicating ideas respectfully, achieving shared goals, and providing practical solutions to complex issues. He represents boards, general counsels, owners, and legal departments of various companies, from household names to venture-backed startups. He advises organizations with tens of thousands of employees and budgets in the tens of billions of dollars.

Highlights of Kevin's many service activities include PTA and PTSA in elementary, middle, and high schools; the Parent Advisory Council at Clermont Elementary; coaching LMVSC soccer; teaching high school students early morning religious education;



Kevin R. Pinkney

and advising Boy Scout Troop 1183.

Response: School safety is a top priority. Some parents report that their children cannot use school restrooms due to drug use, vaping, or violence risks. Students may be concerned about behavior in hallways, buses, and classrooms. New FCPS policies require principals to consider group identity in matters of discipline. FCPS instructs: "Student discipline must be implemented in ways that are equitable" (FCPS P.2601.37P).

FCPS's "equitable" policies encourage leniency for attackers who are members of groups that are perceived to be "overrepresented" in disciplinary proceedings. This means that discipline for the same offense will be different for students depending on their race, ethnicity, or gender.

The first step in addressing the breakdown in classroom order is to restore equal treatment for all students. Teachers are entitled to the support of school administrators in maintaining safety and order. Principals must have confidence that the equal and dispassionate application of discipline, consistent with the disciplinary matrix in the district's Student Rights and Responsibilities policy,

Equal treatment under law has been a shared aspiration in America for generations. It is the only discipline policy that will maintain the broad-based support necessary for public education to flourish.

<https://pinkney4schoolboard.com/>  
Endorsed by Fairfax County GOP

## Mount Vernon District School Board Member

### Mateo Dunne

Mateo Dunne, Candidate for Member of School Board, Mt. Vernon District. I am an attorney with the U.S. Government and former vice president of advocacy for the Fairfax County Council PTA, advocating on behalf of 170+ PTAs and 40,000 members at the state and local levels for increased funding and resources. I earned my degree at Georgetown University Law Center (2003).

My wife and I moved to Fairfax County 20 years ago so our children could attend the best public schools. Our three children received an outstanding education.

Ten years ago, the superintendent decided to eliminate high school sports, performing arts, and language immersion to close a \$100 million budget deficit. I organized and led a coalition of advocacy groups, PTAs, and teacher unions. We persuaded the Board of Supervisors to allocate \$88 million to preserve these programs for current and future students.

I have led multiple school bond campaigns to fund our district's renovation of public schools and helped guide West Potomac High School's renovation, which eliminated



Mateo Dunne

18 trailers and enhanced campus security.

Response: Fairfax County is one of the wealthiest counties in the United States, yet children in our community suffer from hunger because they do not have sufficient food at home in the evenings, on the weekends, and during the summer. Many children suffer from the cold because they do not have winter clothing, or they may suffer indignity because they do not have access to menstrual hygiene products.

I believe a child suffering from hunger, cold, or indignity can't learn. I will work to ensure FCPS establishes and leverages its purchasing power to provide food, clothing, and a menstrual hygiene pantry at every school in need and to promote partnerships between FCPS and nonprofits to ensure the regular distribution of meals to families in need. <https://www.mateodunne.com/> Endorsed by Fairfax County Democrats

### Stori M. Zimmerman

Stori M. Zimmerman, Candidate for Member of School Board, Mt. Vernon District. I am a mom, educator, and military spouse with a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education and Biology and a Master of Arts in Teaching. During my 25 years of educational expertise as a public school teacher, I taught grade levels K-12.

Highlights of my responsibilities as a program manager include annual operating budgets, educational evaluations and assessments, data reporting, human relations management, and staff development. Beyond my professional roles, I've dedicated countless hours to volunteering in the communities I've lived in, contributing to military family readiness groups and events, and military children's awareness campaigns and fundraising initiatives.

Response: I have knocked on many doors and listened to concerned parents and constituents alike, and their biggest concern always comes back to learning. Many people that I have spoken with want to see a school board and central office administrators who prioritize students and learning over politics in the classroom so that our teachers and administrators have the autonomy to foster school atmospheres that are conducive to effective learning environments for all. It is my goal to make certain that FCPS reprioritizes its focus on teaching our students the foundational educational elements of reading, writing, and math that will underpin the rest of their education and positively impact them throughout their lives.

Literacy must be our number one priority and is the fundamental cornerstone of my platform. Despite consistent budget increases, FCPS has invested significant resources in initiatives rooted in the flawed "balanced literacy" model, lacking systematic, cumulative, phonics-based reading instruction in



Stori M. Zimmerman



Bird Indigo, Mixed Media on Canvas, framed 14 x 12.

## Painter Sees World through Prismatic Lens of Autism

**N**epenthe Gallery will feature the artwork of Lee Jaworek, at their weekly ART+WINE+CHEESE event on Thursday, Nov. 9 from 6 to 7:30 pm.

Lee Jaworek, who calls his art Artism, is a painter who sees the world through the prismatic lens of Autism. As a young artist with Autism, he challenges himself daily to create works that depict the triumphs and the beauty of the world around him.

Jaworek uses vibrant colors; he says “each color is just as important as every other color.” His artwork has been exhibited in various galleries throughout the Washington metropolitan area and most recently his “Sunflower” was seen on CBS News Sunday Morning.

To learn more about Lee Jaworek and his artwork, visit Lee’s website <https://leejaworek.com/homepage>

This exhibit marks the first time Lee is selling so many of his original works rather than giclée prints. The exhibit will run from



Painter Lee Jaworek.

Nov. 9 to Nov. 22, 2023.

“We at Nepenthe Gallery are delighted to shine a spotlight on Lee and his amazing works,” said gallery owner Carrie Garland. Carrie, along with her husband Jim, opened Nepenthe Gallery, a fine art gallery and custom frame shop, in March 2022. [www.nepenthegallery.com](http://www.nepenthegallery.com).

## Northern Virginia Home Sales Drop as Prices Rise

### Interest Rates Impact Housing Market Regionally and Nationally.

**H**ome sales slid more in Northern Virginia than around the nation in September while prices jumped more regionally, reported the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors (NVAR). High mortgage rates contributed to sales dropping 18.2% in September in Northern Virginia while nationally sales declined 15.4%.

“Around the region and nation last month people were sitting and waiting for mortgage rates to drop, translating to fewer op-

tions for buyers. This meant that home sales receded while prices went up nationwide. This was even more pronounced in our market which experienced a bigger drop in sales and bigger hike in prices,” said NVAR CEO Ryan McLaughlin.

In Northern Virginia, the months’ supply of inventory for September 2023 was 1.22 months, down 1% from September 2022. September’s inventory figures were higher than August when inventory stood at 1.08 month’s supply of inventory. Unsold inventory across the country sat at a 3.4 month’s supply, up from 3.2 months in September 2022 and 3.3 months in August 2023.

Fewer homebuying choices pushed prices up as the median sold price for a home in September reached \$650,000 in Northern

SEE HOME SALES, PAGE 14

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)

17th annual



# Alexandria Film Festival

Celebrating independents for 17 years!

Film Festival



## Live Programming Nov 10–12, 2023

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# ENTERTAINMENT

## ALEXANDRIA COLONIAL TOURS' GHOST & GRAVEYARD TOUR

Wednesdays through Sundays in September at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30, 8:30 and 9 p.m. Nightly in October at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30, 8:30 and 9 p.m. Admission: \$15 for adults; \$10 for children; free for children under 6 years old. Tours meet at the Alexandria Visitor Center, 221 King Street, Alexandria. Walk your way through the charming streets of historic Old Town Alexandria. Follow a colonial-costumed guide by lantern light for an engaging history tour on Alexandria's original Ghost and Graveyard Tour. During this entertaining tour, you'll hear ghost stories, legends, folklore, unsolved mysteries, tales of romance and angry ghosts looking for revenge. Visit alexcolonialtours.com.

## 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/>

## OCT. 2-29

**Cascades Art Exhibition.** 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Van Landingham Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center (Gallery 311), 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. The Van Landingham Gallery presents a solo exhibition from Gregory Logan Dunn entitled Cascades, a collection of oil and acrylic paintings created during his studio residency at the Torpedo Factory this past year. Original paintings and print reproductions of the artist's work will be available for purchase.

## OCT. 3 TO NOV. 13

**"The Spirit Within" Exhibit.** At Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Drive, Alexandria. Mosaic artist Nina Tisara and artist-photographer Steven Halperson will exhibit their art work in the Fireplace Art Alcove. MVUC members and friends are invited to an artists' reception on Sunday, November 12, 2:30 - 5 p.m. RSVP: [ninat@ninatisara.com](mailto:ninat@ninatisara.com).

## OCT. 6-28

**The "Curses! Foiled Again! The Art of Swords and Sorcery" exhibit.** At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features art that evokes the fantastic and swashbuckling. Opening Reception: Friday, October 6, 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed on October 29, 2023). Details on the art exhibit and related creative programs at [DelRayArtisans.org/event/curses-foiled-again](http://DelRayArtisans.org/event/curses-foiled-again)

## OCT. 10 TO NOV. 19

**"Reflection Unknown" Photography**

**Exhibit by Fred Zafran.** At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Alexandria. Opening Reception: Sunday, October 22, 2023, 2 - 4 p.m. Fred Zafran has long been interested in photography as a distinctive means of storytelling. His work examines the artistic possibilities of photographs that combine the poetic with a representational view of the world. The resulting photo essays which Zafran calls "poetic narrative," are post-documentary in that the stories are open ended, subjective, rich in symbolism and metaphor, and encourage consideration and interpretation by the viewer.

## OCT. 19 TO NOV. 26

**Fleeting Moments | Street Photography.** At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. Fleeting Moments features photographs that capture candid moments, revelatory interpretations, and brilliant reflections of the mundane — work commonly referred to as "street photography." In 1943 the New York Times referred to the street photography of Helen Levitt, as, "fleeting moments of surpassing lyricism, mystery and quiet drama." Those qualities are the hallmark of the works selected for this show.

## THURSDAY/OCT. 26

**Jane Franklin Dance Performance.** 7 p.m. At Waterfront Park, 1A Prince St., Alexandria. Jane Franklin Dance Performance in response to Temporary Public Art Installation "Two Boxes of Oranges and Admonia Jackson" by Nina Cooke John. The City of Alexandria's Office of the Arts was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to fund its community Artist Residency Program. The Artist Residency Program integrates visual and performing artists in the community to conduct interactive art engagements at the Waterfront Park public art initiative Site See. As part of the Artist Residency Program, Jane Franklin Dance was selected to bring interpretive movement pieces inspired by the artwork to the Waterfront Park.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 28

**Project Discovery Walkathon.** 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. At Fort Ward Park Amphitheater, 4301 W. Brad-dock Road, Alexandria. Anyone may attend. Visit [www.alexandria-va.gov/projectdiscovery](http://www.alexandria-va.gov/projectdiscovery)

## SATURDAY/OCT. 28

**Trick-or-Treating at Mount Vernon Estate, Mount Vernon.** 2-6 p.m. Collect candy around the historic grounds and celebrate Halloween with 18th-century entertainment and activities. There's a costume parade on the historic grounds, 18th-century entertainment, magic, demonstrations, a puppet show, live music, and more. Tickets for this popular event on sale now.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 28

**Lights Out - Halloween Party at the Cemetery 7 to 9:30 p.m.** At Ivy Hill Cemetery, Alexandria. Costume contest, games and prizes, haunted vault, cemetery tours.



The Old Town Family Trick or Treat takes place on Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023 in Old Town Alexandria.

Register online - [bit.ly/3Pwtbtt](http://bit.ly/3Pwtbtt)

## SATURDAY/OCT. 28

**Carlyle Halloween Stampede.** 2 to 6 p.m. At Whiskey & Oyster, 301 John Carlyle St., Alexandria. The 3rd Annual Carlyle Halloween Stampede features all-day festive cocktails, signature party favors, costume contests, photo ops, giveaways and more. Guests can start the crawl and pick up their wristbands at any of the participating restaurants: Whiskey & Oyster, Sweet Fire Donna's, Tequila and Taco or Lost Boy Cider. Costumes are recommended. There will be costume prizes for the most festively dressed participants. Visit [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com)

## SATURDAY/OCT. 28

**Tall Ship Providence Presents the Halloween Howl.** 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; tours 45 minutes to one hour. At Senator John Warner Maritime Heritage Center, 1A Prince St., Alexandria. Arrive in costume for some Halloween fun aboard tall ship Providence! Little ghosts and goblins will be taking over the floating maritime center as they rotate through stations of story time, crafts and activities then step aboard Providence with legendary Captain John Paul Jones. Visit [tallshipprovidence.org](http://tallshipprovidence.org).

## SATURDAY/OCT. 28

**Old Town Family Trick or Treat.** 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At various locations in Old Town Alexandria. Bring the family and enjoy trick-or-treating in the various shops and restaurants in Old Town along upper and lower King Street and select side streets. Visit [oldtownbusiness.org](http://oldtownbusiness.org) for the starting point and map pick-up location.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 28

**Tall Ship Providence Presents "Ghost Ship Providence".** 7 to 10 p.m. At Senator John Warner

Maritime Heritage Center, 1A Prince St., Alexandria. All aboard for an adults-only costume party! Cross the gangway (if you dare) for a hauntingly good time. DJ, open bar, food, costume contest and raffles will all take place at the floating heritage center and aboard Providence. Visit [tallshipprovidence.org](http://tallshipprovidence.org).

## SUNDAY/OCT. 29

**Old Town Doggie Trick or Treat.** 1 to 5 p.m. At The Dog Park, 705 King Street, Alexandria. Bring your dog for a howling day of walking through Old Town and visiting participating merchants who will offer treats for your four-legged companion. Start at The Dog Park boutique, located at 705 King Street. For more information, visit [www.oldtownbusiness.org](http://www.oldtownbusiness.org).

## SUNDAY/OCT. 29

**Del Ray Halloween Parade.** 2 p.m. Begins at Mount Vernon Ave., south of E. Bellefonte Ave. Alexandria. One of Del Ray's favorite traditions, the annual Del Ray Halloween Parade, returns once again. Children, pets and strollers in costumes are invited to march and show off their finest and scariest Halloween garb. For more information, including details on entering the house decorating contest, pet costume contest and stroller decorating contest, visit [www.visitdelray.com](http://www.visitdelray.com).

## MONDAY/OCT. 30

**Halloween Tales at River Farm.** 6-7 p.m. At River Farm, 7931 E. Boulevard Drive, Alexandria. Acclaimed local actor (and retired Arlington Judge) William T. Newman Jr. joins Classical WETA's Nicole Lacroix and ghost storytellers Nikisha Kozik and Jimmy Meritt at River Farm to narrate suspenseful (and slightly spooky) passages from the Old Town Mystery book series by local author John Adam Wasowicz.

You'll hear passages from Daingerfield Island set on Halloween night along the Potomac River and from Gadsby's Corner as The Female Stranger helps solve a crime that occurs on 'Mystery in the Museum' night at Gadsby's. Admission is free for children and adults.

## TUESDAY/OCT. 31

**Simpson Park Demonstration Gardens, Tuesdays @ 10:10:00 - 11:30 a.m., Simpson Demonstration Gardens, 420 E. Monroe Ave, Alexandria.** Meet and talk with Extension Master Gardeners in the Simpson Demonstration Gardens to learn the best uses for fallen leaves and other organic garden waste. Free.

## NOV. 3-26

**The Housemates exhibit.** At Del Ray Artisans Gallery 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Exhibit showcases art from Del Ray Artisans members celebrating the beings we live with. Housemates may have fur, feathers, fins, scales, or be human. Opening Reception: Friday, November 3, 7-9 p.m.. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed on Thanksgiving Day). Plus bring in donations for cat and dog rescue groups. Details at [DelRayArtisans.org/event/housemates](http://DelRayArtisans.org/event/housemates)

## SATURDAY/NOV. 4

**David Buskin with Heather Aubrey Lloyd.** 7 p.m. At St. Aidan's Episcopal Church 8531 Riverside Road, Alexandria. David Buskin's songs and jingles have been recorded by many great artists; a sample: Judy Collins, Peter, Paul & Mary, Johnny Mathis, Astrud Gilberto, Tom Rush, Dixie Carter, Roberta Flack, Mel Tormé, Take 6, Phoebe Snow, Richie Havens and Arlo Guthrie. He is a New York Nightlife Award, Bistro Award and Clio Award winner and tonight he's joined by

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# ENTERTAINMENT



The Alexandria Fall Festival will take place on Sunday, Nov. 5, 2023 at River Farm in Alexandria.

local singer/songwriter Heather Aubrey Lloyd for a special night of “melodic, sensual pop, folkie grit and killer wit”. Visit [www.focusmusic.org](http://www.focusmusic.org)

#### SATURDAY/NOV. 4

**Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. 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>.

#### SUNDAY/NOV. 5

**Alexandria Fall Festival.** 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At River Farm, 7931 E. Boulevard Dr. in Alexandria. Food trucks, pony rides, magic shows, beer garden, bounce houses and more. A lineup of local culinary favorites will be in attendance including Goodies Frozen Custard & Treats, Rocklands Barbeque and Grilling Company, Port City Brewing Co., Lost Boy Cider, Paradise Springs

Winery, DC Slices, Big Boy Tacos, A.M. Kettle, The Little Well, Milaap Chai, Taste of Asia and F.T. Valley Farm at Mont Medi. Expect all your fall favorites — from kettle corn and hot chocolate to apple treats and much more! There will be plenty of family-friendly fun at River Farm — two magic shows from The Great Zucchini, caricature drawings from Capital Artworks, face painting from Sunrise Face Painting, pony rides and petting zoo from Mary’s Go Round Petting Zoo, Big Country Amusements bounce houses, Something Vintage lawn games and more! Visit [alexandriafallfestival.com](http://alexandriafallfestival.com).

#### SUNDAY/NOV. 5

**Alexandria Symphony Orchestra: New World Symphony “Going Home” featuring Stephen Seifert, Mountain Dulcimer.** 3 p.m. At George Washington Masonic Memorial, Alexandria. Sweet tones of Appalachia imbue Connir Ellis’s concerto for mountain dulcimer featuring Stephen Seifert. America’s beauty and diversity inspired Czech composer Antonín Dvořák’s New World Symphony. The program opens with a surprise guest artist. Saturday

concert attendees are invited to the pre-concert talk with Maestro Ross at 6:30 p.m. in the Terrace section. Adults: \$20-\$89; Students: \$15; Youth: \$5.

#### SATURDAY/NOV. 18

**61st Holiday Shop.** 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. Artisan vendors of many styles and mediums, plus baked and canned goods, jewelry, household collectibles, lunch, quilt raffle. Visit [www.mvuc.org](http://www.mvuc.org).

#### THE BIRCHMERE

**At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria.** All shows are at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at [Ticketmaster.com](http://Ticketmaster.com). Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or [www.Birchmere.com](http://www.Birchmere.com).

#### OCTOBER

Wed. 25: Euge Groove \$45.00 (Rescheduled from 6/7/23)  
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 Sun. 29: Tom Paxton & The DonJuans and John McCutcheon \$45.00

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## School Board

FROM PAGE 10

early elementary classrooms. Given the critical role of strong reading skills in life success, the shocking statistics on illiteracy, especially among juveniles in the courts and adults in the prison population, underscore the urgency.

The US Department of Justice states, "The link between academic failure and delinquency, violence, and crime is welded to reading failure." To tackle this issue, I will champion the adoption of a division-wide evidence-based structured literacy methodology, implemented with fidelity, commencing in kindergarten. This instructional approach will be firmly grounded in the five pillars of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. <https://www.stori4students.org/>

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## Home Sales

FROM PAGE 11

Virginia, up 5% from September 2022.

On average, Northern Virginia homes stayed on market for 17 days in September 2023, down 32% from the previous September when the average days on market was 25 days.

In June, NVAR released a mid-year update to its NVAR Region 2023 Residential Real Estate Market Forecast. The forecast noted that a continued lack of housing inventory, pent-up buyers' demand creating a sellers' market, and positive economic conditions peppered with mounting risks may be in store for the Northern Virginia housing market for the remainder of 2023. The update was created in cooperation with the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University (GMU-CRA).

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# PEOPLE



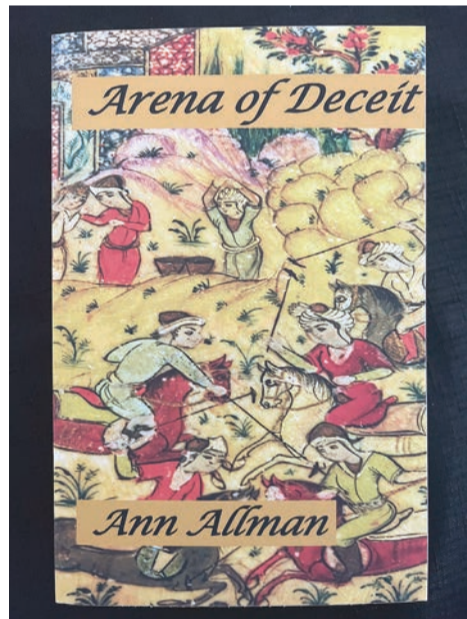
Mount Vernon author Ann Allman

## Long-time Resident Publishes First Book

**A**nn Allman and her husband, Frank Gulino, have lived in our area for forty years. The couple—both D. C. natives—currently own their third house in the same Ft. Hunt zip code. When they first moved to Alexandria after an overseas assignment, Allman brought with her an idea for a story that came to her on a visit to Meteora in northern Greece. “The main characters—a monk in a monastery perched atop a gigantic monolith, and a villager who lived in its shadow—came to me practically full-blown as we stood among the fantastic ‘Pillars of the Sky’ that make the area famous,” she says. “They’ve haunted me ever since.” While working as a freelance writer, publishing articles in *The Washington Post*, *The Mt. Vernon Gazette*, and *George Mason University’s* in-house publications, she often thought about bringing her characters to life in a novel. She had the good fortune, and the skill, to gain acceptance by the Mount Vernon Writers’ Group, an association of professional writers dedicated to the art of literary fiction.

After months of research, Allman decided to set her *Meteora* story in the 16th century when Greece was occupied by the Ottoman Empire. “It’s a fascinating period of history, fraught with a clash of different cultures that still resonates today,” she says. The novel that was the result of her years of study and writing was well-received by her fellow fiction writers. Although it attracted the interest of several agents, she could not find a publisher among the handful who championed historical fiction at the time. “The writing was the easy part compared to the marketing,” she notes wryly.

The offer of a job as an interpreter, or docent, at Mt. Vernon presented her an ideal opportunity to re-enter the workforce part-time when her son was old enough to attend



The cover of Ann Allman’s first book, “Arena of Deceit.”

St. Aidan’s Day School. Her time talking to the public about Washington’s life blended so well with Allman’s new-found passion for history that she stayed at the Mansion for 13 years. Next came an even longer span as an ESOL instructor at Bryant Adult Education Center.

Her retirement from teaching and the subsequent pandemic shutdown once again brought her the chance to work on fiction full time. In retrospect, she had realized that her *Meteora* story would benefit from a fuller exploration of her characters’ early lives. *Arena of Deceit*, the result of many months of further research and writing, is the realization of her decades’ long dream to take readers into a time and place she hopes they will find as haunting as she has. The book is available on Amazon and Kindle.

# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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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.

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## Forgive Me As I Wax Poetic



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

If you are of the “Jewish persuasion” (“who persuaded you”?, as asked by Hawkeye Pierce in a long-ago M\*A\*S\*H episode), you’ve been lighting a memorial candle known as Yahrzeit candles (evidence suggests as long as 2,000 years ago) to honor the deceased your whole life – or your parents have, particularly for family members. The candles are lit at sundown on Yom Kippur (“Day of Atonement”) and as well on the deceased’s date of death on the Jewish calendar (presently year 5,784) cross-referenced to a corresponding date on the Gregorian calendar – with which we’re all familiar.

And for 14 years this Yom Kippur’s eve, I have been lighting two candles, one each for my father (deceased Dec. 2006) and mother (deceased Dec. 2008). This year I will be lighting three candles: father, mother and new this year: for my recently deceased brother Richard. (I still can’t get used to writing it, let alone saying it; he died Dec. 3rd last year, a few months after Yom Kippur.) And when the real-time anniversary date of his actual death occurs, (Dec. 3) it’s not exactly candle-appropriate to light the memorial candle on that date; as it happens, the proper date I’ll be lighting candles for Richard and for my mother (she also died on Dec. 3rd) will be Nov. 21.

I can remember growing up in my parents’ house with the Yahrzeit candles being lit every year on Yom Kippur and watching them flicker all night long and for the next 24 hours as they sat on the kitchen stove remembering/honoring their parents/my grandparents. But I can’t remember lighting my first Yahrzeit candle on the Yom Kippur following my father’s death in early Dec. 2006. I do imagine however, it was weighty, as he was my first parent to die. And likewise, when my widowed mother succumbed on Dec 3rd, 2008, in effect, making Richard and myself orphans. I imagine lighting two candles then is like how I feel lighting three today, except as I said last week, I have no backstop anymore. Moreover, being alive still without my older brother’s wit and wisdom is a position I never thought I’d be in – given my diagnosis, as I’ve described in previous columns. I’m alone now (Dina notwithstanding) and it makes the finality and inevitability of my own mortality even more obvious. I only wish there was someone close with whom I could share my feelings and anxieties. Oh, yeah, there used to be, but there isn’t anymore. That’s the problem. Damn. This makes you readers, like it or not, a resource for me. I talk/write, you listen. It could work. In fact, it probably already has worked for me for years; I was just too fortunate elsewhere to realize it. Not anymore. And it will be painfully obvious to me as I say the prayer, and then light three candles, one each for my mother, father and brother, all deceased – for the first time together. I don’t exactly have survivor’s guilt, but I have something, and it’s something I never thought I’d have, survivor’s remorse.

To me, survivor’s remorse’ means being sorry about surviving – without a hint of guilt. But rather with a generous heaping of being sorry to find yourself in a predicament you had never anticipated, but of course did nothing to cause. Nevertheless, the problem exists. It’s sort of like outkicking your punt coverage. The players get to where they’re going before all parties intended. Oddly enough, there are negative consequences to being first on the scene; just as there are unintended consequences to being last on the scene. And I’m last, and I’m running into unintended consequences every day. My go-to person is gone. My best friend is gone. My business advisor is gone. My hand-me-down giver is gone, and I’m left, to my wife Dina’s chagrin, with a very tired wardrobe with little chance of an upgrade. And as important as all these losses, I’ve learned that life indeed goes on. It may not mean that much to you, but if I ever thought about what my life would be like if my brother died before me; now I know. As Shakespeare would say: “It sucketh.” But as any lifelong member of Red Sox Nation knows there’s no time like the present when you’re down and out. There may be challenges ahead but there’s no going back.

This is just the kind of talk I could have with my brother if I was in any kind of funk. And invariably, with his encouragement and positive reinforcement, I would see the error of my ways and once again, take advantage of my opportunities. I feel better already. Thanks for listening.

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



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