

# CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station ♦ Lorton ♦ Clifton

Brave five year old G. Dickey, of Alexandria, (G doesn't stand for Ghost) does escape the clutches of the giant monster ghoul.



ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 12 ♦ PIZZA, PAGE 14

PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Oh So Different,  
This Romeo & Juliet

PAGE 11

CANDIDATE CONNECTION

General Assembly

PAGES 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

It Grabs  
You!  
Happy  
Halloween!

NOVEMBER 2-8, 2023

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## ROUNDUPS

### Learn about Fairfax County's Public Safety

Fairfax County's Deputy County Executive of Safety and Security, Tom Arnold, will provide a detailed discussion on the missions and responsibilities of the county's public-safety agencies and their community connectivity. He'll do so via a webinar presented by the county's Communities of Trust, this Wednesday, Nov. 1, from 7-8:30 p.m. Register in advance at <http://bit.ly/ffxcopublicsafety23>.

### Veterans Day Ceremony in Fairfax

Fairfax City's annual Veterans Day ceremony will be held next Friday, Nov. 10, at 10:30 a.m., inside American Legion Post 177. It's at 3939 Oak St. in Fairfax, and VFW Post 8469 will be participating, as well. All are welcome to attend.

### Help Stock Britepaths' Emergency Pantry

Britepaths' emergency pantry has an urgent need for several items to help local families in crisis. The greatest needs currently are laundry detergent, toilet paper, dish soap, household cleaning spray, shampoo/conditioner, deodorant and toothbrushes.

Donations may be brought to Britepaths' office at 3959 Pender Drive, Suite 200, in Fairfax, Monday-Friday, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Please call 703-273-8829 or email [info@britepaths.org](mailto:info@britepaths.org) in advance to let them know when to expect the drop-off. Items may also be ordered via the nonprofit's Amazon Wish List at <https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/30L-SP2LLWHRPV>.

In addition, Britepaths also needs volunteers to help with its pantry inventory on Tuesday, Nov. 7, from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at its office. Some heavy lifting is required. Teens are welcome, but those under 14 must volunteer with an adult. Register at: [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4AA4AC2EAB9-food12#/.](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4AA4AC2EAB9-food12#/)

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# Lorton District Police Station and Animal Shelter Open

Residents tour and celebrate.

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

The Lorton area saw another significant opening on Oct. 28. Government officials, police, animal shelter employees, volunteers, and residents celebrated the new South County Police and Animal Shelter. Sited on Lorton Road on land once included in the Lorton Workhouse and Prison property, in history, inmates toiled and farm animals grazed there. Now the site is home to modern police force and animal care operations.

Serving as emcee for the opening event, Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck called it “ironic” that the new building with all its modern services stood on former prison grounds, across from the 1950s era Nike missile base, and near the 1980s landfill, now closed and slated to become a new park in 2025, “with roots that are unique.” Storck noted the hundreds of millions of dollars Fairfax County has invested in updating the Lorton area, now blossoming into a “true community that has value and is respected.” He and other speakers commended the service and vision of former District Supervisor Gerald “Gerry” Hyland (Mount Vernon Supervisor 1988-2015) who was on hand for the opening and championed improvements for the area. Storck’s other acknowledgements included a long list of county employees, community activists and organizations.

The well landscaped building includes the approximately 30,000-square-foot police station, and the 23,000-square-foot animal shelter and adoption center. Its arched covered front walkways and ga-

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Claire Craig, Officer with the Honor Guard sings the National Anthem

bled end walls compliment the nearby Workhouse. The site also includes 20,000-square-feet of outdoor space, with dog kennel runs and fenced walking areas, electric vehicle charging and traditional fueling

SEE POLICE AND ANIMAL SHELTER, PAGE 15



Girl Scout Troop 52053 leads the Pledge of Allegiance

# Strong Bonds Form with Animals

A look at those special relationships.

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

As the Lorton community celebrates the opening of Fairfax County’s new animal shelter and adoption center, it’s clear that for anyone involved with companion animals, their caring encompasses a whole lot more than a building. Pets in all their many shapes, sizes and species, can establish a connection with their human caretakers, creating strong bonds.

Here we note some of those special connections.

Evelyn Grieve is president and co-founder of Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter. She leads the fundraising nonprofit group in supporting the shelter, providing resources for needs beyond the shelter’s available budget. FFCAS often provides the life-saving or corrective surgery, dental work, or medical treatments which provide the animal with the best opportunity of finding a home. Grieve, and many of her group of dedicated volunteers, have served animals since 2006, benefitting many animals. See [www.ffcas.org](http://www.ffcas.org).

Shelter employees, like new caretaker Katie Hughes, hired just two months ago, typically come to the shelter operation with a veterinary technician background, and a passion for animals nurtured over many years.

Volunteers like Linda Wilkerson and Brooke Kowal typically make the shelter a long-term volunteer time commitment. They may walk, play, or groom dogs, foster kittens, or answer questions about individual animals under their care for potential adopters. Last year the shelter boasted their team



PHOTO BY REBECCA CAVEDON

This young couple moved their wedding ceremony up by two hours to improve their chances of adopting Daisy, a German Shepherd puppy in need of a family

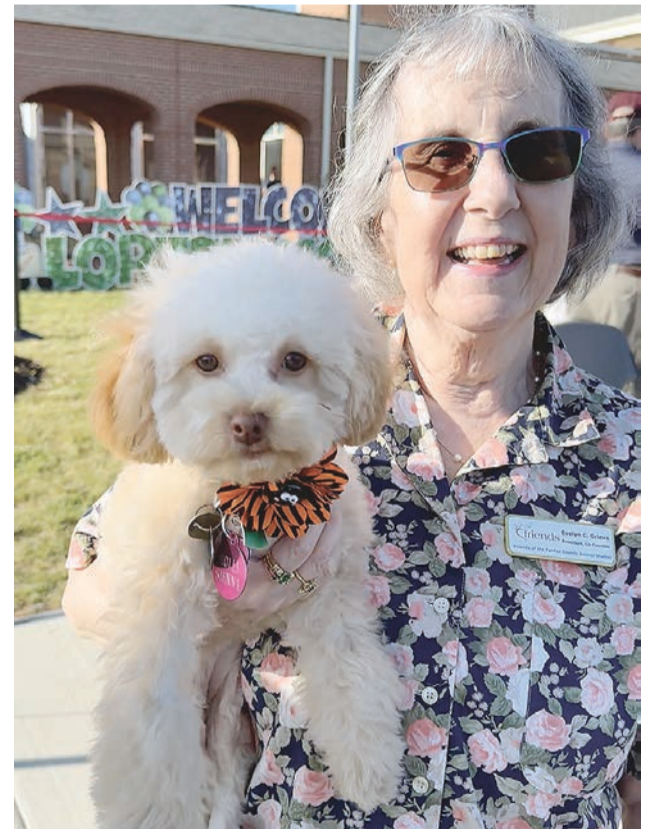


PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Evelyn Grieve and her foster dog, Molly Sienna. Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter helped Molly by funding surgery for her leg which was severely injured due to abuse.

SEE NEW ANIMAL SHELTER, PAGE 16

# School Board Candidate Disqualified from Ballot

## Write-in campaign underway for Dem-endorsed candidate.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

An aggressive write-in campaign is underway for Democratic-endorsed school board candidate Marcia St. John-Cunning, @marcia4schools, who is still running to be the Franconia District School Board Member.

On one page of her Petition of Qualified Voters, which was due April 17, St. John-Cunning's street address is listed incorrectly. The street address error invalidated a number of required signatures on St. John-Cunning's form, and thus, without them, she no longer has the required 125 signatures to appear on the ballot as a candidate for Fairfax County School Board Member by District.

On Oct. 25, St. John-Cunning was disqualified from the ballot in Franconia District following the ruling by Judge Richard Gardiner, Fairfax County Circuit Court.



Marcia C. St. John-Cunning.

Her opponent for Franconia representative on the school board, Kevin Pinkney, endorsed by Fairfax GOP, remains on the ballot.

It brings up one of the potential complications of early voting.

Over 3,000 people had already voted in this race, according to St. John-Cunning, and "now their votes don't count."

While her name remains on the ballot, voters who want to cast their vote for St. John-Cunning should not fill in the bubble next to her printed name. Votes cast in that way will not count.

Judge Gardiner heard the case of Eighth Congressional District Republican Committee et al. v. Eric Spicer, General Registrar and Director of Elections for Fairfax County, in the Circuit Court of

Fairfax County. Gardiner ruled that Spicer, in his official capacity, should have invalidated the page.

"The page ... does not have her address on the front page. Instead, it lists 4429 Shannon Hill Rd., Alexandria, VA 22310, which is not an actual address. This petition page and the signatures on the front and back page(s) are invalid as a matter of law," wrote Judge Gardiner.

Hence, St. John-Cunning is disqualified from the ballot.

Voters who wish to vote for St. John-Cunning must print her full name as "Marcia C. St. John-Cunning" on the line beside "Write-in" on the ballot, according to @FairfaxDems.

"I am going to keep running because I am passionate about what I have been doing for the past 25 years. This is not a political move for me. I love our teachers and our families in Franconia District," said Cunningham on her candidate page.

Lauding the ruling, 8th District Republican Committee Chairman Andrew Lopusser responded to the disqualification of Marcia St. John-Cunning. "We will not stand by while any party or candidate attempts to bypass the rules that safeguard our electoral process," Lopusser said, according to an on-line statement at vagop8cd.org.

He added that the case upholds the Republican processes that ensure only valid candidates reach the ballot.

The 8th District Republican Committee is an arm of the Republican Party of Virginia.

In the meantime, the Fairfax County Democratic Committee, Fairfax County Federation of Teachers, and Fairfax Education Association remain strongly supportive of St. John-Cunning. "We will fight for Marcia St. John-Cunning, and I am confident she will be the next FCPS School Board member from the Franconia district," Bryan Graham, chair of the Fairfax County Democratic Committee, said in a statement.

"We need you to vote for Marcia St. John-Cunning. She needs to be written in on your ballot," said Fairfax Education Association President Leslie Houston.

David Walrod, union president of the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers said, "We want to emphasize that she will be a strong advocate for students, educators, and the community."

Judge Gardiner's ruling came 14 days before the Nov. 7 general election, 47 days after early voting began on Sept. 22. According to St. John-Cunning, she "was certified as a qualified candidate back on

March 7, 2023." That is 232 days before Gardiner's ruling.

"This decision not only ignores the votes of more than 3,000 citizens who have already voted in the Franconia district, but the confusion caused by this decision is harmful to our democracy and the sanctity of the electoral process," said Graham.

According to Lopusser, the decision by Judge Gardiner and the Virginia Department of Elections to disqualify St. John-Cunning was not "an act of disenfranchisement but a reinforcement of the rule of law, and there were legitimate grounds for the disqualification."

As a write-in candidate, St. John-Cunning is not required to file any ballot access documents; however, she will need to be in compliance with Campaign Finance requirements.

In November 2019, the most recent election for the four-year term Fairfax County School Board members, Franconia District, then called Lee, reported 71,853 active registered voters, with total votes of 28,481 or 39.6 percent.

For more on St. John-Cunning, see <https://www.marcia4schools.com/>

For more on Kevin Pinkney, endorsed by the GOP, see <https://pinkney4schoolboard.com/>

# Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week, Nov. 11-18

## Both hunger and homelessness are on the rise.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Student Campaign Against Hunger designate the week before Thanksgiving as National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. And while you might think that's not really needed here in one of the nation's wealthiest counties, you would be wrong.

At Oct. 10's Fairfax County Board of Supervisors meeting, John W. Foust (Dranesville) along with Chairman Jeff McKay, Supervisor Dalia Palchik (Providence), and Supervisor Walter Alcorn (Hunter Mill reminded county residents of the upcoming Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.

"As we approach Thanksgiving and other winter holidays, many families around Fairfax County and



The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors meets Tuesday, Oct. 10.

across the country will gather and celebrate with their loved ones. Unfortunately, there are those who will not be able to share the pleasures of this joyful season due to the realities of food insecurity and homelessness," Foust said. He added that despite significant efforts by the county and numerous nonprofits and faith-based organizations, many county residents do not have adequate food resources.

Foust cited numbers by Feeding America, the largest hunger relief organization in the United States, which has produced estimates for Fairfax County. Their map, the Meal Gap Report, estimated that in 2021, over 60,000 people in the

Fairfax County faced food insecurity.

Similarly, according to Foust, Fairfax County has not avoided the humanitarian challenges caused by homelessness every year. The Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness partners with several nonprofits to conduct a Point-in-Time Count of those experiencing homelessness throughout the county.

The January 2023 count reported a 10 percent increase in the overall number of people experiencing homelessness compared to the past year. "An extremely distressing finding of that was the count showed that the number of

people and families with children experiencing homelessness increased by 33 percent," Foust said.

Helping community members in greatest need of food and housing assistance necessitates a comprehensive and compassionate approach involving collaboration between government agencies, nonprofit and faith-based organizations, and individual community members.

"We're fortunate to live in a county that cares. The more we are aware of the challenges of food insecurity and homelessness, the more likely we are to come together to address how we solve those challenges," Foust said.

The Board approved Foust's motion to have staff prepare a proclamation declaring the week of Nov. 11 to 18 Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week in Fairfax County, to be presented at the board's October 24 meeting. County employees and community members who work to address the issues of hunger and homelessness in Fairfax County were encouraged to attend the presentation.

## Families Overflow Local Shelter in Fairfax County

The Embury Rucker Community Shelter, a residential shelter with 70 beds in Reston, continues to see an increase in the number of families referred to Cornerstones for assistance. From January 2023 to September 2023, according to Maura Williams, vice president of Housing and Community Services at Cornerstones, there has been a 21 percent increase. "We currently have 24 families in overflow shelter situations, meaning we've had to locate them somewhere else outside of the Embury Rucker Shelter."

To give to Cornerstones, visit <https://www.cornerstonesva.org/ways-to-give/?form=Donation>

# Fairfax Hires First Deputy City Manager

**Valmarie Turner is a welcome addition to Fairfax City government.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City has hired its first-ever deputy city manager. She is Valmarie Turner, and she brings nearly three decades of local government experience to the job. She began her new position Oct. 16 and is now working directly with City Manager Rob Stalzer on a variety of tasks critical to the smooth and efficient operation of the City.

Turner formerly worked for Loudoun County, where she's been the assistant county administrator since 2017. In addition, she's served since January as Loudoun's acting director of Finance and Procurement. She holds a master's degree in public administration with a specialization in public policy, plus a bachelor's degree in business economics.

"With Valmarie's hiring, the City of Fairfax continues to attract top-notch talent, and we're very excited to have her on our team," said Stalzer. "Her experience and unique skillset will help City staff continue to deliver projects and services that maintain the high quality of life in the City of Fairfax."

Indeed, Turner's expertise includes extensive, operational knowledge of matters such as affordable housing, community building and planning, economic development, social and human services, public-improvement projects, relationship building and financial management.

She's also the first Black woman to hold such a senior post in Fairfax City's administration. However, said City Mayor Catherine Read, Turner earned this position because "She was a standout candidate in a field of excellent candidates." She was found through a national search conducted in May and June by executive-recruitment firm Raftelis. Then, after Read and the City Council reviewed Turner's credentials, Stalzer hired her.

Besides her work in Loudoun County, Turner received the Credentialed Manager designation with the International City/County Management Assn. (ICMA-CM). She's also a certified Housing Development Finance Specialist, certified HOME Program Specialist and a certified Housing Counselor.

"She has almost 30 years of professional experience, the ability to analyze complex issues, create comprehensive recommendations for their resolution, and drive implementation across the organization," explained Stalzer. "This new position will help employees at all levels connect their work to the larger goals and projects to advance the work of the City of Fairfax."

When he was appointed city manager, some five years ago, Fairfax's finance director was serving as both assistant city manager and finance director which, said Stalzer, was "ineffective and not sustainable." His position was then converted to chief financial officer, and the assistant city manager function was intentionally not filled.

At that time, said Stalzer, the City had many other higher-priority organizational and personnel needs, so it focused on filling them. But now that Turner has joined Fairfax, he said she'll work with department heads and other City leaders in support of the city manager "to ensure that the mayor and city council's priorities are strategically managed, the results are measured, and all services meet the established goals and performance standards."

As for Read, she said, "I'm excited to have Valmarie Turner on board. It's always good to see women get opportunities for which they are eminently qualified – which is certainly the case here. She brings diversity to our senior-leadership team through her unique professional experiences, a fresh perspective, and a skillset that fills gaps we have around affordable housing and addressing homelessness."

As deputy city manager, Turner will serve as a partner and advisor to the city manager, senior-leadership team, and City staff in leading, managing, planning, organizing, directing and evaluating City operations and programs.

On behalf of the city manager, she'll liaison with the mayor, council, residents and City departments and will be involved in capital-budget preparation, monitoring and implementation. She'll also coordinate and manage special projects and focused efforts such as the City's work to meet the challenges associated with unhoused people in Fairfax.

In addition, Stalzer said Turner will eventually provide oversight of specific departments as assigned by him, as well as help plan and administer projects and programs. Reporting directly to Stalzer, she'll also act for the city manager in his absence.

Besides everything else, Turner has served in numerous professional associations, including ICMA, Virginia Local Government Management Assn., Virginia Women Leading Government, League of Women in Government, National Forum for Black Public Administrators, National Association of County Administrators, and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Racial Equity Workgroup.

At the start of the Oct. 24 City Council meeting, Read mentioned Turner's hiring, saying, "She comes from a wonderful background, with a wealth of skills that will truly benefit our City." Afterward, Read said she connected with Turner immediately. "I look forward to working with her," she added. "Fairfax City is fortunate to have a person of her caliber join our talented and committed senior-leadership team."



PHOTO COURTESY OF MATT KAISER  
**Valmarie Turner**

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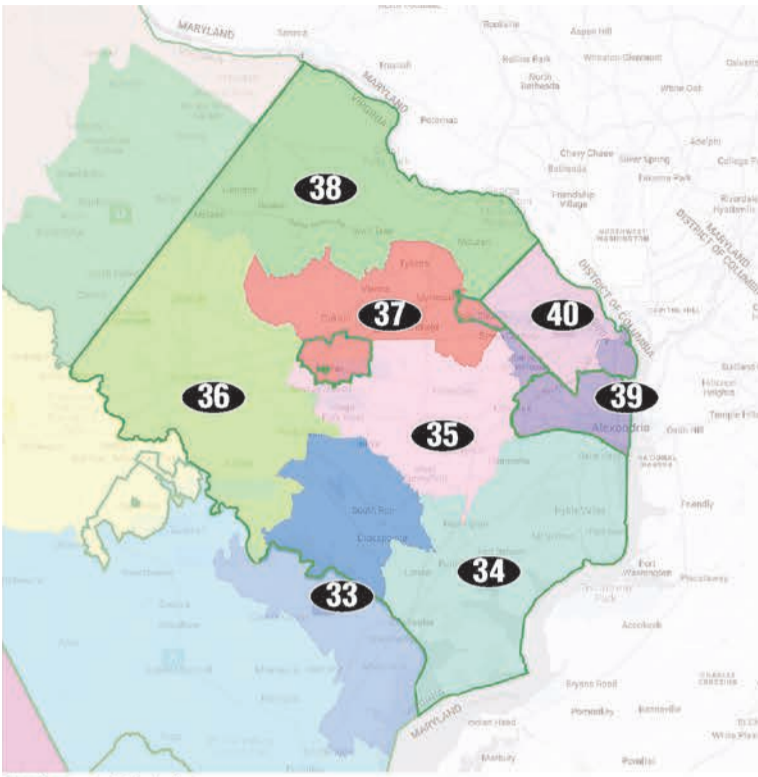
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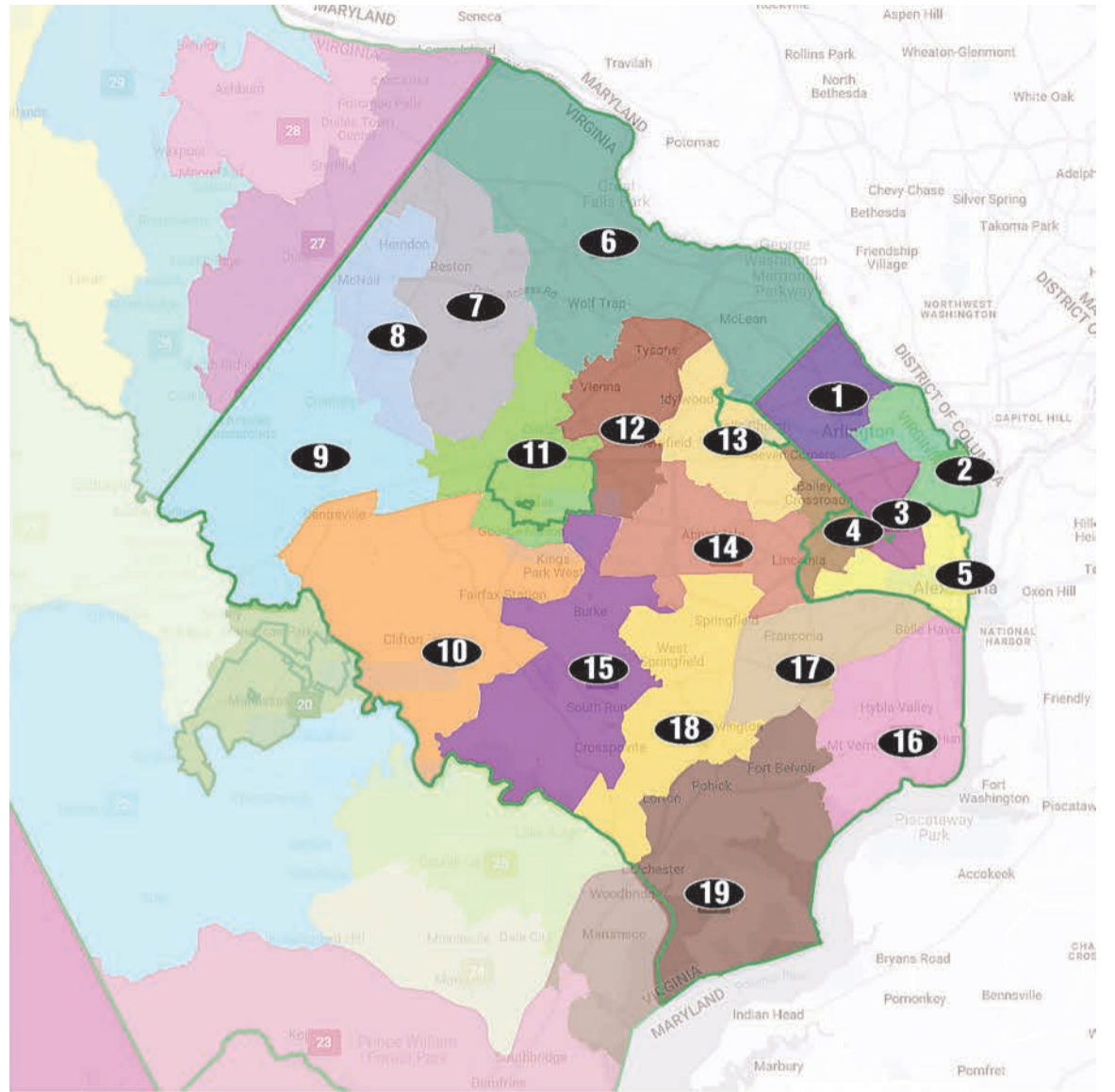
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# CANDIDATE CONNECTION



Va Senate District



Va House of Delegates Districts

# Go Vote

Turnout could alter state political control.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

A slight shift in the vote in Fairfax County's midterm elections on Nov. 7 could determine which party controls Virginia and what legislation is passed. The potential ramifications could be far-reaching, positioning the 2024 election on abortion and Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin's (R) national prospects.

The Virginia Democratic Party lost its 2019 election trifecta in the gubernatorial and state legislative elections in 2021. A state government trifecta occurs when one political party holds majorities in the governor's office and the state legislature's two chambers, the House and the Senate. Following the November 2021 election, the Republican Party controls the office of the governor, as well as the House of Delegates.

If Virginia Republicans win both chambers of the General Assembly on Nov. 8, 2023, by retaining or increasing their slim majority in the state House and gaining the Senate, it will be a Republican trifecta. The trifecta would allow Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R) to push through his conservative agenda, including his 15-week abortion ban, which the Democratic-controlled Senate rejected. Despite a Republican-controlled Virginia House of Delegates since January 2022, a Democratic-controlled Virginia Senate has limited the governor's ability to pass much of his agenda.

What could make this November's midterm elections a wild card is that all 100 seats in the GOP-controlled Virginia House

of Delegates and the 40 Senate seats are up for grabs under new, untested district maps that were purposefully drawn without regard for where legislators lived. The final maps paired or even tripled incumbents in the same districts. Legislators retired, and seats became available, making predictions more difficult and setting the stage many for first time legislators.

Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R) was the first Republican in Virginia's gubernatorial election to win a statewide election since 2009. Youngkin won by the narrowest margin in a Virginia gubernatorial election since 1989, with 50.6 percent of the vote to Democratic candidate Terry McAuliffe's 48.6 percent. It was also the first time that a Virginia statewide candidate did not win in one of the Northern Virginia counties of Loudoun, Prince William, or Fairfax, or one of their independent cities.

The Fairfax County School Board will have record turnover, and is not immune from the culture battleground seen around the country.

There is an unexpected twist in the plot for the Franconia school board seat.

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.

More than 57,000 voters have already voted, and more than 650,000 active voters have not voted. Early voting continues through Saturday, Nov. 4. Election Day is Nov. 7, voters must vote at their assigned polling place, and all polling places will be

open from 6 a.m. - 7 p.m.

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

Don't miss this week's Candidate Connection featuring candidates for General Assembly. Here are links to previous week's Candidate Connection:

### Candidate Connection

Candidates for Sheriff, Fairfax County, City of Fairfax

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/oct/11/candidate-connection/>

### Clerk of Court for Fairfax County

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/oct/11/clerk-of-court/>

### Election - Chairman-Board of Supervisors

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/oct/18/candidate-connection/>

### District Members, Board of Supervisors

Dranesville, Hunter Mill, Providence & Sully Districts

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/oct/25/north-district-members-board-of-supervisors/>

### District Members, Board of Supervisors

Braddock, Franconia, Mount Vernon,

Providence & Springfield Districts

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/oct/25/south-district-members-board-of-supervisors/>

### Member School Board by District

Dranesville, Hunter Mill, Mason, Providence & Sully districts

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/oct/25/member-school-board-by-district/>

### Member School Board by District

Braddock, Franconia, Mount Vernon, Providence & Springfield Districts

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/oct/25/member-school-board-by-district-south/>

### Candidate Connection: School Board At Large

Three open seats, zero incumbents, nine challengers

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/oct/11/candidate-connection-school-board-at-large/>

### Vienna Town Council

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/oct/25/vienna-town-council/>

### Soil & Water Conservation District Board

<https://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/sep/27/race-for-soil-water-conservation-district-board/>

# CANDIDATE CONNECTION

## Senate District 33

### Mike Van Meter (R)

Mike Van Meter (R), candidate for Virginia Senate in District 33. I graduated from the University of Florida in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in political science and spent eight years in the U.S. Navy as a helicopter pilot. I received a Master of Arts in Human Relations from the University of Oklahoma. I worked in corrections in the Charles County, MD, sheriff's office, as a police officer in Washington Metropolitan, DC, and as an FBI agent for over twenty years and retired in 2019. I obtained a second Master of Arts in Addictions Counseling and Co-Occurring Disorders from the Hazelden Betty Ford Graduate School for Addictions Studies. I am currently an addictions therapist at a major hospital.

Response: In speaking with a voter in Prince William County, I had a discussion about how fentanyl is the leading cause of death in America today for people between the ages of 18 and 39. I have had numerous voters tell me they are concerned that this drug will destroy our nation because the death rates go up every month.

As an addiction therapist, this sentiment hit home with me since I work with people dying from addiction every day. Many legislators do not realize quite how bad this problem is and therefore do not prioritize it. Additionally, they would not know what to do about it even if they did. It is imperative that we make battling not only fentanyl but all illicit drugs a priority.

I will introduce legislation that will provide resources to our law enforcement to stop the influx of this drug, provide training to our responders, and provide the necessary drug prevention education to our children. I will work tirelessly to help fellow legislators recognize the importance of this issue and gain their support in dealing with what is clearly a health problem that is quickly turning into a national security problem.

I will work to convince my fellow legislators that our number one priority in the General Assembly is the protection of the people of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

VanMeterforVirginia.com

### Jennifer D. Carroll Foy (D)

Jennifer D. Carroll Foy (D), 42, Candidate for Virginia Senate District 33. I am a public defender, former foster parent, and proud Virginia Military Institute graduate. In 2017, I took my lifelong fight for others to the State House and became the first public defender ever elected to the General Assembly. Now, I am running for State Senate to continue fighting for Virginia families.

Response: While knocking on doors last weekend, I met a teacher who described her experience navigating our public school



Mike Van Meter

system at a time when staff are underpaid, schools are underfunded and understaffed, and teachers are vilified. We connected about how both of our kids sometimes don't get picked up by the bus until after school has started due to understaffing.

I will never forget the pain in her voice as she described the fear that staff and teachers live with as gun violence continues to terrorize our communities. We can and must do better for our kids.

Growing up in the Petersburg school system, I know firsthand the importance of strong and safe public schools. I will fight to pass legislation to increase teacher pay and staff retention and ensure the state pays its fair funding share. I will also fight to remove unnecessary testing and bureaucratic burdens on teachers, increase mental health services and after-school programs, and institute an assault weapons ban.

This will be a natural continuation of my work as a delegate, where I raised teacher pay and passed gun safety legislation, earning me the support of school board members and teachers across my district and the Commonwealth. In the State Senate, I will urge my colleagues to join me in this fight because when we give teachers the benefits and wages they deserve and the tools they need to help our kids succeed, we will revitalize our classrooms and the next generation. <https://jenniferrollfoyc.com/>

## Senate District 34

### Mark A. Springman (R)

Mark A. Springman (R). I grew up in a military family, and because of that, I grew up all over the country. As part of that, I developed an appreciation for comparative politics — seeing how other places do things and using that as a model for how things should or should not be done. That is the best thing I can offer voters — someone who isn't willing to call it good enough and constantly seeks to improve.

Response: I was chatting with a constituent in the Saratoga precinct. She started off by saying she had just moved up here from Florida and was a registered Democrat there. We chatted for a bit and eventually found we both shared a deep appreciation for history. We started talking about education. One of the things we discussed was efficiency in education and Latin. We discussed how Latin, if taught over the course of K-12, gives students a basis in English, Grammar, Romance Languages, Classical Literature, History, Science, and Law.

I would sponsor a bill to create a merit-based scholarship to allow more Virginia high schoolers to attend UVA's summer Latin program and another bill that would cover part of the cost for teachers to attend if they committed to teaching Latin at their respective schools. [MarkSpringmanforVA.com](http://MarkSpringmanforVA.com)

### Scott A. Surovell (D)

Scott A. Surovell (D) Senator Scott Surovell has represented Eastern Fairfax County in

the General Assembly since 2010. Surovell is a lifelong Mount Vernon resident and graduate of West Potomac High School, James Madison University, and UVA Law. He practices law and has dedicated his legislative career to fighting for Northern Virginia's fair share, protecting consumers, and preserving our environment for future generations.

Response: In 2015, I was elected to serve Prince William County for the first time. One issue my new constituents made me aware of was the potential for water contamination at the Possum Point Power Plant. Dominion had four clay-lined ponds containing toxic chemicals right on the banks of the Potomac River. The neighbors I spoke with in that community convinced me we needed to fix the issue immediately. Some neighbors of the plant said that they were drinking exclusively bottled water, and many were worried about the potential for widespread contamination if extreme weather caused the ponds to breach and overflow into the river. This was an issue in our backyard and several communities across the Commonwealth. I worked with industry representatives, grassroots advocates, and my constituents to pass legislation forcing Dominion to spend \$1 billion more than they wanted to to clean up the problem and do it right. <https://scottsurovell.org/>



Scott A. Surovell

## Senate District 35

### Mark Vafiades (R)

Mark Vafiades (R), candidate for Virginia Senate in District 35, works in healthcare, specializing in electronic health record management. He has worked in the private sector for the federal and state governments, has owned a small business, and is a retired reserve Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputy who worked in patrol for 20 years.

Mark's passion is advocating for citizens and families, especially regarding how government legislation affects them financially and otherwise.

Response: The three priority issues that Mark is highlighting (which, based on conversations with voters, are also their key issues) are as follows: Education Transparency/Parental Rights; Crime Control/Supporting Police; Cost of Living/High Taxes. [markforva.com](http://markforva.com)

### David W. Marsden (D)

David W. Marsden (D), candidate for Virginia Senate, District 35. Senator Dave Marsden was first elected to the Virginia Senate in 2011, and he served in the Virginia House of Delegates beginning in 2006. Prior



Mark Vafiades



David W. Marsden

to his time in the Virginia General Assembly and after years of experience in juvenile justice, Marsden was appointed Chief Deputy/Acting Director in 2000 for the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice and served under Governors Gilmore and Warner.

Response: In the Senate, Marsden has sponsored and passed many bills, and he currently serves on the following Senate committees: Transportation (Chair); Finance & Appropriations; Commerce & Labor; Agriculture, Conservation, & Natural Resources; and Rules; and Economic Development & Natural Resources (Chair); Public Safety; Transportation; Energy; Labor & Employment; and Companion Animals (Chair).

Marsden was born in Alexandria, Va., and has lived in the Fairfax area for his whole life. He graduated from W.T. Woodson High School and then from Randolph-Macon College. Marsden and his wife raised their three children in Fairfax County, where they graduated from Lake Braddock High School.

Response: This past week, I met with a group of constituents from Greenspring Senior Living who brought to my attention a problem that residents are experiencing. It would appear that if someone leaves Greenspring for a different level of care, they are responsible for 3 months' additional rent. If they move to a higher level of care at Greenspring and then depart due to death or move to a different facility, they are again charged 3 months' rent. This practice occurs in only some Erickson communities, and the rules seem to differ in many adult facilities operated by other entities.

This appears to be blatantly unfair and inconsistent. While residents signed a contract allowing this practice, some states banned such practices or limited them to 30 days of additional rent. Virginia needs to join the states that have taken action to eliminate or scale back this practice. It can cost residents or estates between \$30,000 and \$60,000. I intend to pursue legislation to address this critical need. <https://marsdenforsenate.nationbuilder.com/>

## Senate District 36

### Julie Anna Perry (R)

Julie Anna Perry (R), candidate for Virginia Senate District 36, Did not respond. [JulieforSenate.com](http://JulieforSenate.com)



Julie Anna Perry

### Stella G. Pekarsky (D)

Stella G. Pekarsky (D), candidate for Virginia Senate District 36, grew up in a working-class immigrant family. Her parents' emphasis on education ignited her passion for ensuring every child receives a high-quality public education. She holds a BA in American Government and Politics, a minor in International Relations, and a Master of Education in Multicultural/Multilingual Education. [SEEHELPING.COM](http://SEEHELPING.COM)



Stella G. Pekarsky

# CANDIDATE CONNECTION

FROM PAGE 7

cation from George Mason University.

Stella began her professional career as a public school ESOL teacher and taught in the Sully district, which she currently represents on the Fairfax County School Board and has served as Chairman. Stella and her husband own a local air charter company. They have six children. She has been a long-time engaged community member, serving on PTAs, the Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees, HOAs, and other organizations.

Response: Stella's priorities include fighting for an economy that works for all, investing in public education and teacher pay, gun violence prevention, and fighting against restrictions on abortion access and voting rights. Her local service and community ties and relationships in Richmond will allow her to "hit the ground running" on day one to deliver for the 36th.

Stella most enjoys solving seemingly small issues that have a huge impact on the lives of individuals. Recently, a constituent's children were disenrolled from their school two weeks into the new year when their waiver expired due to new home construction delays. Stella worked with administrators to center the needs of the students, for whom a move would have negative impacts, and was able to keep the kids in their new school while their home construction concluded. For Stella, there is no problem too small, and she will work tirelessly on behalf of her constituents. <https://stellapekarsky.com/>

## Senate District 37

### Kenneth D. "Ken" Reid (R)

Kenneth D. "Ken" Reid (R), candidate for Virginia Senate District 37. Resident of Tysons; 10 years serving in a local elected office in Loudoun County; newsletter



Kenneth D. "Ken" Reid

business owner (1991–2021) and technical writer; commissioner, Fairfax County Landlord-Tenant Commission; former member, Northern Virginia Regional Commission, Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and liaison to various town and county boards and commissions; B.A. Rutgers; M.A. University of Missouri School of Journalism; Orthodox Jew; father of twins, James and Lara, who graduated Flint Hill School.

Response: While door-knocking in Fairfax City, a number of residents told me they felt it was unfair that they needed three people in a car to use the 66 and 495 express lanes;

it had previously been two people in a car. They said the roads are still congested because people don't want to pay the exorbitant tolls. Signage is also confusing.

So, I set out a campaign to provide rebates to single-occupant drivers who use the express lanes and restore HOV-2. In my view, there is sufficient capacity on the express lanes to ensure a 55-mph or 60-mph ride for paying users, even with additional traffic. We have to equalize tolls on I-66 inside the Beltway with rates for 66 outside the Beltway, and use the money for additional widening, not trail and transit projects that are not alleviating congestion that much. The lack of reliability of Metro and buses and continued congestion in this area adds to the stress factor, and I believe it's the government's job to help.

Highlights of some of the legislation I propose: Revise the state composite index, which disadvantages Northern Virginia counties and cities for state school funding. Research the feasibility of Medicaid paying for obesity drugs and weight reduction surgery (gastric bypass) to cut down on obesity-related ailments like diabetes and heart-disease and improve citizens' longevity and quality of life, especially the poor. Expand community health centers to give people in underserved areas access to specialists. A number of providers do not accept Medicaid, leading patients to use emergency rooms

which are costly. Examine the feasibility of establishing job training and mentoring partnerships for minors at risk of committing crimes and matching them with businesses in need of workers to remove them from bad neighborhoods and family situations. We mustn't make it easier to commit crimes than to get a job and be productive in society. [KenReid.org](http://KenReid.org)

### Saddam Azlan Salim (D)

Saddam Azlan Salim (D), candidate for Virginia Senate District 37, is running to ensure we protect Virginia's future by investing in public education, ensuring access to reproductive healthcare, and expanding gun violence prevention measures. Saddam's story illustrates why he's running: His family was forced to leave Bangladesh due to catastrophes caused by climate change, so he knows firsthand why we must address the climate crisis and protect our environmental resources. His family experienced homelessness when they first arrived here, but Fairfax County's affordable housing program helped



Saddam Azlan Salim

them thrive. He also learned English and thrived in our public education system, earning a bachelor's and master's degree from George Mason University. Finally, his mother's life was saved by access to reproductive care, so he understands why we must ensure access for all.

Salim is proof that investing in the programs we believe in — public education, healthcare, and housing — ensures a brighter future. He will also bring his financial consulting skills to the Senate to help make the most of our budget. Salim serves on the board of the Democratic Business Council and is co-chair of South Asians for America. <https://www.salimforsenate.com/>

## Senate District 39

### Sophia C. Moshasha (R)

Sophia C. Moshasha (R), candidate for Virginia Senate District 39 is a lifelong Virginian and advocate for community prosperity. At 34 years old, Sophia brings deep-rooted connections and a comprehensive understanding of Virginia's development. With expertise from her tenure in the Air Force's Small Business Innovation Program and dedication to advancing emerging technologies, she is committed to fostering small business growth, enhancing educational resources, and workforce development to ensure everyone has an opportunity for success.



Sophia C. Moshasha

Response: A local business owner approached me at a farmers market with a strong concern about the rising toll costs on the I-66 and I-495, affecting her ability to operate her delivery service. She emphasized how the tolls squeezed her margins and ultimately hurt her employees. She presented compelling information on how the high tolls were inflating the cost of living for families in Northern Virginia.

Her passionate plea stuck with me, prompting me to further investigate the tolling policies and their impacts. This business owner's story highlighted the need for immediate action to alleviate the burden on commuters.

In response to constituents' concerns about the high costs of commuting, I plan to sponsor legislation that focuses on refunding a significant portion of local tolls paid by Virginia-based commuters. Additionally, I intend to push for the restoration of HOV-2 lanes during specific hours on I-66 and I-495 to promote car-pooling, along with equalizing tolls on I-66 inside and outside the Beltway.

To gain bipartisan support, I will emphasize the direct positive impact on the lives of our constituents, stressing the potential economic benefits and reduced financial strain on local businesses. Collaborative discussions with opposing elected officials will highlight the bipartisan nature of this issue and the shared responsibility to support the community's well-being. [Sophia4VA.com](http://Sophia4VA.com)

### Adam P. Ebbin (D)

Adam P. Ebbin (D), 59, candidate for re-election in Virginia Senate District 39, took office in 2012 after serving for eight years in the House of Delegates. Adam has resided in Alexandria since 1989 and is a 1985 graduate of American University in Washington, D.C. He was a Fellow with the Flemming Foundation for Legislative Leadership in 2006 and at the University of Virginia's Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership in 2000. In 2012, Adam was also a Fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government.



Adam P. Ebbin

Response: Many persuasive and impactful constituents have shared their experiences with me over the years, including Virginians whose lives have been tragically impacted by gun violence. Those experiences led to my co-founding the Virginia Gun Violence Prevention Caucus and my championing and successfully passing legislation that banned firearms from state buildings.

Another instance where I worked closely with constituents was when an intrepid group of middle-school students organized to improve the physical conditions of their schools. They were impacted by mold in their classrooms. G.W. Middle School students conducted research,

asked questions, petitioned local school leaders, and reached out to me. Hearing from these young, organized student advocates was a breath of fresh air. As I told The Washington Post at the time, "Students deserve to be learning in a healthy environment, and staff and teachers who are in the same building year after year deserve to be teaching in a safe environment. These kids are making sure that this issue is dealt with adequately." In 2020, with the support and compelling testimony of these local Alexandria public school students, we passed legislation requiring school boards to develop mold testing and remediation plans and to quickly notify parents of the presence of mold in their children's schools. <https://www.adamebbin.com/>

# CANDIDATE CONNECTION: HOUSE OF DELEGATES

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.

More than 57,000 voters have already voted, and more than 650,000 active voters have not voted. Early voting continues through Saturday, Nov. 4. Election Day is

Nov. 7, voters must vote at their assigned polling place, and all polling places will be open from 6 a.m. - 7 p.m. For information on how and where to vote, including voting early, see <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/>

## District 10, House of Delegates,

### James A. Thomas Jr. (R)

James A. Thomas Jr. (R) With over 17 years of federal government service in both the legislative and executive branches, I have gained vast experience and knowledge of problem-solving in



James A. Thomas Jr.

the legislative process and how to work with public officials to achieve success with important pieces of legislation.

I was the first one in my family to attend college, and I earned a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from the University of Dayton. After the attacks on Sept. 11 and while in college, I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, serving combat deployments to Iraq. I spent the next decade and a half

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



# CANDIDATE CONNECTION: HOUSE OF DELEGATES

FROM PAGE 8

focused on national security policy, working on Capitol Hill and in the Pentagon. I understand the importance of working across the aisle to find common ground to shape, create, and implement legislative priorities and to be successful in addressing the challenges we face.

As a husband, father, and veteran, it is so important that we can work together to address the challenges our community faces and leave it better than we received it for the next generation.

Response: Since 2009, more individuals and families have moved out of Fairfax County than into it. The single largest contributing factor to this is the high cost of living in our area. Going door-to-door, I've met so many individuals who are frustrated with the increases in taxes and general affordability in our communities. Especially for those individuals on a fixed income, living in our area is just too difficult. The chief complaint is the car tax.

I believe it is time to eliminate this burdensome tax once and for all. We must first start by understanding where our money is being spent at both the state and local levels. To do this, we need to conduct a bi-annual audit to see where the money is going and how efficient departments and agencies are at collecting the revenue. From there, you can begin to make sound fiscal policy, make reforms to the tax code and structure, and ultimately remove the dreaded car tax.

With better transparency and accountability, we can begin to make informed policy decisions, create a diverse and dynamic economy, and begin to lower the cost of living for everyone while still allowing for sound strategic investments." ThomasforVirginia.com

## Dan I. Helmer (D)

Del. Dan I. Helmer (D) is a West Point graduate, an Iraq and Afghanistan veteran, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army Reserve, a Rhodes Scholar, and a small business leader. He lives in Fairfax



Del. Dan I. Helmer

with his wife Karen, a public school teacher, and their sons Aaron and Harris, who attend Fairfax County Public Schools. The son of an immigrant and the grandson of refugees who survived the Holocaust, Dan believes that patriotism means taking on the hard challenges of our time and putting country and community ahead of partisan politics. Dan is proud to serve the families of southwest Fairfax County in the House of Delegates.

Response: A year and a half ago, a constituent wrote to my office to share her personal story as we faced the fall of Roe and impending abortion bans. Lila (we are using a pseudonym to protect her privacy) shared the heartbreaking experience she and her family had suffered. After two years of trying, she and her husband were finally pregnant. At 12 weeks, they learned the fetus was not developing normally and would have to have many surgeries after birth. After much consideration, they decided to continue the pregnancy and endure the extensive neonatal care that would follow. By the 16th week, the abnormalities were tripling,

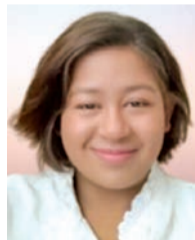
and the doctors informed them that the fetus, if it survived to birth, would only live a few hours. They made the agonizing decision to end the pregnancy. Without access to abortion, Lila explained, her experience would have been all the more traumatic. If she hadn't been able to secure a legal end to the unviable pregnancy, she would have had to carry a doomed pregnancy to term and would certainly have suffered greater mental anguish.

For Lila and all the other women in Virginia and in all the states across the South who come here to get the reproductive health care they can no longer get in the states that have outlawed abortion, Virginia is the last safe haven in the South. My wife was told after the birth of our second child that another pregnancy would likely kill her. Lila's and my wife's stories have motivated me to work even harder to codify the right to abortion in Virginia's Constitution. Stories like this remind us of the urgency for safe and accessible healthcare for every person and that the ability to make medical decisions should lie with the patient and their doctor, not politicians. <https://danhelmer.com/>

## District 11 House of Delegates

### Almira Mohammed (R)

Almira Mohammed (R) I am a 31-year-old woman of color; I'm a first time candidate that has no ties working a government position or for big corporations. I'm relatively unbiased and am here to better House District 11.



Almira Mohammed

Response: The car tax is the one issue I've been hearing about often. I've heard it so often that I felt I should use my candidacy to become an advocate for the current car tax to change. I hear it from Lyft and Uber drivers. I hear it from almost everyone I've come across at Republican committee meetings, and when I go campaign door knocking, I've heard it at the Fairfax City Fourth of July parade.

Interestingly, it stood out when I received a mention of the car tax in an email. The writer shared details about the issue, giving me a glimpse of what I can do as a delegate. I reached out to a member of the Board of Supervisors to find out why it's not being addressed, and while I received a response, it ultimately came to a dead end. I ended up contacting the governor's office to share my concerns. I haven't heard back from them.

I'm for repealing this car tax. We're in tough economic times, and the least we can do is address this tax. When you look at the details, it doesn't make sense. It even says on the Fairfax County government website that usually older vehicles have a lower value and that these values were elevated during COVID.

While the Board of Supervisors approved some assessment ratios and vehicle values declined, they're still high. I'm not 100 percent sure what kind of assessment the board made, but I know that when I talk to people

in the district, this car tax is brutal.

If elected, I will fight for it to change. I have no interest in convincing my opponent to lower the car tax; it's the basis of my platform. If something were to be done, it would have already been addressed. I doubt he hasn't heard about it. [AlmiraforVirginia.com](http://AlmiraforVirginia.com)

### David L. Bulova (D)

David L. Bulova (D) Married, 54, and a father of three children. Bachelor of Arts from William & Mary and a Master of Public Administration from Virginia Tech.



David L. Bulova

Currently, I am the representative for the 37th House District, and professionally, I am an environmental planner specializing in stormwater and Chesapeake Bay restoration. Examples of my community involvement include the Brain Injury Services, National Night Out Against Crime, and youth sports coach. I enjoy collaboration and problem-solving. In 2019, I was honored with the "Bridge Builder Award."

Response: Most of my bills result from conversations with constituents and local organizations. This has included legislation to help older adults age in place, combat human trafficking, protect families from identity theft, reduce overdose deaths, and slow the spread of invasive plants. During a meeting at Main Street Bagel, a constituent mentioned that over 100 Infants die unexpectedly each year in a sleep environment. This was verified in a report by the State Child Fatality Review Team. Tragically, the review team found that 95 percent of these deaths were preventable through parent education. As a father of three, I can't even imagine the pain of losing a child. It also struck me that when my wife and I were new parents, we knew little about safe sleep practices. The conversation led to the introduction of House Bill 1515, which requires information on safe sleep to be provided to new parents when they leave the hospital. We garnered the support of the Medical Society of Virginia, the American Academy of Pediatrics, INOVA Health Systems, and several other organizations. The bill ultimately passed the General Assembly unanimously. <http://www.davidbulova.com/>

## District 12, House of Delegates

Delegate Holly Seibold (D) is running unopposed.

## District 13 House of Delegates

### Dave A. Crance Jr. (Libertarian)

Dave A. Crance Jr. (Libertarian) Dave, his wife Suman, and their youngest children live just outside the City of Falls Church. After high school, he joined



Dave A. Crance Jr

the Army as a paratrooper, serving combat tours in both Central America and the Middle East. While attending community college, he worked as a bartender. Here, he found his true passion in life and never looked back — hospitality, where he could enjoy serving and meeting new people every day. Today, as a regional manager, he handles a portfolio of multiple hotel brands stretching from Maryland to Florida.

Dave gives back to the community through multiple organizations, including the Falls Church Chamber of Commerce, most recently serving as membership chair in 2022. He received the James S. Elkin Award for Humanitarianism in 2017. Dave has coached for the Little League, receiving multiple Coach of the Year awards. He is also the chaplain of the Falls Church VFW and works with our local school districts to coordinate the post's youth activities, scholarships, and educator of the year awards. He is a member of the Greater Falls Church Veterans Council and a member of the American Legion.

Response: While campaigning, a person contacted me and asked if I would drop by. I replied, "Sure," but on the day I was canvassing that part of my district, I realized his address was just south of the district line. Even though I knew he couldn't vote for me, I gave my word and called to let him know, but I'd still be happy to drop by if he wanted. He asked if that was okay, so I went to see him that afternoon.

I originally expected a senior citizen from the call, but I discovered he was middle-aged, and what I learned from him was Apert syndrome. He was very excited that I came by and wanted to show me his apartment. He was extremely proud, as he should be, of having been able to overcome his disability with help to stand on his own. But what he wanted to discuss really hit me hard.

He was frustrated that once he found a full-time job, he had to move back to part-time due to the risk of losing his benefits. "I just want to be able to work and not depend on others; maybe if you win, you can help with that." I have never been hit so hard by a story as I have been with his. Right now, I'm busy with the campaign, but I have already begun studying the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services program and Supplemental Security Income offerings. It is an area I'm finding a gap in, and if elected, I intend to see how we can do better. <https://www.dave4va.com/>

### Marcus B. Simon (D)

Marcus B. Simon (D), age 53. Early in his public service career, he served as an officer in the U.S. Army JAG Corps and is a co-founder of the Law Firm of Leggett, Simon, Freemyers



Marcus B. Simon

& Lyon and EKKO Title, a real estate title company. Marcus attended New York University as an undergrad and then attended The American University School of Law. First elected to the House in 2013, Marcus serves on the House Committees on Courts of Justice, Finance, and Communications, Technology & Innovation. He also serves as

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# CANDIDATE CONNECTION: HOUSE OF DELEGATES

FROM PAGE 9

the Deputy Floor Leader of the House Democratic Caucus. He's proud of his work to expand voting rights, enact common-sense gun violence prevention initiatives, address the student loan debt crisis, and prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Constituent service is one of the most important jobs a legislator has. Knocking on doors as a candidate, you have a lot of pleasant exchanges, but when knocking as an incumbent, you really get a chance to solve people's problems. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, one source of great frustration has been dealing with the Virginia Employment Commission. Many people who'd never needed unemployment benefits or government assistance before found themselves tangled up in a system that was tragically overwhelmed.

Every constituent case took months to resolve and, in some cases, years. Each one involved a personal story of hardship, of concerns about not being able to pay bills, and of not being able to care for their families, coupled with the general fear associated with the pandemic. Managing the caseload was paramount to ensuring that constituents felt heard and that we were going to work with them until it was resolved.

Because of the scope of the VEC's systemic problems, we passed legislation to overhaul internal processes, to finally implement the new online system, and to reduce the claims backlog. While the system still needs tweaking, progress has been made and will continue to happen. No one wants to be dependent on a state agency for their livelihood, but it is our duty to help those who need it the most. <https://vahousedems.org/members/marcus-simon/>

## District 14 House of Delegates

**Curtis L. Wells Jr. (R)**

Curtis L. Wells Jr. (R) Did not respond. [WellsWorksforVA.com](https://www.wellsworksforva.com)

**Vivian E. Watts (D)**

Del. Vivian E. Watts (D) Ranking Delegate on Courts and Finance Committees, Member of the Transportation and Rules Committees, and the Behavioral Health Commission; Former Secretary of Transportation and Public Safety; non-profit director; Fairfax Citizen of the Year; the University of Michigan B.A. with honors; I grew up on a farm, married Dave, and we raised Cindy and Jeff.

I was a 15-year citizen activist before being elected. Trying to understand what it meant to serve, I'd be disturbed after poignant door-to-door conversations: "I totally empathize, but I know I can't just go make all the changes needed. Am I just a hypocritical politician?" I finally resolved that if I hadn't heard those concerns or the reality of that person's life, I wouldn't be armed to make a difference whenever and however I could: by introducing a bill, amending other



**Vivian E. Watts**

bills or the budget, speaking out, and casting informed votes.

My expertise is in complicated fights for education funding, reduced class sizes, humane nursing home staffing, and modernizing taxes to reflect ability-to-pay in today's economy. As a strong advocate, I draw on many sources regarding mental health, women's control of all aspects of pregnancy, and converting to green energy. As an informed legislator, I appreciate the complex challenges of economic advancement and criminal justice.

Most importantly, I know that "showing up" is essential to absorbing multicultural diversity, knowing current transportation needs, appreciating community strengths and challenges, and continuing to learn from all sources—not just from advocates and my personal research but from real-life experiences. <https://vivianwatts.com/>

## Member, House of Delegates, District 15

**Marcus T. Evans (R)**

Marcus T. Evans (R) is a 44-year-old retired Army officer who has lived in Virginia since 2015 and Burke Centre since 2018. Marcus served two tours in Operation Iraqi Freedom, two overseas assignments in the Republic of Korea, one in Germany, and various assignments across the country. Marcus is married and has two children attending Terra Centre Elementary School. Marcus volunteers in the community and serves on the Board of Directors for Springfield/South County Youth Club (SYC); he is the Recreational Lacrosse Program Commissioner for SYC. Marcus holds a Bachelor of Science from Ohio State University, a Master of Arts from the University of Maryland University College, and a Master of Science from the Air Command and Staff College.

I have been serving my country and community my entire adult life. I believe our politicians think they are elected rulers, and as "workers," Virginians exist merely to fund their vanity. After seeing a lot of right and wrong, I believe I offer the voters of House of Delegates 15 a choice on what type of community they would like to live in.

Discriminating against students of Asian descent at Thomas Jefferson High School is wrong. Taxing the people of Virginia out of their homes and the food off their tables is wrong. Allowing drugs to enter our community is wrong. Criminals breaking into our cars at night is wrong.

If elected, I will work to pass legislation to bring back common sense and regular people's values.

Response: In September, the Burke Centre community had its annual festival, and as a candidate, I attended the festival to have an opportunity to speak with voters. At the festival, an older woman approached the table that displayed the party and candidate literature. I decided to use humor to break the ice and start a conversation. I asked her for her vote "so I could go to Richmond to make \$17,000 a year to help me pay my property taxes."

She looked me dead in the eye and said,



**Marcus T. Evans**

"I'm a retired school teacher. I get up at 6 a.m. to substitute teach so I can make \$80 a day so I can pay my property taxes and give some money to my daughter in Virginia Beach so she can pay her rent. I'm afraid I am going to lose my home."

Currently, there are relief programs for seniors, but they are income-based. This lady likely crossed the threshold for income tax relief and was forced back into the classroom. Every townhouse, rowhouse, or single-family home in House of Delegates District 15 starts at a half million dollars and only goes up, and yet there are two food banks within a half mile of each other on the Burke Centre Parkway.

If the shame of what politicians are doing to Virginians won't change the politicians, then maybe the voters can help replace them in Richmond. [MarcusforVA15.com](https://www.marcusforva15.com)

**Laura Jane Cohen (D)**

Laura Jane Cohen (D), age 47, went to the University of Georgia, was a preschool teacher, and since 2019 has served on the Fairfax County School Board. As a mom of two, she has long been a gun violence prevention advocate and will continue fighting for common-sense gun safety solutions.

Response: When you're knocking on doors, you get to not only talk to like-minded folks, but sometimes you're lucky enough to engage with people with opposing viewpoints who are interested in actual dialogue. They want to know why you hold certain positions and often want to tell you why they feel differently. Right before the primary, I spoke with a gentleman who told me that, as a gun owner, he didn't agree with my stance on guns. I might've tried to defend my position in the past, but this time, I decided to ask him what he disagreed with. We sat and talked for a long time. I shared that I grew up around guns and believed in responsible gun ownership. We shared that we both worried about keeping our kids safe, believed in keeping firearms out of the hands of domestic abusers, and wanted to ensure that everyone had to pass a background check. When we were done, he apologized for assuming I was "just one of those people who wanted to take away his guns."

It was an important reminder to engage with everyone willing to talk with me on this journey. Assuming things about each other only thwarts meaningful dialogue, and we all have much to learn about each other if we just sit and listen. <https://www.laurajane-cohen.com/about>



**Laura Jane Cohen**

## House of Delegates, District 16

**Candidate Paul Krizek (D) runs unopposed**

## House of Delegates, District 17

**Candidate Mark Sickles (D) runs unopposed**

## District 18 House of Delegates

**Edward F. McGovern (R)**

Edward F. McGovern (R) I am a retired Federal Employee, Department of the Army Civilian, who worked in resource management. I have lived in Springfield since 1993.

My wife and I raised our two kids here. We chose Fairfax County for its excellent schools and opportunities for everyone. Those are now in question. I earned a master's degree in public and international affairs from the University of Pittsburgh and a political science degree from Shippensburg University.

Response: Two items have come up frequently with voters in the 18th. Taxes are a real problem; people cannot afford to stay in Fairfax County with skyrocketing assessments and car tax values. Voters are unhappy to hear that what we get back on the tax dollar from Richmond has plunged over the last ten years from over 30 cents on the dollar to 21.5 cents.

This accelerated with the Democratic one-party rule. Fairfax County did much better in Richmond when both Republicans and Democrats sent delegates to the General Assembly. Special taxes for Fairfax County are not the answer. We received more of our hard-earned dollars back when there was a balance. America is about checks and balances at every level, not one-party rule.

There is ambivalence regarding abortion in the 18th District, but voters do not support my opponent's extreme position on abortion. They are not happy that a multi-billion-dollar special interest group has poured out-of-state money into local politics. With advances in medical knowledge, there is interest in looking at Virginia's current stance, which is 22–24 weeks. My view is that the government does not solve problems, but legislation can reflect community values.

Moving restrictions to 15 weeks in Virginia would be an opportunity to develop a full discussion on a complicated, sensitive topic. It is also important to note that special interests that fund political campaigns will not reflect our community values. [EdMcGovernVA.org](https://www.edmccgovernva.org)

**Kathy K. L. Tran (D)**

Kathy K. L. Tran (D) First elected in 2017, Kathy Tran has pushed to expand healthcare, fully fund our public schools, and make Virginia more inclusive. She is a former child refugee from Vietnam and now leads the Virginia Asian American and Pacific Islander Caucus. Kathy, her husband, and five children live in West Springfield.

Response: In 2021, a constituent told me her husband was killed in the line of duty while in the military, but Virginia's tax exemption for Gold Star widows did not apply to her.

Currently, the Virginia Constitution provides tax relief for surviving spouses of ser-



**Edward F. McGovern**



**Kathy K. L. Tran**



From left are Kaylee Williams and Matilda Awad as Romeo and Juliet.



Rehearsing are (from left) Kaylee Williams, Kat Pascual and twin sisters Matilda and Jessica Awad.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

## Fairfax High Presents 'Romeo and Juliet'

**A fresh, new take on a classic love story.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Featuring a cast and crew of nearly 60, Fairfax High is presenting "Romeo and Juliet." But this version is set in a different time period than the original and has a surprising amount of humor.

"It's challenging for the students because it's Shakespeare," said Theater Director Chris Whitney. "But they're making his language accessible to audience members, so they'll understand what's going on at all times. It's been over 10 years since this school did a Shakespeare play, so it's good to bring it back. And the actors are finding the humor in this one, while also playing the tragic parts very well."

The curtain rises Thursday-Friday, Nov. 9-10, at 7 p.m.; and Saturday, Nov. 11, at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$7, students and \$10, adults via [fxplayers.org](http://fxplayers.org) or \$12 at the door.

Whitney put this play into a dystopian era, explaining that "We're just coming out of the pandemic, and this show is about two people finding love in a hopeless place. In fact, Rihanna's hit song, 'We Found Love,' is even in this show. It's not a musical, but it's during a party scene with dancing."

The actors also have a professional fight director, Robb Hunter, who's teaching them how to safely use stage knives and clubs during some action scenes. "For people who don't like Shakespeare, I hope they'll appreciate the language," said Whitney. "And for those who do, I hope they'll enjoy the fresh take of the world we're creating."

Another thing different about Fairfax's production is that the male role of Romeo is being played by a girl, senior Kaylee Williams. Why? "Because she auditioned for it and was great," said Whitney.

"I wanted to get more experience with fight choreography," said Williams. "And

I also like Shakespeare, so I wanted to try out for the lead. And since this version is set in the future, I thought a girl playing Romeo would make it unique and set it apart from other versions.

"Romeo's about 17 and is a lovesick, hopeless romantic who also likes hanging with his friends. At first, he's in love with another girl, but then sees Juliet and falls in love. So one of the show's messages is, don't rush into things and tread lightly."

She said it's fun playing a male role because it gets her out of her comfort zone and lets her explore different acting styles. And, she added, "It's a cool experience to do Shakespeare. I've never done one of his plays before, so it's a good learning experience for me."

Regarding this production, Williams said, "Since it's set in a dystopian time period, we have issues that are current and will help the audience connect to the show. Some examples are the feuding between two powerful families and the fact that the dance party is held at a club, instead of a royal ballroom."

Portraying Juliet is senior Matilda Awad. Describing her character as "both naïve and mature," Awad said Juliet is "intrigued by the prospect of love and how it'll enhance her life. She wants to be an adult faster and thinks love will bring her there. She's also bubbly and always willing to talk to people and make new friends – and that's what leads her to Romeo."

"I can relate to her because we're both teenage girls experiencing love for the first time," continued Awad. "And I get to make lots of jokes and show both maturity and immaturity. I also play very dramatic scenes. I'm trying to show Juliet as a moody, hormonal teen who – when she doesn't get her own way – can even be whiny." She also noted that, since her real-life twin sister, Jessica, portrays Juliet's family nurse, it's easy to show the dynamic between those two characters onstage.

She said audiences will like this show because Whitney included elements and trends prevalent in today's world, such as TikTok dances and "people being split between ideas and not wanting to compromise – and how that can lead to heartbreak. And the actors really emphasize all the jokes so the audience will understand them."

Junior Kat Pascual plays Friar Laurence, Verona's main priest. "He's a father figure

to Romeo, who's a Montague, but also friendly with Juliet's family, the Capulets. So he's a neutral force trying his best to stop the feud between the two families. He's like a guidance counselor – he wants what's best for everybody but doesn't have the best methods of making it happen, so he's under lots of pressure."

Pascual's having a good time playing this part because, she said, "I genuinely enjoyed Shakespeare, even before this show, so I like making it accessible to modern audiences. And it's fun to be the level-headed person amidst all the craziness. I'm in a lot of scenes with Kaylee, who's Romeo, and I like playing off the heightened emotions other people are throwing at me."

She said all the actors are making sure the show is funny. "The first half is truly hilarious," said Pascual. "And even after that, when it gets serious, it'll still be more relatable than people expect it to be. Seeing it performed live, in front of them, will make it more tangible."

Portraying the Capulet family's nurse and maid is senior Jessica Awad. "She acts as the maternal figure for Juliet because her actual mother isn't very present in her life and doesn't give her the love she needs," explained Awad. "She's responsible for Juliet and cares a lot for her, so she at first advises Juliet to marry eligible bachelor Paris because he'd be a safe option for her. And the family's against Romeo because he's a Montague."

Noting that her character has no filter and says what she thinks, Awad said, "She'll even tell dirty jokes and speaks her mind honestly to Juliet. I like playing her because she shows lots of different emotions. She's sad when Juliet's upset that Romeo's been banished, but is happy, funny and laughing with her in the beginning of the show. And because Matilda's my sister, it's easy to portray that love and strong bond between our characters."

She said people will like "how many parts of the show are so lively, but you can also cry with Juliet and Romeo and really feel their love and how it's a rollercoaster of emotions. I think the theme of love will make a big impact on the audience."

## HOUSE OF DELEGATES

FROM PAGE 10

vicemembers killed in action. However, a group of surviving spouses are omitted from this tax exemption. For example, the spouse of a soldier killed in a combat zone by a helicopter crash due to the malfunction of their helicopter would not be eligible since the soldier was not killed by enemy fire. However, if the soldier survived, was determined to be 100 percent disabled, and passed away, their surviving spouse would be eligible.

We must honor the sacrifices of service members and surviving spouses equitably. My constituent and I passed a law giving localities the option to provide these surviving spouses with tax relief. Fairfax County then passed a resolution giving these spouses relief in our county. In 2023, we worked to pass legislation as the first step toward amending the Constitution to include this exemption. This year, I'll collaborate with my constituents to pass legislation as the final step before Virginians can directly vote to amend the Constitution. <https://www.kathyfordelegate.com/>

### House of Delegates, District 19

**Candidate Rozia Henson (D) runs unopposed**

### Candidate for Fairfax County School Board at Large

**Linda Pellegrino**

FCPS is facing three important issues:

School safety, academic excellence and accountability.

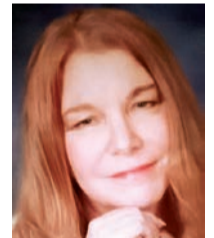
School safety is my number one issue. Currently only high schools have safety officers.

There is a need to install sensors in the bathrooms to detect vapors of electronic cigarettes, which in some cases has had student use of marijuana-laced with fentanyl.

Academic excellence should be FCPS's most important priority. It is important to make teacher salaries compensatory with the performance of the students. SAT results have dropped since 2021. We need a return to academic excellence. My solution is to emphasize academics in science, math and the arts, and an emphasis on phonics in early childhood development in elementary schools, to be included with parental involvement in reading comprehension, vocabulary and grammar. The high schools should offer college academics as well as a career track for careers in plumbing, auto mechanics and other practical jobs to help students find full employment.

I support all text books and other materials in the government school system that are for the purposes of education in the sciences and arts. However, the sexually explicit material in FCPS is inappropriate.

Responses for other candidates for school board at large ran earlier in October. See <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2023/oct/11/candidate-connection-school-board-at-large/>



**Linda Pellegrino**

# ENTERTAINMENT

## NOW THRU NOV 10

**Into the Hothouse Exhibit.** At Gillespie Gallery of Art, GMU's Art and Design Building, 4515 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Mason Exhibitions presents Into the Hothouse, an immersive site-specific installation by Chicago-based artist Aimée Beaubien. The exhibit is a category-defying constellation of dozens of gathered, printed, and hand-made works that explore botanical and environmental subject matter. Natural forms, technological interventions, and laborious craft techniques abound. The gallery is free and open to the public from Monday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## 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/>

## FUNDAY MONDAY

**"Funday Monday is open to children of all ages, however is best suited for the preschool set!** Funday Monday runs from 10:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. and — unless otherwise noted — is held at Fairfax Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. There are plenty of free parking lots/garages in Old Town Fairfax. Stroller access is available at the side entrance Old Town Hall facing Route 236/Main Street. For more information visit [www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts)."

### SCHEDULE

Nov 6 -- Miss Mollie's Musical Fun  
Nov. 13 -- No Program  
Nov. 20 -- My Gym  
Nov. 27 -- Drew Blue Shoes Magic  
Dec. 4 -- Music Together Sing and Groove  
Dec. 11 -- My Gym  
Dec. 18 -- TBD

## SATURDAYS THRU NOVEMBER

**Reston Museum.** See how Reston's founding principles were implemented by joining the upcoming walking tour. Tour will be held 10 a.m. every Saturday through November. Sign up at: <https://www.restonmuseum.org/event-details/guided-walking-tour-reston-founding-2023-09-09-10-00>

## NOW THRU NOV. 7

**Cox Farms Fall Festival 2023.** At Cox Farms, corner of Braddock Road and Pleasant Valley Road, Centreville. The Fall Festival is filled with family-friendly entertainment and attractions including slides, swings, animals, hayrides and more. From the world-famous hayride to our corny Cornundrum and giant slides, our Fall Festival has something for the whole family. The Fall Festival is open Sept. 16-17, and then Thursday through Monday Sept. 23-Nov. 6, plus Tuesday, Nov. 7. Hours Sept. 16 – 17; Thursdays through Mondays Sept. 23 – Oct.



**"On Golden Pond" will be presented by the Vienna Theatre Company on Nov. 3-5, 2023, at the Vienna Community Center.**

30: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. | Nov. 2 – 7: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (last entry one hour before closing). Market is open daily through Nov. 7. The Fields of Fear Hours: Friday and Saturday nights Sept. 22 – Nov. 4 (plus Sunday, Oct. 8) 7:30-11 p.m. (last entry 10 p.m.) Featuring more than 20 acres of fear and spooky attractions.

## BONITA LESTINA FAIRFAX OLD TOWN HALL PERFORMANCE SERIES

Enjoy an evening of music showcasing a variety of genres in the elegant interior of historic Old Town Hall (3999 University Drive) in the heart of Fairfax City. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. and performances begin at 8 p.m. and run from October to April. Admission is free. Visit: [www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts).

### SCHEDULE

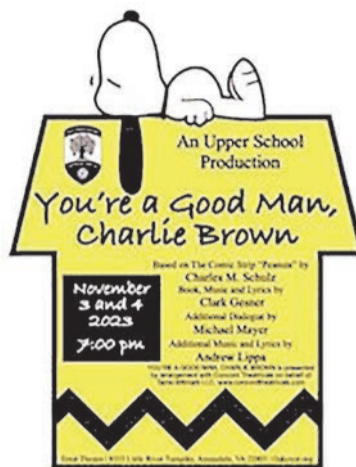
November 3: Swingology - Jazz Bossa Nova, Manouche and Swing  
November 17: Graham Breedlove – Blues  
December 8: Marcolivia – Classical String Duo  
January 5: Baltimore Composers Forum – Modern  
January 19: Navy Band Wind Quintet – Classical  
February 2: Kadencia – Puerto Rican Orchestra (part of the Chocolate Lovers Festival!)  
February 16: Matt Trkula – Classical Guitar  
March 8: Mandoleers – Mandolin and Guitar Orchestra  
March 22: James & Victor – Jazz Duo/Steel Pan  
April 5: Francesca Hurst – Solo Piano  
April 19: Sylvan Waters Duo – Harp/Brass

## THURSDAY/NOV. 2

**Foreign Language Film, "Taare Zameen Par"** ("Like Stars on Earth"). 1 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Ishaan, a student who has dyslexia, cannot seem to get anything right at his boarding school. Soon, a new unconventional art teacher helps him discover his hidden potential. A visual feast and Bollywood mega-hit.

## FRIDAY/NOV. 3

**Family Fun Bingo.** 7-9:30 p.m. At Old Firehouse in McLean. Join them for an evening of family fun! Enjoy



**"You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" will be presented by the Oakcrest School Theater on Nov. 3-4, 2023 in Annandale.**

free popcorn. Winners will take their pick of prizes!

## "ON GOLDEN POND"

Nov. 3, 4 at 8 p.m.; 2 p.m. on Nov. 5. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, Vienna. Presented by the Vienna Theatre Company and Vienna Department of Parks and Recreation. Directed by Terri Ritchey; Produced by Reece Smyth and Pete Storck. Visit [www.viennatheatercompany.org](http://www.viennatheatercompany.org).

## NOV. 3-4

**"You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown."** 7 p.m. At Oakcrest School Upper School, Ernst Theater, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. The musical follows the story of Charlie Brown and his friends, as seen in the comic strip, Peanuts, by cartoonist Charles Schulz. Through captivating dance and song, Charlie and his friends discover what it truly means to be a "good man". Visit <https://www.oakcrest.org/>

## NOV. 3 TO FEB. 4

**Eleanor Mahin Thorp: Metopic Ridge.** At Tephra ICA at Signature. Opening Reception & Artist Talk is Friday, Nov. 3, 6–8 p.m. Tephra Institute of Contemporary Art (Tephra ICA) presents Metopic Ridge, a solo exhibition by artist Eleanor Mahin Thorp. Thorp's paintings take us on an immersive site visit to examine the Blue Ridge Mountains exploring stability and change, the seen and the hidden within rocks. Through her discerning gaze rocks are more than geological entities; Instead, they metamorphose into vessels of history and human connection. Drawing inspiration from the fascinating transformations depicted in Persian miniatures, Thorp traces the hidden figures and forms in the rocks. Her paintings reveal the duality of rocks' existence as both a firm witness to time and a medium for that which is intangible.

## SATURDAY/NOV. 4

**"When You Wish Upon a Star: A Jazz Tribute to 100 Years of Disney."** 7 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. "When You Wish..." an unforgettable evening celebrating 100 years of Disney through the lens of jazz as performed by house band of The National Jazz Museum in Harlem. Dreams really do come true! This production is not affiliated



**The Silkroad Ensemble with Rhiannon Giddens can be seen on Sunday, Nov. 5, 2023, at GMU Center for the Arts in Fairfax.**

ed with, sponsored, or authorized by The Walt Disney Company.

## SATURDAY/NOV. 4

**Fun Walk.** 10:30 a.m. Great Falls TrailBlazers will have a Fun Walk on Saturday, Nov. 4 at 10:30 a.m. The group will meet at Welham Green Road and Georgetown Pike and walk to Springvale Road and back. All are welcome to attend. Great Falls Trailblazers like to keep the community abreast with trails that the Great Falls Trailblazers are working on to allow the community to get out of the house and walk or jog and keep healthy. Currently the Lucy Hanes Trail and the trail at Windermere Park and Miller to Gouldman are open and in good shape. Visit [GreatFallsTrailBlazers.org](http://GreatFallsTrailBlazers.org) for more information.

## SATURDAY/NOV. 4

**Wine and Cheese Pairing Event.** 5-7 p.m. At Total Wine & More, 1451 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Fundraiser for AAUW McLean Branch. Enjoy fine wines paired with exotic cheeses to help raise funds for women's scholarships. Tickets \$40. Email: [Taylor6840@gmail.com](mailto:Taylor6840@gmail.com).

## SATURDAY/NOV. 4

**Fall Bazaar and Craft Show.** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center Street, South, Vienna. Sponsored by the Auxiliary to the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department. Offered for sale will be crafts, holiday decorations, items for your home, clothing and gifts for that special someone. A delicious lunch menu is planned, as well as a bountiful homemade baked goods table. Looking for a unique find? Come shop at our Vera's Attic table. Proceeds from the rental of the table spaces and raffles benefit the fire department in their effort to raise funds for life saving fire and rescue equipment, college scholarships and more. For information, or to reserve a space and request an application, call Carol at 703-309-3468 or email [Dancers1023@aol.com](mailto:Dancers1023@aol.com).

## SATURDAY/NOV. 4

**Let Me Run Race.** 9 a.m. Meet at Great Falls Elementary School Track; the race will take place

around Deerfield Pond neighborhood. Anyone can run! GFES PTA is hosting this race as an end of season milestone for the inaugural "Let Me Run" boys running club. Attendance for the boys, and anyone else who would like to run is free. There will be a DJ, balloon arch for the finish line, snacks and coffee, water for all, along with a few fun activity stations.

## SATURDAY/NOV. 4

**Civil War Books, Relics and Memorabilia Show.** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Arlington-Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Bud Mayo and Don Hakenson will be sponsoring A Civil War Books, Relics and Memorabilia Show. Admission is \$5. Vendors are most welcome and SCV members receive a table discount. Vendors Needed. Contact Don Hakenson at [dhakenson@verizon.net](mailto:dhakenson@verizon.net) (or call him at 703-971-4984), or contact Bud Mayo at [mayo5304@cox.net](mailto:mayo5304@cox.net), or 703-389-1505.

## SUNDAY/NOV. 5

**An Afternoon of American Song.** 3 p.m. At St Luke Catholic Church, 7001 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Presented by the Washington Vocal Arts Ensemble. Performed by Elise Jenkins, Benjamin Goodrich, Adonis Iparaguirre and Josh Roginsky with guest pianist Joe Walsh. The program includes pieces from West Side Story, Porgy and Bess, Susannah and more.

## SUNDAY/NOV. 5

**Silkroad Ensemble with Rhiannon Giddens.** 7 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Returning for their second of three years as a Mason Artist-in-Residence, Silkroad Ensemble presents the world premiere of American Railroad, an initiative that maps American music through the various immigrant communities involved in building the late-1800s Transcontinental Railroad. Artistic Director and 2023 Pulitzer Prize winner Rhiannon Giddens joins the ensemble for this performance, which is told through the stories and sounds of African American, Chinese, Irish, Japanese, and Native American communities. Traditional instru-

# ENTERTAINMENT



The Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk will take place on Sunday, Nov. 5, 2023 in Burke.

ments—such as the guzheng, pipa, erhu, and qinpin—cross paths with fiddles, bones, tambo, and banjo to remind audiences of America's intricately interwoven history.

## SUNDAY/NOV. 5

### Unmask Historic Heroes from the

**War of 1812.** Noon to 3 p.m. At Colvin Run Mill Historic Site, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. At Colvin Run, the War of 1812 is not just about battles and generals; it's about everyday people who played a pivotal role in assisting the U.S. Navy. The homefront was their battlefield. Discover unsung heroes who made extraordinary contributions during

these challenging times, including the remarkable efforts of women who stitched uniforms with care, while farmers, millers, and bakers ensured a steady supply of food for the Navy. Meet the crew of Ship's Company, a War of 1812 reenactors' group, and get an up-close-and-personal view of what it was like to be a sailor during that era. Don't miss sampling naval pudding, a delicious treat cherished by sailors during the war. Visit Colvin Run Mill or call 703-759-2771.

## SUNDAY/NOV. 5

**Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk.** 2 p.m. At Burke Presbyterian Church, 5690 Oak Leather Drive, Burke. A

community walk to raise awareness and funds to help fight local and global hunger. Visit [burkecrop-walk.org](http://burkecrop-walk.org).

## NOV. 5, 12, 19, 26

**Traditional Celtic Music.** 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. At the Old Brogue Irish Pub of Great Falls, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Featuring a concert series of top quality music from the British Isles, Brittany (France), the Celtic areas of Northern Spain, and the Americas, staged in a listening room (The Snuggery). Tickets must be purchased in advance at <https://old-brogue.com/celtic-concert-series> - \$21 plus tax general admission. A season ticket for all 5 concerts is available for \$92 plus tax.

### SCHEDULE:

- ❖ 11/5: **THE IRISH INN MATES:** Jesse Winch (bodhrán, bouzouki, guitar, harmonica), Mitch Fanning (fiddle), Tina Eck (flute, whistles) and Zan McLeod (guitar bouzouki), will be joined by special guest, dancer Agi Kovacs.
- ❖ 11/12: **AYREHEART:** During the Renaissance and Baroque eras, lute players were songwriters and pop stars who weren't afraid to improvise. Ayreheart is here to continue the tradition! Ronn McFarlane on lute, Will Morris on fretless bass, violin and colascione, and Mattias Rucht on percussion all have backgrounds in rock and jazz, which comes through in their energetic performances.
- ❖ 11/19: **IONA:** Local Celtic mainstay IONA, emerging from a 6 month sabbatical, transports its audience to ALL the Celtic cultures,

## Fairfax City Installs Capital Bikeshare Stations

Fairfax City is installing 10 new, Capital Bikeshare stations to connect George Mason University to Old Town Fairfax, Fairfax Circle and the Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metrorail station. Station locations were mainly selected based on their connectivity to activity centers, trails and transit.

For a limited time, new members may save \$20 on an annual membership by using promo code COFFXTAKE20 when signing up in the app. For more information about the City's bikeshare program, call 703-385-7810 or email [transportation@fairfaxva.gov](mailto:transportation@fairfaxva.gov). To see a street list of the stations, plus a map showing where each one is, go to [fairfaxva.gov/bikeshare](http://fairfaxva.gov/bikeshare).

and their transplants in the New World. Lead singer, bouzouki and bodhrán player, Barbara Tresider Ryan, and Bernard Argent on wooden flute, whistles, vocals and percussion, are joined by Jim Queen, fiddle, banjo and vocals and Leigh Oben on basses of all descriptions.

❖ 11/26: **BETH PATTERSON and SEÁN HEELY:** US National Scottish Fiddle champion, singer and harper Seán Heely, and bouzouki genius, singer and bass guitarist Beth Patterson, innovative repertoire of tunes, ballads, sea shanties, and songs in the Irish and Scottish folk traditions.

❖ 12/11: **JODY MARSHALL'S HOLIDAY CELEBRATION:** One of the top hammered dulcimer players in America, Jody Marshall has been performing for more than a quarter century. She is accompanied by Jim Queen on fiddle, banjo and vocals, Susan Queen on bass guitar and

vocals, and Paul Nahay on piano, bringing us holiday favorites old and new.

## MONDAY/NOV. 6

**Halloween Candy Buy-Back Event.** 1-5 p.m. At Dr. Stephan Tisseront's Office, 11720 Plaza America Drive, Suite 110, Reston. To benefit Children's National Hospital in D.C. and our troops overseas. For every pound of candy collected, Tisseront Orthodontics will donate \$1 to Children's National and give \$1 to the child/family donating the candy. Many families choose to donate to Children's National as well. Through the years Tisseront Orthodontics has collected over 15,000 pounds of candy and has donated over \$25,000 to Children's National Hospital in D.C. All candy that is collected at the event is packaged up with letters from the community and shipped to the U.S. Armed Forces overseas.

Alexandria Film Festival

17th annual

# Alexandria Film Festival

Celebrating independents for 17 years!

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Nov 10-12, 2023

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**Saturday and Sunday**  
AMC Hoffman Theatre  
The Lyceum

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Questions? Contact us at: [info.alexandriafilm@gmail.com](mailto:info.alexandriafilm@gmail.com)

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Speakers at the ceremony included Supervisor Dan Storck (2nd right), Chief Kevin Davis, Congressman Gerry Connolly, Supervisor Pat Herrity, Shelter Director Reasa Currier, and Board Chairman Jeff McKay; also pictured Karen Corbett Sanders school board member, and Supervisor Rodney Lusk.

# Police Station and Animal Shelter Open

FROM PAGE 3

stations, and parking. The space includes a satellite office for the District Supervisor and public community rooms. It was designed to meet LEED Silver Certification standards for environmental sustainability, including stormwater handling, tree preservation, infrastructure for solar panels, and energy efficient systems and materials that promote indoor air quality.

Presence at the site means the police department eventually can organize smaller patrol areas to decrease response times to calls, which Board of Supervisors Chairman, Jeff McKay pointed out, benefits the whole county. Police chief Kevin Davis, also speaking at the opening, commented that the addition of the new police station means a lot of things; one being that officers want to be part of this new well equipped police force. McKay noted that two weeks ago, the police academy graduated its largest class of recruits; and one of the most culturally diverse, fluent in multiple languages, and including 30 percent women. Additional staffing is expected to allow the police force to soon return to use of three shifts, instead of the current two shifts.

This second county animal shelter and adoption center “campus” for improves access to critical animal services, such as behavior and training support, pet wellness services, and pet supplies. Director of animal services, Reasa Currier, noted the importance of “valued animals and the important relationship they have in our lives.” She described the building’s ability to bring health and happiness to animals under their temporary care, designed to provide sunlight, noise abatement in separate sections



Director Reasa Currier says, “Pets are family and all deserve the love and companionship that pets provide.”

for dogs, cats, and small mammals, and create an environment more like a home. The space, which includes extensive veterinary care and surgical areas, will allow for expansion of pet care services to families facing financial hardship.

Not everyone who toured the facility on this first day of operation went home alone. On its first day of adoptions, two dogs and 12 cats were adopted into new homes.

The new facility is located at 8855 and 8875 Lorton Road, Lorton. Learn more about the new animal shelter campus operations and services at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter/lorton-campus-operational-guidance>.

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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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## A “Madder” of Perspective



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

My wife, Dina and I have been married for almost 45 years. In that time, we have discovered, among other admissions; that we don't think alike, eat alike, drink alike and joke alike, as an extremely brief sample. In general, we have much less alike that would lead one to consider – on paper, anyway, the logic of our potential togetherness. Given that that ship has sailed, and we have survived this test of time, it's worth mentioning/summarizing that we don't always get along. And just recently I was reminded of that reality from a very unexpected source: a website of a company from whom I regularly purchase my vitamins, minerals, supplements, et cetera. Maybe being reminded of our ongoing dilemma from an unexpected and totally independent/non-partisan source might have an affect on me. (I won't say that it could actually impact our marriage because to say so would confirm how little I've learned during our marriage. Rome wasn't built in a day. And neither is the communication between a married couple so easily transformed. It takes work, lots of work, and unfortunately for Dina, this experience is brand new – to me.)

This electronic missive, which was this pill provider's second attempt to encourage me to re-order (which according to their records, I was past time to do so) was friendly enough and certainly reasonably intended. However, I didn't take it as such. I took it as bothersome. My knee-jerk reaction was to say – out loud: “Stop bugging me!” It was this verbal counter punch that reminded me of the nature of the relationship/marriage I share/experience with my wife, and the motivation for this column.

Typically, and this won't come as a news flash to those who know us, I am the more responsible party. To clarify – for the sake of this column and my life, I'm the one who's more aware/responsible for times, dates, bills due, people/procedures to follow to solve problems; in short, the mundane and boring; that's me. As a rest, our reality is that I'm the one doing the reminding about such and such. It's my nature. I'm happy to do it and for me, it's no problem. Dare I say, it's my job. Still, as much experience as I have in this capacity, I have on occasion said something to Dina about something I felt was time-sensitive - or felt that I was being helpful/necessary in what I was saying, that she didn't feel was nearly as important as I did. Moreover, she may have felt the intrusion into her comings and goings was more frequent than it needed to be. On this too-frequent occurrence, Dina would invariably say: “Stop bugging me.” (Finally, the point of the column.) And I would invariably respond: “I'm not bugging you. You're being bugged by me.” Which from perspective, means I'm acting within my hypothetical marital rights (and apparent wrongs) in saying this because it's not about me. It's more likely about us or her. I'm merely stating a fact whose utterance was meant to be helpful, not bothersome, and certainly not nagging.

Since I'm the one writing this column, I will admit that these types of conversations/interactions are my opinions and do not reflect Dina's opinion/reaction. In fact, often, they didn't always go so well. Most often they go badly. And despite my best intentions, as has been made abundantly clear to her numerous times, I was not being helpful at all. And after receiving this second email from the pill provider (they are not prescription medications, they are over the counter), a business from whom I've bought thousands of pills over 14-plus years, I sort of snapped; well for me, snapped: I talked back to the computer in an irritated tone. (Dina also hates when I use tone as another method of communication.) And what did I say, exactly, to the computer? “Stop bugging me.” And then I laughed. So that's how Dina has felt all those times when she felt compelled to tell me to stop bugging her. From 1978 to 2023, finally now we're simpatico, sort of. I suppose turnaround is fair play – or at least possible (I think I'd hold off saying probable).

You see it is possible to teach an old dog – or in this case, an old husband, new tricks/new behaviors. I don't think I'll have similar agreement with this pill provider so I will refrain from subjecting myself to whatever ridicule or response I'm likely to receive – regardless of their tone, from the company when I ask them to spare me their marketing initiatives. As a businessman I can appreciate valuing and remaining connected with your active/existing clientele. As one of those active/existing clientele, I don't have to like it, especially if they're initiating more than I feel they should. Then it becomes a losing proposition. The exact opposite of what the company – and our marriage, is supposed to be.

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



The photo of Officers Pitts and Prucnal, with Wallace, captures the joy of the moment of celebration with the community.



Potential adopters Chelsea Stearns and Derrick Burks interview Cinco as a possible family member on the Shelter's opening day

# New Animal Shelter Bonds

FROM PAGE 3

of volunteers logged about 15,000 hours; the equivalent of seven full-time positions.

Animal Protection Police officers (APPO), like Second Lieutenants Desiree Pitt and Kathleen Prucnal, share the passion and compassion for animals, and wildlife found in our community. Too often they also see the cruelty that can be visited on voiceless animals. Officers have been honored with formal recognitions, like the January 2022 Virginia Federation of Humane Society Humanitarian Award to three officers, McLemore, Ankers, and Lugo, for their response in a dog cruelty case (see Springfield Connection, January 13-19, 2022, pg 6,10), And informally, with frequent deliveries of baked goods from grateful dog owners following rescues.

Adopters are another special group with a high degree of affection for companion animals. People who “rescue” by adopting enjoy a certain pride. Potential adopter Samara Wilkins always wanted a rabbit. Chelsea Stearns and Derrick Burks feel adopting a cat would create a shared family for them.

Certainly the most touching animal bonding story of the day, if not the year, belongs to a young couple whose wedding ceremony was planned for the same day and time as the shelter's opening for adoptions. The pair learned that a German Shepherd puppy, named Daisy, would be available for adoption for the first time on opening day; their wedding day. They knew adoption applications are taken on a first-come basis, with no animal holds. So they advanced their wedding time in order to be first in line at the shelter to offer a new home for Daisy. The



Long-time volunteer Linda Wilkinson walks Effie, a young dog available for adoption

three left together the same day. We expect Daisy will be helping the couple celebrate the first day of their union and many wedding anniversaries to come.

PHOTOS BY  
SUSAN LAUME/  
THE CONNECTION



Lt. Prucnal and Wallace, who occasionally accompanies Prucnal to work and serves as a volunteer on the APPO recruitment team, recreate their photo in front of the now completed Lorton Police Station and Animal Shelter