

THE CONNECTION

CENTREVIEW ❖ Chantilly ❖ Great Falls ❖ Herndon ❖ McLean ❖ Oak Hill ❖ Oakton ❖ Reston ❖ Vienna



Matthew Jenks runs for yardage in Westfield's 21-14 win over Yorktown on Nov. 17 in the Class 6 D Regional semifinal.

Future of Downtown Herndon?

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Kent Gardens Boundary Proposals Take Shape

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Clifton Home Tour

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Westfield Continues in Playoffs

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OPINION, PAGE 6 ❖ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 12 ❖ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 14

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NOVEMBER 22-28, 2023

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Curious what your home is worth? Call to chat with JD and Ed today!



FILE PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Comstock building site; sign installed in 2020

Town of Herndon Downtown Redevelopment Site



SCREENSHOT VIA COMSTOCK

The Town of Herndon Redevelopment site. The Subaru building and its structures at the corner of Elden and Center Streets have been razed.

Economics Deflate Imminent Hopes For Herndon's Downtown

Project lingers in limbo, but new permits process will be ready.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Economics has always been at the core of the issues delaying the Herndon Downtown Redevelopment Project (2019) between the Town of Herndon and Comstock Herndon Venture LC, according to Bill Ashton, the town's manager. He said this during a phone interview on Friday, Nov. 17.

The downtown redevelopment project is under a public-private partnership agreement between the parties. It involves nearly five acres of land in the center of the historic downtown district in the Town of Herndon. Comstock plans a mixed-use development featuring 273 apartments, approximately 17,000 square feet of retail space, a 16,265-square-foot arts center shell, and a 726-space parking garage. As of Nov. 17, 2023, a section of the parcel remains as it has since the pandemic began: fenced off, overgrown with weeds, and a sun-faded banner tacked to the fence announcing, "Excitement is Building; Take a Look."

During the Herndon Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 14, Ashton reported that the building permit review was underway for the long-awaited project and "the permit review process should be completed by the holiday. ... It'll be ready to rock and roll," Ashton said. Is the project about to commence?

On Friday, Ashton said that Comstock and



SCREENSHOT

Bill Ashton, Herndon town manager

the town are attempting to ensure all permit processes are completed so they won't have to wait for the permits "if the conditions become right." According to Ashton, Comstock resubmitted its building permits because the original Herndon Downtown Redevelopment Project was planned under an earlier revision of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code. The codes are updated on a three-year cycle as part of the code development process.

"Now we have a new [2021] Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, and Comstock has to update its permits. It's a matter of course we'd do with any project," Ashton said.

Those earlier permits were valid until Comstock pressed the pause button. By the fall of 2020, during the first year of the COVID pandemic, on Nov. 17, the Town Council unanimously approved a resolution that amended the comprehensive agreement with Comstock. It adjusts the outside satisfaction date by which Comstock must have the project under construction to Dec. 31, 2021. The staff report cited recent construction delays for the project as related to significant problems created by conditions in the Metropolitan construction market. COVID-19 caused substantial increases in material costs. Production facilities reduced output or shut down due to COVID-19 workforce restrictions. That caused supply to constrict; at the same time, demand held steady.

A year and a half later, in April 2022, Comstock exercised its right in the amended comprehensive agreement to pause construction commencement for up to 24 months due to market conditions or other matters, including delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The deadline for the two-year pause Comstock took in April of 2022 is right around the calendar corner for 2024. Is April 2024 a line in the sand, or could the deadline be extended?

"I really don't know," Ashton said. "At times, people look at me funny when I say that. It's the conditions on the ground.

There's no way I can make up the past five years of inflation-driven growth. It's been a very challenging period."

Comstock did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Economy Watches: U.S. and Greater Washington

The Town of Herndon's redevelopment project forecast could be viewed through analyses of the United States and Greater Washington's regional economies.

"The hard part of the inflation fight now looks over," writes David Mericle of Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC on Nov. 12, 2023, in the US Economics Analyst 2024 US Economic Outlook Final Descent (Mericle) report. "It was fair to wonder last year whether labor market overheating and, at times, unsettling high inflation mindset could be reversed painlessly. But these problems now look largely solved; the conditions for inflation to return to target are in place, and the heaviest blows from monetary and fiscal tightening are well behind us. As a result, we now see only a historically average 15 percent probability of recession over the next 12 months."

In the Greater Washington, D.C., area, "as has been the case nationally, the region's economy has held up against higher rates far better than anticipated," stated the current report of the Washington Economy Watch for October 2023. "A local recession appears less likely. However, the region's economy will likely slow throughout next year, with a few consecutive months of job losses likely."

Wrapped in the Warmth of Winterwear

Over 1000 served in the Hunter Mill District's Free Winter Coat Closet 2023.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The combination of a warm winter coat, hat, and gloves is a defense against the cold for anyone out in frigid weather. Whether they are a child waiting for the school bus in the morning, a senior citizen crossing a parking lot, or someone experiencing homelessness, everyone deserves to be warm. Partnering with the Hunter Mill District Supervisor's Office, nonprofit Cornerstones supported the Hunter Mill District Winter Coat Closet for 2023.

"More than 1,000 coats were given to area residents and families today who needed a warm coat as the winter season approaches," said Fairfax County Board Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill).

Held indoors this year at the North County Government Center in Reston on Saturday, Nov. 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., county staff welcomed the participants into the stocked winter wear room in timed groups to avoid overcrowding. Families and individuals selected their choices from the racks of winter coats, all gently used or new and sorted by size and sex.

The assortment appeared astonishing: belted long coats, wool coats, and anoraks, as well as insulated puffer jackets with faux-fur-lined hoods, toasty parkas, and more. Each would put severe weather in its place, wrapping the wearer in warmth. Hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves covered the nearby tables. As supplies ran low on given-size racks and tables, volunteers rushed to replenish them with what appeared to be an infinite supply.

According to Jillian Smith, Community Programs for Supervisor Walter Alcorn, the distribution of winter wear at the event required six staff members and approximately 50 volunteers working in two shifts. Other volunteers, such as those from corporate



Within the line of sight to Reston Town Center's luxury condos, families and individuals in need line up for free winter wear at the North County Government Center.

sponsors like Navy Federal Credit Union, had previously arrived at Cornerstones headquarters to assist with the massive sorting demands to ensure a smooth distribution day.

Holiday Gift Card Drive Underway

Cornerstones seeks to provide gift cards to the parents of nearly 1,500 local children in 2023. This will allow them to buy what their children want and need for the holidays. Gift cards will also be collected for adults and children staying at the Embry Rucker

Community Shelter over the holidays.

Go to www.cornerstonesva.org/donations/drives/gift-cards-for-kids/ to learn more about the program. Gift card donations will be collected at Cornerstones' Main Office, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, on Thursday, Dec. 7, and Friday, Dec. 8, from 9 a.m.–6 p.m. and Monday, Dec. 11, from 9 a.m.–noon.

Choosing the right coat can be about more than just warmth; it reflects the individual's personality. Vibrant colors and fun designs aim to spread happiness.



Participants have enough space to shop in the winter wear giveaway room because staff welcomes them in timed groups to avoid overcrowding.



From left, volunteers Emily Cook, 16, Charlotte Cook, 13, Caitlin Cook, all of Burke, and Lilla Helgason, 14, of Centreville, ready the restock coat piles for transfer to the shopping racks.

ROUNDUPS

How to Survive an Active Shooting

With active shooter/active aggressor events and other critical incidents happening across the world, it makes sense to be prepared. So Fairfax County police are offering free training from officers to help people take control of their own safety.

It'll be presented virtually on Wednesday, Nov. 29, from 6:30-8 p.m. To register, go to <https://bit.ly/sullycrase112923>. The Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) course equips people with vital strategies, guidance and a proven plan for surviving active shooter/active aggressor events and other critical incidents.

This 90-minute lecture will educate participants on attackers, past events, disaster response, plus how to prepare for and respond when trapped in a building during an active violence event. They'll also learn the steps law enforcement takes to victims and limit casualties. Attendees must be at least 18 to participate and registration is required.

Women's Personal Safety Presentation

Police officers at the Sully District Station are giving an empowering and informative presentation on Women's Personal Safety. Covered topics will include Crime Prevention, Situational Awareness, Observing Your Surroundings, Reducing the Risk of an Attack, Developing a Plan of Action, and Knowing When to Use Force.

This event is open to all women, 18 or older, and will be offered Thursday, Nov. 30, from 6:30-8 p.m., in the community room of the Sully police station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. There'll be no physical maneuvers or scenarios, but women will learn practical strategies equipping them with the knowledge they'll need to feel confident in any situation. People planning to attend must register at <https://bit.ly/sullywomensafety113023>.

Capital Art & Craft Festival

The largest-ever Capital Art & Craft Festival returns to Northern Virginia Dec. 8-10, 2023 with more than 300 juried artisans taking over two Dulles Expo Center halls.

The Capital Art & Craft Festival (www.CACFart) will feature handcrafted, one of a kind art in more than a dozen mediums including glass, jewelry, leather, paintings, prints, photography, pottery, wearable art and wood. It has always been the largest indoor arts festival in Northern Virginia and now increases to two of the Expo Center's facilities with 36,000 square-feet of exhibit space.

Friday, Dec 8 and Saturday Dec 9: 10 am – 5 pm; Sunday Dec 10: 10 am -4 pm
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Ticket information: www.CACFart



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Happy Thanksgiving 2023

DELEGATE KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM



There are so many complexities and challenges in the world in which we live that it is important to take some time to reflect on the good things that are going on in our families, communities and the world for which we need to be thankful. As individuals and as members of churches, nonprofits and neighborhoods we come to know people who in a totally unselfish way do acts of kindness that improve the lives of others. There are so many unsung heroes that devote their lives or some of their time to helping others, our environment, and the quality of life in our neighborhood. I will not attempt to name them for I do not want

to accidentally leave someone out. I am sure you have your own list of angels and heroes that you could share.

I love it when the media of all forms does a spotlight, a featured article, or draws attention to the angels and heroes. I am sure you know the people to whom I am referring. Their stories give us inspiration as well as ideas for our own life planning. These are the people to whom we need to direct our thanks and well wishes not only on the day designated for giving thanks but on any day on which we have come to know them. These people do not work for money, but I am sure they would appreciate a sincere thank you. They are not going to stop what they are doing because of this suggestion, and certainly no one has asked me to request it.

I think the responsibility is on us to recognize good neighbors and good Samaritans for what they do to improve life in our community.

I am very much aware of the crime and the horrible wars that engulf our world. The hungry, the sick, the homeless, the refugees, the immigrants, and others warrant our continued prayers and honest attempts to make a difference. Do not forget them on Thanksgiving Day, but keep everything in perspective with an understanding of all the good that is going on.

Become a spokesperson in your religious establishment, your neighborhoods, and your places of employment to make this Thanksgiving a special one that acknowledges our blessings and commits our energy and resources to making the world one in which we can all find a bounty of blessings.

From Jane and me, a Happy Thanksgiving Day, 2023!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Correcting 2 Points from Veterans Day Article

To the Editor:

I write to correct two points from your article on the Veterans Day observance at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial in your November 15-21, 2023 edition.

First, the article inaccurately stated that I served in Baghdad,

Iraq in 2003-04 as an Airborne-, Air Assault-, and Ranger-qualified Soldier. I attained those qualifications after, not before, my tour of duty in Iraq. While this may seem a small point, your readers will naturally (but incorrectly) assume that I provided the erroneous informa-

tion, and I do not want to appear to have misrepresented my record, especially given military punctilio and recent controversies on the subject.

Second, the article misattributed to me what my speech noted was an apparently apocryphal quote from George Washington: "The

willingness with which young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars are treated and appreciated by their nation."

Bruce Ellis Fein
Great Falls

Bald Eagles Spotted on Their Nest

The mated pair of Bald Eagles in Great Falls have once again been spotted on their nest on Minnehaha Island, seen from Riverbend Park. It's never too early to start watching for signs that they may be welcoming a new brood of hatchlings in 2024. Behavior in January such as nest repair/rebuilding and one of the two sitting on the nest at all times are good clues that more eaglets may be on the way. Stay tuned, send in your photos and observations of the nest and let the Eagle Watch begin.



www.forbark.org or by mail at FORB, Post Office Box 1481, Great Falls, VA 22066. Thanks for supporting Riverbend Park.

Hugh Morrow, President
Friends of Riverbend Park

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Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name. Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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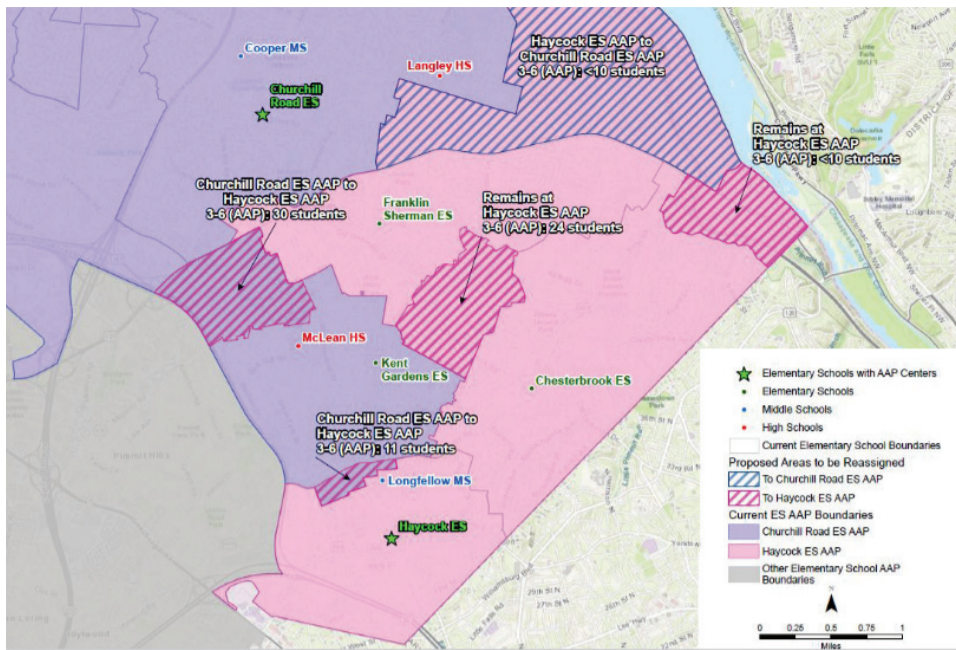
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Scenario B; this is what staff recommends to the school board.

Capacity Challenge at McLean ES Forces Boundary Changes

Staff recommends Scenario B to school board.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Public School staff has recommended to the school board Scenario B for the boundary adjustment to provide capacity relief to Kent Gardens Elementary School in McLean. Thirteen temporary classrooms are currently in use at the school to accommodate program capacity utilization.

According to the posted Board Docs for the canceled Nov. 20 school board meeting, scenario B considers reassigning an estimated 380 students at five elementary schools and two Advanced Academic Program (AAP) centers. It eliminates the split feeder from Franklin Sherman Elementary to middle and high school.

Scenario B:

- ❖ Kent Garden ES to Franklin Sherman ES, K-6: 190 students and to Haycock ES, K-6: 38 students.

- ❖ Franklin Sherman ES to Churchill Road ES, K-6: 40 students and to Chesterbrook ES, K-6: 112 students [15 students and 97 students].

Churchill Road Elementary and Haycock Elementary Advanced Academic Program (AAP) Level IV boundaries will also be adjusted under the posted recommendation to remain consistent with feeder school boundaries.

A public hearing is still scheduled for Nov. 30 from 6 to 8 p.m., followed by a vote by the school board on Dec. 4, although it is unknown if the canceled meeting for Nov. 20 might result in changes. Any approved boundary change would have no impact on the boundaries of the middle or high schools. Detailed information will be posted on the McLean Elementary Schools Capacity/Boundary Issue webpage after the School Board takes action. The new boundary effective date is anticipated for the 2024-25 school year.

The Kent Gardens Elementary School needs more space to accommodate the community's growth and high interest from out-of-boundary students. According to Fairfax County Public Schools, Kent Gardens' design capacity is 896 students, and the SY22-23 program membership is 1,023 or 121 percent, with 13 temporary classrooms. The school serves a

diverse student population as it draws from within the local boundaries of a growing community.

It also incorporates students outside the boundary for the French Immersion program. As announced at the Sept. 19 and 27 community meetings, the French immersion program, predominantly attended by Kent Gardens base students, should remain. On Nov. 6, the division announced that the French Embassy and Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented Kent Gardens with the LabelFrancEducation Award. The recognition is for the delivery of an outstanding dual language program.

Among the online comments, one parent voiced, "I bought my house in McLean so that our children could attend French Immersion at Kent Garden. Our eldest just started kindergarten, and I am appalled that our investment in the McLean community could be so easily disregarded."

Another parent or caretaker wrote about the strengths of Scenario B, saying it balanced capacity across all schools with fewer students impacted than Scenario A

However, another wrote, "E is the only reasonable one helping to alleviate overcrowding at Kent Gardens ES and closing the split feed at Franklin ES without uprooting a huge number of students from Franklin Sherman."

On Feb. 9, 2023, the school board approved an amendment brought forward by Dranesville District Representative Elaine Tholen. The amendment relocated Kent Gardens ES from Table 3: Monitoring Capacity Concerns by FCSB to Table 4: Priority Recommended Boundary/Capacity Adjustments, on pages 38 and 39 of the Proposed CIP, with a Scoping during Spring 2023. The board approval allowed staff to do a full scoping to determine if a boundary change, a program change, or both are good options to reduce the capacity issues at Kent Gardens. At the time, Tholen said, "This amendment is long overdue."

Visit the McLean Elementary Schools Capacity/Boundary Issues | Fairfax County Public Schools website for more information at www.fcps.edu/facilities-planning-future/school-boundary-adjustments/mclean-pyramid?utm_campaign+=&utm_medium=e-mail&utm_source=govdelivery.



NOTICE OF WATER RATE AND BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

December 14, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 14, 2023, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2024, include the following:

- An increase in the Availability Charge from \$4,640 to \$4,800*
- An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$22,090 to \$22,910.
- An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,790 to \$1,830.*
- An increase in the Account Charge from \$44 to \$47.
- An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$14.95 to \$15.60.*
- An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$3.65 to \$3.84 per 1,000 gallons of water.
- An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$4.00 to \$4.10.
- An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$53 to \$57.
- An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
- An increase in the Overhead Charges for Labor from 102% to 104%.
- An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge Inspection Fee from \$42 to \$46.

*Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is also proposing a \$241 million budget for calendar year 2024¹. Water sales are expected to provide \$212 million, and the remaining \$29 million is expected from connection charges, investment income, and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2023	2024
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 63,208	\$ 67,746
Power and Utilities	14,457	15,190
Chemicals	12,068	13,625
Purchased Water	7,511	8,913
Supplies and Materials	5,591	6,449
Insurance	1,471	1,330
Fuel	821	930
Postage	602	620
Contractual Services	12,253	12,855
Professional Services	1,236	1,480
Other	2,295	2,739
Sub-Total	121,513	131,877
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(11,141)	(11,014)
Total	\$ 110,372	\$ 120,863

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$49,244,258
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$58,974,000

¹ Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

Visit fairfaxwater.org/rates to view a copy of the proposed changes.

Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Susan Miller at 703-289-6018. Interested parties may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, to be included in the record of the public hearing.

The 2023 Holiday Ornament Sale in Great Falls

Supplies are limited.

By MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

This year marks the 210th anniversary of the historic Georgetown Pike. The Great Falls Citizens Association partnered with The Arts of Great Falls to create and sell an exceptional ornament to commemorate the milestone. It is the second in the series.

The image is of the historic Cornwell Farmhouse, which has overlooked Georgetown Pike almost from its inception (est. 1813). The construction of the house began in 1828 but took several years to complete.

Many years ago, Walt Lawrence of The Artists' Atelier on Walker Road in Great Falls photographed the home with two horses winter grazing in the snow. The image is printed on the ornaments with Lawrence's permission. It captures the site's essence and evokes nostalgia for the now-alternate view.

Only 200 of the memento ornaments are available, according to Winne Frost of the Great Falls Citizens Association, so supplies are limited. Display it as a holiday decoration or year-round as a window sun-catcher.

The Pike is one of only four major Northern Virginia turnpikes built in the early 1800s that is still in use. In 1974, the Virginia Commonwealth recognized and designated the Pike as the first historic and scenic byway. In 2012, the National Park Service added the Pike to the National Register of Historic Places, recognizing it as a valuable roadway to protect.

Bill Canis of GFCA said that the proceeds from the ornament sale would go toward community programs. Frost named the old-growth restoration project behind the Grange Hall on the Pike. Plantings and materials are required for the understory areas, which will serve as a demonstration project for what people can do in their yards.

The Great Falls Citizens Association and The Arts of Great Falls are selling the ornaments at Hidden Springs Farm, 438 River Bend Road, on weekends through Dec. 3, and at the Great Falls Atelier, 765



The 2023 Great Falls Ornament, #2 in a series.



Reverse side of the 2023 ornament.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

The Great Falls Citizens Association is the sponsoring organization for the Grange Oak Restoration Project, and the proceeds from the sales of the ornaments will be used, among other things, to support the project. On Sunday, Nov. 12, Rotary Club of Great Falls members and local youth planted thirty-two tree saplings.

Walker Road, Great Falls, throughout the holiday season for \$20 each. See gfca.org to learn more about Georgetown Pike and Cornwall Farm.



From left are Lt. Matt Dehler, MPO Travis Heiden and Capt. Dan Spital.

MPO Travis Heiden: Officer of the Quarter

MPO Travis Heiden was recently honored as the Sully District Police Station's Officer of the Quarter for July, August and September. He was feted at the Oct. 11 meeting of the station's Citizens Advisory Committee.

Making the presentation was Lt. Matt Dehler who, at the time, was that station's assistant commander. Dehler was also the person who recommended Heiden for this honor. And since they've known each other for three decades, it was important to Dehler to be the one to recognize his longtime friend.

"MPO Heiden is a 30-year cop, approaching retirement in a couple months," said Dehler. "I wanted to do this presentation because, when I came out of the [Fairfax County Criminal Justice] Academy as a rookie in the '90s, we worked together," said Dehler.

Heiden began his career as a patrol officer in the Reston District and was then selected to

the Reston Neighborhood Patrol Unit, where he served until 2004. After that, he spent 13 years with the Police Department's Gang unit, in the early- and mid-2000s.

"This unit was instrumental in disrupting the operations of many major street gangs, including MS13 – as well as many different motorcycle gangs," said Dehler. "MPO Heiden was there for over a decade. He spent a ton of time gathering intelligence and evidence and participating in numerous prosecutions against gang members for everything from narcotics distribution to murder. And for many years, he also trained FCPD officers on gang investigations."

Heiden then came to the Sully District, finishing his career on the midnight shift. "He's mentored many young officers in police tactics and investigations," said Dehler. "He's kept a lot of people safe, including his squad members, and we're very proud of him."

– BONNIE HOBBS

Centreville Motorcycle Crash Kills Lorton Man, 27

A crash between a car and a motorcycle last week took the life of a 27-year-old Lorton man. It happened on Route 28 north in Centreville, and the person killed was Zafeer Piracha.

Fairfax County police officers from the nearby Sully District Station responded to the crash last Thursday, Nov. 16, at 9:01 p.m. Preliminarily, detectives determined that the driver of a 2016 Acura TLX was traveling northbound on Route 28, prior to Westfields Boulevard, as was Piracha on a 2022 Kawasaki.

According to police, the Acura "struck Piracha, causing him to separate from the motorcycle." Piracha was pronounced dead at the scene, and the other driver was taken to a local hospital for treatment of injuries not considered life-threatening. While officers try to sort out the details leading up to this fatal collision, they're continuing to investigate whether speed and/or alcohol were factors in the incident.

Detectives from the Crash Reconstruction Unit would also like to speak with anyone who may have witnessed the crash or has any information about this case. They're asked to contact the Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips may also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by calling 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477) or by going to <http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org/>.

– BONNIE HOBBS



PHOTO COURTESY OF DARAH CURRAN

The home of Dave and Jacquie Baciocco.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DARAH CURRAN

The home of Adam and Janie Trost.

Clifton Holiday Homes Tour and Horse Parade

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Let the holiday season officially begin – it’s time for a full day of fun and merriment in the historic Town of Clifton. The festivities begin Saturday, Dec. 2, at 2 p.m. with a colorful horse parade, followed by the Holiday Homes Tour from 4-7 p.m.

Parade participants are members of the Clifton Horse Society, and they and their horses will be all decked out in their holiday finery as they jingle down Main Street and loop through the town. Afterward, they and the attendees will gather together to enjoy cookies and other refreshments.

People are then invited to visit the charming shops and eat at Clifton’s restaurants before immersing themselves in the town’s storybook setting of twinkling lights, the sound of caroling and beautifully decorated homes awaiting them during the homes tour.

On display will be four houses in town, an RV, plus a bonus fifth house, just outside Clifton. “You will not want to miss this home’s floor-to-ceiling decorations spanning three levels, which have been featured in a national magazine,” said event Chairman Darah Curran. “This bonus house will open at 3 p.m. to accommodate the drive.”



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Horses make their way through town during a past Clifton Horse Parade.

The rest of the homes will open their doors to the public at 4 p.m. Three of them are historic and one is a modern, arts-and-crafts style. “While the homes’ walls might not be able to talk, as you walk through them,

documents will share stories about the houses, their previous homeowners and some town history/gossip,” said Curran.

One house stands on the rumored moonshine stills of the 1920s, another home

showcases stained-glass doors that were once part of a suite at the Clifton Hotel – and prior to that, served as the interior cabin-doors on a Trans-Atlantic steamship. The historic homes served many purposes; visitors will be able to learn about their former uses as a barbershop, grocery store, saloon, church, livery, etc.

In addition, the Clifton Caboose will be open for curious train enthusiasts of all ages to view. And all three town churches will have holiday performances over the course of the evening, and the public is welcome to attend, free of charge.

Except for the bonus house, the entire event is walkable throughout the town. Tickets for the homes tour will be available at these Clifton shops and restaurants: Main Street Pub, Little Villaggio, Belle Jar and Virginia Mercantile, as well as at Pickett Fence in Burke.

The cost through Dec. 1 is \$25, adults; \$5, children. On the day of the event, tickets will be \$30 and \$5. Proceeds benefit the Town of Clifton and a designated, town charitable cause. Ticket booklets will contain each home’s address, plus detailed information and histories about all of them.

— DARAH CURRAN CONTRIBUTED TO THIS STORY.

Police Seeking Help Identifying Armed Robbers

Fairfax County police detectives are releasing two photos from a commercial robbery last Saturday, Nov. 18, in Chantilly and are asking for the community’s assistance in identifying the people responsible for this crime.

Police say two men armed with a firearm entered the Chantilly Check and Convenience Store at 3:21 p.m. According to police, “The suspects forced an employee to open a safe and stole cash. The victim was not harmed,

and the two men ran from the area. Detectives determined that one of the suspects had entered the store only hours prior to the robbery.”

Anyone who may have information about this case or can identify these men is asked to call the Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 5. Tips may also be submitted anonymously via Crime Solvers by phoning 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

— BONNIE HOBBS



Suspect One



Suspect Two

SPORTS

PHOTOS BY WILL PALENSCAR



Matthew Jenks scores on a short run for Westfield



Kennedy Duda #21 runs the ball for Westfield



Landon Murphy #18 looks to the Westfield sidelines before a play



Davian Richardson #48 brings down Chris Monticeno #1 and has help from teammate Cal Oakley #47



Matthew Jenks is set to deliver a pass for Westfield



Kennedy Duda #21 powers his way for positive yardage

Westfield Bulldogs Press on in Playoffs

Yorktown's season ends in Chantilly.

BY WILL PALENSCAR
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

The Westfield Bulldogs hosted the Yorktown Patriots in Chantilly on Nov. 17 in the Class 6 D Regional semifinal.

Westfield opened scoring with only 42 seconds to play in the opening quarter when quarterback Matthew Jenks would score the first of his 3 touchdowns on a 1 yard touchdown run.

With 7:08 left in the 2nd quarter Westfield would add to their lead when Jenks would run in for his second touchdown. Westfield's lead was now 14-0. Yorktown would get on the board with 3:45 before halftime with Hudson Greene's pass to Chris Monticeno from 9 yards. The Westfield lead was now cut in half 14-7. However Jenks would score his 3rd touchdown just 32 seconds before halftime to give the Bulldogs a two touchdown lead, 21-7.

In the 3rd quarter Michael Merritt would be the benefactor of another Hudson Greene touchdown pass. Again, Yorktown was with in a touchdown, 21-14. But it was Westfield's defense that saved the game and a potential tying score in the closing minutes deep into Bulldogs territory.

With the win Westfield (9-3) advances to play James Madison in Vienna on 11-25 for the Class 6D Region Final.

Class 6 Regional Semifinals Results

Highland Springs (11-1)	28	Oscar Smith (8-4)	7
Manchester (11-1)	40	Thomas Dale (11-1)	21
Region B			
Freedom (11-0)	45	Colonial Forge (10-2)	16
Battlefield (12-0)	21	Mountain View (11-1)	18
Region C			
Fairfax (9-3)	30	South County (10-3)	6
Lake Braddock (10-2)	38	West Springfield (9-3)	21
Region D			
James Madison (11-1)	37	Herndon (8-4)	7
Westfield (9-3)	21	Yorktown (7-5)	14



Officiating crew signals touchdown for Matthew Jenks and Westfield after Jenks short run.



Matthew Jenks runs for yardage in Westfield's 21-14 win over Yorktown. Duda #21 powers his way for positive yardage



Matthew Jenks #6 protects the ball with both hands as defenders close in on him.



The host Westfield Bulldogs enter the field to host the visiting Yorktown Patriots in the Region D semi finals.



Chris Monticeno #1 avoids being tripped up by Westfield Brendan Partridge #68



Finn Luca brings in this reception for Yorktown.



Kennedy Duda holds the ball close to his body as a defender moves in.



Hudson Green looks for a receiver to throw to.

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or follow the link at mcleancenter.org

Special Events

**DEC
1-3**

**McLean Holiday
Art & Crafts Festival
Friday-Sunday, Dec. 1-3**

Admission: \$5, for all three days
of the show. Free admission for
children age 12 or younger.



**DEC
8**

The Old Firehouse

**Light Up McLean Holiday
House Decorating Contest
Home Registration Deadline is
Friday, Dec. 8**

**DEC
9**

Presented by The Alden

**"It's a Jazzy Christmas"
Saturday, Dec. 9, 7 p.m.**

\$30/\$25 seniors
\$20 MCC district residents

**DEC
10**

Presented by The Alden

**Beau Soir Ensemble
Sunday, Dec. 10, 2 p.m.**

\$10/\$7 seniors
\$5 MCC district residents

**DEC
19**

Presented by The Alden

**Barter Players "Frosty"
Tuesday, Dec. 19, 4 p.m.**

\$15/\$12 seniors
\$10 MCC district residents



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mcleancenter.org

Home of The Alden Theatre
aldentheatre.org

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ENTERTAINMENT

THREE FARMERS MARKETS REMAIN OPEN INTO DECEMBER

Enjoy the extended season at the Reston, Burke and McCutcheon/Mt. Vernon farmers markets. Starting Nov. 25, each market will welcome a handful of new vendors in addition to the ones you know and love. Expect new products, such as bagels, hot biscuits, pho, fresh cheese and more! The Extended Season will continue each week until market closing dates, which can be found below.

Burke Farmers Market. April 22 – Dec. 16, 8 a.m. to noon. VRE Parking Lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke
Reston Farmers Market. April 29 – Dec. 2, 8 a.m. to noon. Lake Anne Village Center, 1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston

McCutcheon/Mt. Vernon Farmers Market. April 19 – Dec. 20, 8 a.m. to noon. Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria

NOV. 9 TO DEC. 24

Photo with Santa. At Tysons Corner Center. Lower Level – Fashion Court/Nordstrom Wing. Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. / Sun. 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. Tysons Corner Center's Santa Claus will arrive on November 9th, and be available for photos and personal time daily through December 24th.

STARTING NOW

Sip & Stroll. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Shopping with a Twist will be in effect daily during center hours (10 a.m.-9 p.m. Mon.-Sat. /11 a.m.-7 p.m. Sun.), although individual restaurant hours may vary. Adult beverages must be in a logo'd disposable cup provided by the restaurant where the drink was purchased. Only alcoholic beverages purchased from participating restaurants may be taken outside the restaurant and into the shopping center. No outside alcohol is permitted.

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."

SCHEDULE

Nov. 27 -- Drew Blue Shoes Magic



The Reston Holiday Parade will be held on Friday, Nov. 24, 2023 at Reston Town Center.

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-restons-founding-2023-09-09-10-00>

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.

SCHEDULE

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

NOV. 3 TO FEB. 4

Eleanor Mahin Thorp: Metopic Ridge. At Tephra ICA at Signature. 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.

FRIDAY/NOV. 24

Reston Holiday Parade. 11 a.m. At Reston Town Center, Reston. Celebrating its 32nd year, the one-of-a-kind, one-hour, half-mile parade along Market Street also welcomes the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus in a horse-drawn carriage. Since 1992, rain or shine, the parade has been an annual tradition on the day after Thanksgiving. After the parade, the Clauses will return for the Tree Lighting at 6:00 p.m. on Market Street. Bring your parade bells and join us for a day full of holiday cheer!

FRIDAY/NOV. 24

Black Friday at Tysons Corner Center. Many mall retailers have extended their Black Friday sales by starting them earlier this holiday season, so shoppers don't have to wait until Black Friday to score those once a year deals. The mall will be closed on Thanksgiving Day and will be open from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Black Friday.

SATURDAY/NOV. 25

Langley Crew Turkey Trot 5K Fun Run/Walk. 9 a.m. At Langley High School in McLean. The Langley Crew Booster Club invites the community to join us for a fun-filled event that combines fitness and festivity while supporting the dedicated rowers of the Langley High School Crew Team. Whether you're an experienced runner or looking for a leisurely stroll, this event is perfect for everyone. Registration is now open, so don't wait to secure your spot! Participants and supporters should assemble in the Langley High School parking lot beginning at 8:00am. They can pick up their t-shirts and race packages at the racer check-in desk. Register now at <https://potomac.enmotive.com/events/register/2023-langley-crew-turkey-trot-5k> and be a part of this amazing event!

SATURDAY/NOV. 25

A Chanticleer Christmas. 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. A Chanticleer Christmas showcases an inspired and far-ranging repertoire full of new a cappella arrangements of well-known tunes—from Renaissance music to Gospel hymns, Christmas carols from all around the world to songs from the "Great American Songbook." With 12 expressive voices ranging from soprano to bass harmonically

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ENTERTAINMENT



A Chanticleer Christmas takes place on Saturday, Nov. 25, 2023 at GMU Center for the Arts in Fairfax.

mended for unparalleled beauty and clarity, Chanticleer has impeccable style and has amassed a huge following.

NOV. 25-26

“The Nutcracker.” At Fairfax High School, Fairfax. The Fairfax Ballet Company presents a full-length production of “The Nutcracker.” Two show times include: Nov. 25 at 4 p.m. and Nov. 26 at 4 p.m. Fairfax Ballet Company members, along with guest professional artists and students from the Russell School of Ballet, join Clara and her Nutcracker Prince in this journey through a winter wonderland of dancing snowflakes, twirling candy canes, and an epic battle between heroic toy soldiers and mischievous mice. Chloe Shulsinger, a senior at Westfield High School in Chantilly and member of the Fairfax Ballet Company, dances the role of Clara, and professional guest artist Philip Smith-Cobbs, previously with the Atlanta Ballet, portrays the Nutcracker Prince. For tickets, visit www.fairfaxballetnutcracker2023.bpt.me. Tickets are also available at the door one hour before each show. For group discounts, email events@rsbdance.com

SUNDAY/NOV. 26

Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey Siegel. 7 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Enjoy a feast of magnifique French music in this sumptuous Keyboard Conversations® with Jeffrey Siegel. In Festive French Fare, Siegel showcases Debussy’s beloved Clair de Lune, Ravel’s enchanting Sonatine, Saint-Saëns’ devilish Danse macabre, and two tuneful Novelettes by Poulenc.

SUNDAY/NOV. 26

Beaver Boogie 5K. 10 a.m. At Lake Accotink Park, Springfield. Lace up your running shoes and join the Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP) for a wild, fun-filled adventure at the first-annual Beaver Boogie 5K Fun Run/Walk. Get ready for a memorable 5K race through picturesque Lake Accotink Park – a perfect way to spend a day

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with family and friends. The Beaver Boogie is more than just a fun run; it’s an opportunity to support the mission of the Friends of Lake Accotink Park (FLAP), a certified 501(c)3 organization dedicated to “protect, restore, preserve, and educate all concerning the natural, historical, and cultural resources of Lake Accotink Park.” Registration is \$25 for each participant through Eventbrite.

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS AT THE WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER

The Workhouse Arts Center will present several holiday events and activities in November and December for visitors to give back to the community, shop for holiday gifts, attend performances, take a class, and more. For more information, visit workhousearts.org.

Toy Drive – Now through Dec. 11

The Workhouse Arts Center is partnering with OAR NOVA, a local non-profit restorative justice organization, to give back to our community. Join us in helping families impacted by the criminal justice system by donating a new, unused toy in its original packaging. Toys can be dropped off in the Workhouse Visitors Center.

Small Business Saturday - 20% Off All Items – Saturday, Nov. 25, 11 am-6 pm

Celebrate Small Business Saturday by supporting artists at the Workhouse Arts Center and get a 20% discount on all items in gift shops, galleries, and artist studios! Shop for one-of-a-kind gifts and save big!

Thanksgiving Weekend Comedy Showcase – Saturday, Nov. 25, 8 pm

The Workhouse Arts Center presents, in collaboration with Rahmein Mostafavi, some of the funniest comedians in the DC area including Dewayne White, Jared Stern, Olivia Vida, Benny Nwokeabia, and Jason Weems for this special holiday weekend of comedy! Tickets are \$20. McGuireWoods Gallery in building W-16.

Creating Beautiful Ornaments with



The Church Street Stroll takes place on Monday, Nov. 27, 2023 in the Town of Vienna.

Lightbulbs - Saturday, Dec 2, 10:30 am

In this workshop participants will transform used lightbulb into festive holiday ornaments. Participants will be shown how to paint, collage and add glitter for a beautiful transformation. Cost, \$70. Building W-3, room 305.

Theater Performance – A Christmas Carol - Saturday, Dec. 2, 7 pm and Sunday Dec 3, 1 pm

Get into the holiday spirit with this season favorite presented in a whole new light. Through the magic of theatre, John Hardy single-handedly performs over 40 roles to bring Charles Dickens’ classic holiday perennial tale to life at the Workhouse Arts Center. Tickets, \$25. Building W-3 Theater.

WinterWorks - Season Celebration - Saturday, Dec. 9, 6-9 pm

Our festive WinterWorks event will feature holiday merriment, fun photo opportunities, carol singers, a Raku ceramics activity, dance demonstrations, hot chocolate bar, smores by a fire pit, and more! Admission is free. Art activities,

food, and beverages available for purchase. Workhouse Arts Center Campus.

Holidays...Hallowdays Movie Screening - Sunday, Dec. 10, 2 pm

While incarcerated at the Lorton Correctional Complex in the 1960s and 1970s, Rhozier “Roach” Brown led the prison theatrical troupe THE INNER VOICES. They performed original plays, skits, and social dramas at a variety of venues including the Apollo Theater and the Smithsonian Institution. Cost: In place of an admission fee, guests are asked to bring a new unused toy to donate to the Workhouse Toy Drive. Building W-3 Theater.

New Year’s Eve Musical Theater Performance – The Who’s Tommy Sunday, Dec. 31, 8 pm

Based on the iconic 1969 rock concept album, The Who’s Tommy is an exhilarating story of hope, healing, and the human spirit. The story of the pinball-playing boy who triumphs over his adversities has inspired and amazed audiences for more than 40 years. The New Year’s Eve show includes a

post-performance reception with midnight champagne. Tickets \$50. Building W-3 Theater. See the website for ticket prices for additional dates and times. Show runs through Feb 11. Fridays and Saturdays 8 pm and Sundays, 2 pm.

New Year’s Eve Comedy Show with Antoine Scott – Sunday, Dec. 31, 8 pm

The Workhouse Arts Center presents, in collaboration with Rahmein Mostafavi, a special New Year’s Eve comedy celebration. Time to laugh off 2023 and bring in 2024 with an abundance of joy! Join headliner Antoine Scott and a host of other hilarious comics for a one-show-only New Year’s Eve comedy event. Tickets are \$50; \$60 front row reserved seats. McGuireWoods Gallery in building W16.

MONDAY/NOV. 27

Church Street Stroll. 6 p.m. At the Town of Vienna in front of Freeman Store and Museum. Includes musical entertainment from local school groups and holiday greetings from Mayor Linda Colbert, the Vienna Town Council, and other elected leaders. New this year is a tree lighting ceremony with a traditional, decorated evergreen tree on the Freeman Store lawn! Santa will make his grand entrance down Church Street aboard the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department’s antique fire truck. After the official ceremony, participants can visit with Santa, stroll down historic Church Street, enjoy the festive lights, enjoy hot chocolate, warm up by a bonfire and explore the holiday shopping specials inside local Church Street businesses. Revelers can also enjoy tours of the nearby Caboose, the Vienna Train Station, and the Little Library for a trip down memory lane. For more information: call Historic Vienna at 703-938-5187 or visit www.viennava.gov/stroll.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 15



The Bargain Loft

Christmas Shop Opens at 10AM-3PM on Tuesday, Nov 14th

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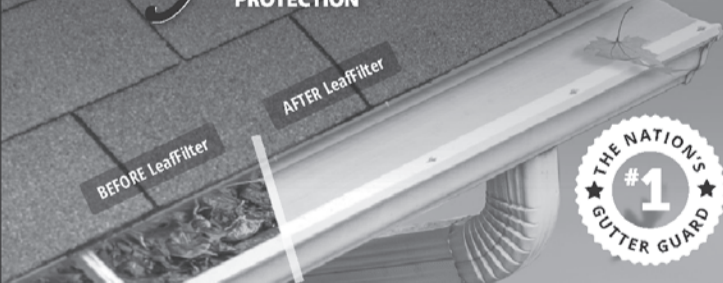
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Let us know about an upcoming event

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ENTERTAINMENT



Winterfest will take place Nov. 30 to Dec. 2, 2023 at Brown's Chapel Park in Reston.

FROM PAGE 13

NOV. 30 TO DEC. 2

Winterfest. 5-9 p.m. At Brown's Chapel Park in Reston. Reston Association is proud to announce Winterfest, a new three-day family festival that's perfect for the holiday season. Winterfest will feature a 'Light up the Park' walk, a Santa meet and greet, an 'Enchanted Forest' filled with decorated trees from the community, local vendors for holiday shopping, bonfires and smores, a pop-up bar, food options and more. A unique aspect of the event is the Enchanted Forest, which will feature up to 50 holiday trees individually decorated by sponsoring businesses, families or groups. Guests will be able to share in the holiday celebration as they walk through the Enchanted Forest and can vote for their favorite tree theme, most creative tree or most originality. Following the event, all trees will be donated to less fortunate families in the Reston community. The event is free for all Reston Association members; admission is \$8 for non-members ages 3-17, and \$18 for non-members 18+. Registration is open at <https://www.reston.org/winterfest-2023>.

NOV. 30-DEC. 3

Tyson's Library Quarterly Book & Media Sale. At Tyson's Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Thursday, 30 November, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Friday, 1 December, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday, 2 December, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday, 3 December, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.: Bag sale. \$10 for a full grocery sack or half price if less. Large selection of books and media for all ages and interests. Visit <https://www.tysonslibraryfriends.org/>. Call 703-338-3307 for additional information. Proceeds benefit the Tyson's-Pimmit Regional Library and related activities.

DEC. 1-3

Holiday Book Sale. At Centreville Regional Library, Centreville. Dec. 1, Friday, 1-5 p.m. Dec. 2, Saturday, 10-5 p.m. Dec. 3, Sunday, 1-4 p.m. Bag sale on Sunday. Fill a grocery bag with books for \$10. Fiction, nonfiction, gift baskets and stocking stuffers

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy - A Celtic Family Christmas. 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy return to the Center for the Arts for a Celtic experience like no other. In A Celtic Family Christmas, the charming duo invites you and your family into their holiday traditions on Cape Breton Island with charming stories of family, farming, food, and plenty of music. Even their talented children will join in the foot-stomping jigs, dizzying fiddling, soulful ballads, and spirited two-stepping. Fiddle masters in their own right, when MacMaster and Leahy combine their talents and magnetic chemistry,

the stage crackles with electric energy.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Puzzle Swap. At Reston Museum in Reston. Visitors are encouraged to bring a puzzle and leave with a "new to you" puzzle! The event will take place during Reston Museum's open hours until all puzzles are gone. Visitors can also purchase Reston-themed puzzles from the gift shop. The gift shop (excluding consignment) is 10% off the day of, with an extra 5% for museum members. Proceeds support Reston Museum a 501c3 nonprofit. Learn more at: <https://www.restonmuseum.org/event-details/puzzle-swap>

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Breakfast with Santa at Tysons Corner Center. 8:00am - 9:30am Food Court, Level 3. 'Breakfast with Santa' is a popular family tradition, involving a special and up close interaction with Santa and a complimentary catered breakfast. Upon Santa's arrival, all can enjoy family friendly entertainment, holiday music, face painting, coloring activities, and more. This annual event presented by Tysons Corner Center is free for families, with no additional costs for the breakfast or activities.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Model Train Show. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. The Herndon Historical Society's annual Model Train Show will take place. N-Scale Operating Layout by the Northern Virginia NTRAK. The Herndon caboose will also be open that same day from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Lake Anne Jingle on the Lake Christmas Festival. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Lake Anne Plaza, Reston. Join the Lake Anne and Reston Community for a day long holiday celebration, starring Santa himself! Santa will arrive along with the Vienna Singing Princesses on a decorated boat parade, and accompanied by Santa's elves on paddleboards! Calling on kids of all ages to greet Santa and enjoy hot chocolate, food and gifts at our Christmas Market, as well as children's choirs and ballet, Ukrainian Christmas songs, and children's activities and ornament making.

Schedule:

12 p.m.: Boat Parade and Santa arrival
12:45 p.m.: Vienna Singing Princesses
1:30 p.m.: Sunrise Valley Elementary School Choir
2:15 p.m.: Reston Conservatory Ballet
3:00 p.m.: Lake Anne Elementary School Choir
3:30 p.m.: Ukrainian Christmas songs

THURSDAY/DEC. 14

Winter Wonderland 2023. 6:30-8:30 p.m. At The Lake House, 11450 Baron Cameron Ave., Reston. Proceeds will benefit Fellowship Square, an organization improving the lives of older adults who struggle to make ends meet by providing affordable housing and supportive services.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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October 28, 2023
(In Case Anyone Missed it)



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As I sit and write this column on Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023, I do so with a heavy heart, heavier than usual I should say. And it is heavier than usual because today is my recently deceased brother's 74th birthday - or rather it would have been. We won't be celebrating it this year - or ever again. In fact, this is his first birthday since he died semi unexpectedly last Dec. 3rd. Another one of those firsts that survivors everywhere must endure when a significant person in their lives dies. And my brother Richard's death was very significant. A huge loss. He leaves a gaping hole in my life, as he does for his widow, Vanessa, and hundreds of his clients for whom Richard was more than simply an insurance broker. He was, as Father Mulcahy was on M*A*S*H, a caretaker of souls, sort of.

Do any of you remember where you were on Oct. 28, 2022? It was a Friday night. Ordinarily, recalling a random-ish day a year or so ago, maybe even a few months ago, is challenging as so often the days, weeks and months tend to blend and it all becomes a blur. Well, this is one date that will never be a blur to me. That's because the Friday night to which I refer was the last night I saw my brother, Richard alive. My wife Dina and I and Richard's wife Vanessa gathered at Richard's home for a surprise birthday dinner for him.

Back home finally, after two months in the hospital (six weeks of which were in the I.C.U.), followed by another two weeks in the adjacent rehabilitation center, Richard was thin and weak, understandably. But he was home at last and happily making progress rehabbing in his in-house exercise room. Slowly but surely becoming even ambulatory. If I'm not mistaken, Richard was driving a bit, with the help of a caregiver, of course. He boasted about walking around the Costco on South Dakota Ave, NW - with a walker. But he was up and at'em generally and improving. When he came down the inclinator (the stair lift), that early evening from his upstairs' bedroom and got into his downstairs' wheelchair, he then rolled into the dining room to his right, where we all were sitting at the dining room table eagerly awaiting his arrival: "Surprise," we all yelled. He had a huge smile. It was his birthday after all. But considering his month's-long ordeal, he wasn't quite ready for prime time. Nevertheless, we forced the issue and there we all were. That evening was the last time I saw my brother alive, and it's a memory that will never blur. I'll always know where I was on that date, his 73rd birthday. Though we spoke regularly over the phone in the weeks that followed, the timing hadn't presented itself to visit him again as he was busy with his rehab, - and tired from the exertion, and going to sleep early. And besides, he was home, having survived all those weeks in I.C.U., and was even receiving infusions for his colon cancer again. In naive truth, we all sort of figured he dodged/survived a bullet - figuratively speaking. And he did survive sepsis after all, as serious as that is, (as we learned from his physicians), so his progress was encouraging/ almost amazing. Though we all anticipated a long, slow recovery; all signs, generally speaking, were positive.

He was eating. He was walking. He was exercising/ rehabbing at home in his home gym. He was out driving occasionally. He was investigating buying a scooter so he would more mobile, and on the "q.t." on his phone, he was researching cruise lines as he was thinking about travelling with Vanessa in the spring. And then on the Sat. morning Dec. 3rd at 8:30 am, I received a call from Vanessa, crying, frantic, having found Richard laying on the floor by his bed, telling me he was "gone." Impossible for me to process, on such short notice, especially considering he had been doing so well that his doctor had restarted his colon cancer infusions to once and for all knock the remaining colon cancer out of his body. After two bi-weekly infusions, he seemed to be on track to a miraculous recovery which, given Richard's personality and determination, was what we had come to expect.

The few days after were a blur. Meeting with funeral parlor people, coordinating with Vanessa about an obituary, deciding the date and place for the memorial service, calling friends and relatives. The following Friday, we had Richard's service at Judean Gardens in Silver Spring. The packed house was a testament to the kind of person my brother was. I thought I knew him. But after hearing so many kind words from so many people in attendance, most of whom, I had never met before, I knew him even better. I realized Richard's loss even more than I had realized, and it made me proud to be his brother. RBL, we miss you terribly. Rest in peace, and please come to me in a dream. I want to see how you're doing. Love, KBL.

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

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