

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

NOVEMBER 30, 2023



Chris Barbuschak, the November 26 speaker, and Ray Kroc photo.



The original McDonald's on U.S. 1 in Hybla Valley.

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

A Historic McDonald's? Fairfax County Has One.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Northern Virginia has many historic treasures like Mount Vernon, Arlington House and Gadsby's Tavern; but McDonald's? The popular fast-food eatery

rarely makes any list of historic attractions.

The McDonald's restaurant at 7614 Richmond Highway in Hybla Valley, which opened on July 29, 1957, and is still there today, was the very first McDonald's in Fairfax County. After opening that one, Oscar Goldstein and John Gib-

son, owners of the Gee-Gee Food Corporation, went on to build the largest franchise operation of the McDonald's chain in the nation until the legendary Ray Kroc bought them out in 1967.

On Nov. 26, 2023, Chris Barbuschak outlined McDonald's California origins and the restaurants'

spread in the Washington area and around the globe for 60 rapt attendees at a Burke Historical Society meeting in the Pohick Library. Barbuschak, a Burke native, is the Archivist/Librarian for the Virginia Room of the Fairfax Regional Library.

The Gee Gee Food Corpora-

tion built the Richmond Highway McDonald's in three months for \$15,000. Barbuschak speculated that they chose the site because U.S. 1 was a major north-south artery, pre-Beltway, pre-Interstate highways. Customers ordered a hamburger for 15 cents at a walk-
SEE A HISTORIC, PAGE 9

Gum Springs 190 Founders Day Gala

Gum Springs Gala celebrates 190 years since community's founding.

BY MARY PADEN
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Members and friends of the historic Gum Springs community gathered at George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate on Saturday, Nov. 18 to celebrate the 190th anniversary of the community's founding by West Ford (1875-1863), who was formerly enslaved on the estate.

Gum Springs is the oldest historically Black community in Fairfax County and one of the oldest in the nation. The event was sponsored by the Gum Springs Historical Society and attended by about 100 people, including descendants of West Ford as well as local officials including Sen. Scott Surovell, Del. Paul Krizek, and newly elected Mount Vernon School Board member Mateo Dunn.

Ron Chase, president of the Gum Springs Historical Society and founding director of the Gum Springs Museum, opened the event by saying, "It is important to recognize the ingenuity of the early leaders who laid the foundation for this historic community. The founder, West Ford, and the original families —



Ron Chase, founding director of the Gum Springs Museum and president of the Gum Springs Historical Society. Chase told the audience that "Gum Springs is now facing a fight for survival against constant pressure from developers."

the Browns, Grays, Chases, Kings, Hollands, Fergusons, Smiths, Jaspers, and Taylors — to name a few, were its building blocks. However, after 190 years, Gum Springs is now facing a fight for survival against constant pressure from developers who seek to

change or even destroy this historic community."

He introduced keynote speaker Dale Green, professor of architecture and historic preservation at Morgan State University and descendent of several notable African Amer-



Dale Green, professor at Morgan State University, gave the keynote address saying, "Those who do not learn their past will never know their own power."

ican historic figures including the founder of Morgan State, a Historically Black College or University (HBCU).

Green gave a moving talk about how understanding the past struggles and ac-
SEE GUM SPRINGS, PAGE 11

PHOTO BY KATHERINE FOGDEN

PHOTO BY KATHERINE FOGDEN

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NEWS

Board Resolutions Honor Residents

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors presented resolutions to honor Abigail Akyea, a finalist for the Boys and Girls Club of America National Youth of the Year Award; Dr. Jerry and Alice Foltz, founders of the Centreville Immigration Forum; and John Fee, chair of the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission.

The Board approved 16 administrative items, including authorizing the Fairfax County Police Department to seek state funds to protect organizations from hate crimes. The fund will be used to increase security for a synagogue, community center, and school in

the interests of deterring and detecting threats and attacks to reduce or eliminate damage.

Based on County Executive Bryan Hill's suggestion, the Board authorized the Fairfax County Police Department to apply for and accept grant funding from the Department of Criminal Justice Services, FY 2024 Combating Hate, in the amount of \$139,250. The award is valid from January 1 to December 31, 2024.

For a complete listing of all board actions taken at the November 21 Board of Supervisors see the summary of board actions that is available sometime during the week of Nov. 27.

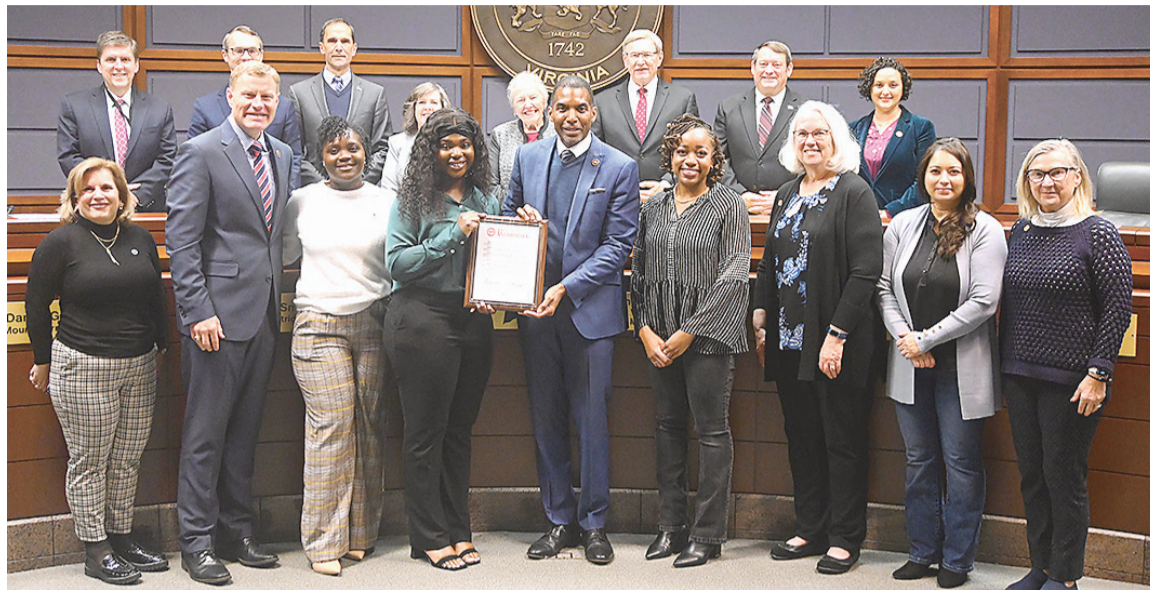


PHOTO VIA FAIRFAX COUNTY

The Board approved a resolution to recognize Abigail Akyea, a finalist in the Boys and Girls Clubs of America's National Youth of the Year Award. Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk (D-Franconia) said that Abigail, the daughter of first-generation immigrants from Ghana, participated in the Murraygate Boys and Girls Club where staff taught Abigail to appreciate her heritage and individuality, sparking a passion for inclusivity. That led Abigail to start the West Potomac Change — a club that promotes inclusivity and diversity at West Potomac High School.

Surovell to Lead Senate Democrats

New Senate Majority Leader.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

After November's General Election, incumbents and newcomers, who will represent Virginians in Richmond in January, are beginning to find the assignments tangential to their elected General Assembly seats.

Party leadership roles and committee assignments make the Commonwealth's part-time government run. As the selection process rolls out, party leadership positions are especially newsworthy this year due to the significant loss of senior legislators brought on by retirement and redistricting.

One of those top leadership positions will be held by Northern Virginia Sen. Scott Surovell (D-34), who will serve as Senate

Majority Leader. Surovell was selected by his fellow democratic senators to lead the caucus following the retirement of long-time incumbent Sen. Dick Saslaw, the longest serving member of the Senate who held the leadership position beginning in 2020. Previously serving as Vice Chair with Saslaw, Surovell pursued the chair position, running against Senator Maine Locke, from Hampton.

Surovell who ranks seventh in Democrat seniority and 14th overall (out of 40) in the Senate, says he is "honored the caucus elected me to lead them and honored to step into the shoes of Dick Saslaw." The majority leader in the Senate has a differ-



Sen. Scott Surovell

ent role than the position in the House. While the House Speaker holds the significant power to decide which bills are heard in Committees and on the House floor, Surovell describes the Senate as having "power distributed among all the members." As Leader, he will act as his party's "chief spokesman and strategist." It's a role he describes as being "like a Border collie."

Recognizing that the Northern Virginia region makes up about one third of the Commonwealth's population, and supplies half of its tax revenue, but for decades didn't enjoy the full power of that influence, Surovell says it's important for each region to "have a seat at the table." With a \$750 million dollar shortfall in Metro funding and our schools "severely" underfunded, the area has reason

to seek a fair share of tax revenues.

The Senator indicates he sought the leadership role knowing that in State government such positions "can have significant impact on people; to achieve long term objectives where the Governor term is only four years". He includes the ability to make policy change, impact budget shortfalls and "over a period of time align our views with the majority of Virginians to keep the promises made during the campaign." In leading the group, he hopes "to maximize the amount of change we can accomplish as a group, as we sacrifice time away from families and careers to service our community."

Surovell is a practicing attorney when not attending to Senate responsibilities. He is in the top five percent of Senate members for carrying bills. The part-time senate position earns a salary of \$18,000 and per diem. The 34th Senate District includes portions of Fairfax, Prince William and Stafford counties.

United Community Holiday Gift Card Drive

Gift Cards for 166 Children Still Needed

Thank you to everyone who has already contributed to help reach the goal to ensure we provide the families of 900 local children with gift cards this holiday season. We are 82% of the way to goal but we still need gift cards for 166 kids.

There is still time to make the holidays special for children in our local community. Make a donation online.

Shop gift cards from our Amazon Wish List.

<https://www.amazon.com/registries/>

[gl/guest-view/DCXZKRATR2GU](https://www.unitedcommunity.org/guest-view/DCXZKRATR2GU)

Purchase \$25 Target, Walmart, or Visa gift cards locally and drop them at our office at 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria.

Donate \$25 Target, Walmart, or Visa gift cards to help parents buy gifts. Drop off or mail in gift cards. <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/WebLink.aspx?name=E3464&id=151>

Gift cards can also be purchased from our Amazon Wish List.

United Community, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, VA 22306, (571) 255-8979, <https://www.unitedcommunity.org/>

FPCPD Searching for Stolen French Bulldog

Detectives from FPCPD Criminal Investigation Division are seeking the community's assistance to locate a stolen french bulldog.

On November 27 at 7:50 a.m., officers responded to a burglary of a home in the 7500 block of Tralee Woods Court in Springfield. The victim was alerted by a family friend that her dogs were running loose in the neighborhood. The family friend was able to retrieve two of the three dogs. The victim returned home and was unable to locate the third dog, a french bulldog named Queen.

Detectives determined a suspect entered the victim's home and attempted to take all three dogs. When unsuccessful, he took Queen and left the home. Surveillance footage showed the suspect carrying Queen to a four-door Nissan, possibly an Altima or Sentra, and leaving the area. The male suspect was described as, 5'8" wearing a white t-shirt, gray shorts, and blue Crocs.

Detectives are asking anyone with information regarding this incident to call the West Springfield District Station at 703-644-7377 and ask to speak with a detective. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone - 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477)

Grant Funding Could Help Fight Hate Crimes in Fairfax County

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

At its meeting on Nov. 21, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors prepared to position its Police Department to better combat hate crimes, especially at locations within the county with a history of anti-Semitic acts. Fairfax County Police define bias crime, also called hate crime, as “any unlawful action committed against a person or their property because of race, religious conviction, ethnic/national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.”

“Unfortunately, it is time to redouble our efforts on this front due to rising hate and bias incidents around the country, many stemming from the conflict in Israel and Gaza,” Jeff McKay (D) chairman of the Board of Supervisors said at the meeting.

“Thankfully, our county has been spared the violence that we’ve seen in other places, but we know there are still significant challenges in our community. We need to be vigilant to ensure that our rich diversity continues to be a source of pride rather than a source of pain. Hate has no place in Fairfax County,” McKay said.

The Board authorized the police department to apply for competitive grant funds under the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services program. The maximum amount requested per location is \$150,000; the Board authorized the police department to apply for \$139,250 and accept grant funds if awarded.

“The locality that is applying for the maximum amount would be expected to have partnered with multiple institutions and/or non-profit organizations,” states the guidelines and application procedures for the 2024 Combatting Hate Crimes Grant Program Funding Opportunity.

The funds would be used for improvement at four facilities, Gesher Jewish Day School in Fairfax; Little River United Church of Christ, Annandale; Pozez Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia on Little River Turnpike, Fairfax; and Temple B’nai Shalom, Fairfax Station. The goal is to make improvements to better secure the facilities and protect them against hate crimes.

According to Board documents of the Nov. 21 meeting, each of the four organizations will train staff and residents. The funding was available to any Virginia community



SCREENSHOT

Jeff McKay

that established a collaboration program with institutions or nonprofit organizations that had been victims of hate crimes or were at risk of becoming victims.

A project manager will meet monthly with partners to track the projects. Collectively, the projects will help strengthen the facilities.

McKay said that for organizations, not only religious but nonprofits as well, wishing to apply for future grant funding opportunities, next year’s application is expected to open in September.

GIVE LOCALLY

Where to Give for Local Impact

There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of ways to give locally. Here are a few ideas of where to give. Please let us know what we have missed and any corrections. Send corrections or updates to mkimm@connectionnews-papers.com with “Give Locally” in the subject line.

❖ Alice’s Kids (@alicewillhelp) aliceskids.org P.O. Box 60, Mount Vernon, VA 22121 When a child is raised in poverty they suffer both publicly and privately. When that same child can’t afford to pay for the band field trip, a pair of glasses, a chorus outfit or a new pair of shoes, these are indignities that are evident to their classmates. Alice’s Kids pays for these relatively inexpensive items in the hopes of preserving the dignity of the child. <https://aliceskids.org/>

❖ Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that feeds, clothes and educates children in need. Assistance League’s philanthropic programs touch the lives of thousands of children at 11 Title I schools in Northern Virginia, serving children most in need at selected schools in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the

SEE GIVE LOCALLY, PAGE 5



The students, faculty and families of Stratford Landing Elementary School say THANK YOU to all of the SPONSORS of our 2023 Rock 'n' Run fundraiser!

Diamond Level



Platinum Level



Gold Level



Silver Level



Another Mount Vernon Gazette Community Partnership

WHERE TO GIVE LOCALLY

FROM PAGE 4

City of Alexandria. To learn more about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, contact info@alnv.org or visit www.alnv.org

❖ Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington Fairfax Area operates clubs in two of the neediest areas of the county, Culmore, Mount Vernon/ Route 1 corridor, and Chantilly/Herndon, focusing on character and academic success. <https://www.bgcgw.org/club-page/fairfax-county-region-our-impact/>

❖ Britepaths Britepaths' services stabilize low-wealth working families, build resilience through financial empowerment and workforce development, and provide supports for children. Britepaths.org <https://britepaths.org/>

❖ Centreville Immigration Forum, a safe, organized center where residents and contractors can negotiate work arrangements with day laborers. Centreville Square Shopping Center, 5944 Centreville Crest Ln, Centreville, VA 20121. Phone: (703) 543-6272

website: www.centrevilleimmigrationforum.org and email contact@theCIFva.org

❖ Closet Of The Greater Herndon Area is a nonprofit thrift shop in downtown Herndon. The Closet recently awarded over \$20,000 in grants to seven local non-profit organizations: Cornerstones, Fellowship Square, Herndon-Reston FISH, Meridians Recovery, Mobile Hope of Loudoun, South Lakes High School PTSA Food Pantry, and Herndon Woman's Club in support of Wreaths Across America. The Closet is a source of low-cost clothing and household necessities and also gives away clothing at no cost to truly needy individuals. 845 Station Street Herndon, VA 20170 (703) 437-7652. Email TheClosetInc@verizon.net

Web: theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/

❖ Comfort for America's Uniformed Services (CAUSE) ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation for all that they have done. Mailing address: 4201 Wilson Blvd., #110-284, Arlington, VA 22203, CFC #33011, Phone 703-591-4965, cause-usa.org

❖ Committee for Helping Others (CHO), Vienna, organized in 1969 by a group of churches and individuals in the Dunn Loring, Merrifield, Oakton, Vienna community to provide simple, loving charity to those in need. Coming up, holiday bike drive. 703-281-7614, www.cho-va.com

❖ Community Foundation of Northern Virginia www.cfnova.org The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia works to respond to critical need and seed innovation in our region. Your gift helps us make grants in our focus areas of interest while also bringing a spotlight on the benefits of community philanthropists www.cfnova.org/for-donors/donate-now

❖ Cornerstones, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, www.cornerstonesva.org.

Nonprofit providing support and advocacy for those in need of food, shelter, affordable housing, quality childcare, and other human services. Programs and services include the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, Emergency Food Pantry, Hypothermia Prevention Program, Gifts for Kids and annual Coat Drive. www.cornerstonesva.org

❖ Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO), 703-569-9160. Open to receive do-

nations at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Provides food and financial assistance to those in short-term emergencies, and provides clothing and household goods to low income families. www.echo-inc.org.

❖ FACETS helps parents, their children and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty in the Fairfax area, a partner in efforts to end homelessness in Fairfax County. FACETS is always in need of donations and volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities.

Contact Haylee Davis at hdavis@facetscares.org.

703-865-4251 or volunteer@facetscares.org. www.facetscares.org. 10640 Page Ave., Suite 300, Fairfax VA 22030

❖ Fairfax City Area FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help) FISH provides funds and volunteers to serve the needy and elderly in the greater Fairfax City area of Fairfax County. FISH responds to requests for life's necessities: food, clothing, financial assistance for delinquent rent, mortgage, utility bills, gasoline, and prescriptions. 703-222-0880 fairfaxfish.org/

❖ Food for Others Located at 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-207-9173. 2938 Prosperity Ave. info@foodforothers.org. Food for Others distributes food to more than 1,800 local families in need each week. Drop off food at our Merrifield Warehouse, 2938 Prosperity Ave, Fairfax, VA 22031. Monday through Friday from 9:30am to 5pm. www.foodforothers.org

❖ Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter. Each year, nearly 5,000 pets, including cats, dogs, small mammals, reptiles and livestock, come to the Fairfax County Animal

Shelter. Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter funds important needs throughout the Shelter such as behavioral training and dental or medical care beyond what the shelter's budget can provide. generalinfo@ffcas.org 571-212-9858 www.ffcas.org/

❖ Friends of Guest House Northern Virginia offers structure, supervision, support and assistance to female ex-offenders who want to improve their lives and break the cycle of incarceration. Friends of Guest House offers the only program for women of its kind in Northern Virginia. One East Luray Ave., Alexandria, VA 22301-2025, 703-549-8072, [info@friendsofguesthouse.org/](mailto:info@friendsofguesthouse.org)

❖ Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia transforms the lives of lower-income families in need by providing affordable homeownership opportunities in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax and Falls Church. Learn more at www.habitatnova.org.

❖ Herndon-Reston FISH (Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help), 336 Victory Drive, Herndon, 703-391-0105 herndonrestonfish.org Herndon-Reston FISH has assisted local residents in short-term crises since 1969. 703-437-0600.

❖ Homestretch, to empower homeless parents with children to attain permanent housing and self-sufficiency by giving them the skills, knowledge and hope they need to become productive participants in the community. Since 1990 Homestretch has helped over 2,000 families achieve permanent housing and self-sufficiency. 303 South Maple Ave, Suite 400, Falls Church, VA 22046 Phone: 703-237-2035 homestretchva.org

SEE WHERE TO GIVE, PAGE 7

PASSPORT AUTO



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Fairfax Funds Innovators

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK
MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT

I am pleased to share that Fairfax County recently announced the winners of the first ever round of grant funding for the Fairfax Founders Fund, one of many County programs designed to help businesses grow in Fairfax County. The five companies chosen represent a group of visionary startups that exemplify local innovation and entrepreneurship. Winners were selected for the potential of their innovative tech products and demonstrated business growth opportunities. Each business will receive up to \$50,000 that will provide a significant boost to their ventures and showcase the region's dynamic and thriving startup ecosystem. As a serial entrepreneur, I strongly supported this program when it came to the Board for consideration and equally strongly support the need to develop and grow "Made in Fairfax" companies. I am proud that one of the five chosen is in the Mount Vernon Woods area, Anapact – The Smart Headgear company makes headgear for boxers with sensors to help protect against head injuries.

The Fairfax Founders Fund is a Fairfax County Department of Economic Initiatives program designed to support early-stage, high-growth startups. The program provides grants and technical assistance to product and technology-based companies on the path to seeking institutional investments or awards and expanding their customer base. The primary objectives of the fund are to stimulate economic development, connect startups with local resources and partnerships, and promote economic mobility by ensuring that early-stage capital is accessible to entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds.



Applications for the second round of funding are now open through Jan. 8. Learn more about eligibility requirements, how the program works and how to apply here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/fairfax-founders-fund>. Read more about the winners here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/fairfax-founders-fund-inaugural-cohort-winners>.

Did you know the County provides support and funding opportunities for local small businesses and entrepreneurs? From BizEx that

provides a step-by-step guide to starting your own business, to having our own Economic Development Support Fund that directs investments into three kinds of projects: capital development projects, purchasing real estate and programming support for economic development activities identified in the Economic Success Plan, the County is here to help you and your business. Learn about these and many more business support programs here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/about-us>.

Children's and Teen's Connection/Gazette

Our annual Children's Connection, including the Children's Gazette, has been a long-standing tradition. We are once again welcoming contributions from children, youth, and teens in public and private schools, as well as homeschool, after-school care, and other programs, art and writing classes, and from individuals.

We publish images of all types of visual art forms, from drawing, painting, printmaking, and graphic design to sculpture, extended media, crafts, and more. We welcome written works such as poetry, essays, opinion pieces, and short stories.

Visit <http://www.connection-newspapers.com/PDFs/> and scroll down to the Children's Edition to see last year's editions. Our plan is for the Children's Connection/Gazette to publish the week of December 20, 2023, with overflow possible in January 2024.

Submission Directions

Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format. These can be submitted via Google Drive. Writing should be submitted in text format (docx or Google Docs) or pasted in the body of an email. We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email.

Identify each submission as follows:

<First Name> <Last Name>, <Age>, <Grade>, <Residence Location (Reston Herndon, Springfield, etc.)>, <Title of the Work>, <Medium or Type of Writing> | <School/Center Name>, <School Location>, <Teacher Name>, <Title>

Artwork example

Sean Murphy, 12, Grade 7, Springfield, Summer Morning, watercolor on parchment | Irving Middle School, Springfield, VA, Elizabeth Carr, art teacher, MS

Writing example

Martina Alvarez, 17, Junior, Alexandria, I'm Not Just a Teen, essay | Mount Vernon High School, Alexandria, VA, Gratia Rodriguez, English Teacher, HS

Please email your submissions by 6 p.m. on Monday, December 11, 2023, [Earlier is Better] to Editor and Publisher Mary Kimm at kimm.mary@gmail.com and fill in the Subject Line as Children's Connection 2023

Submit a Letter to the Editor

To submit a letter to the editor, email editors@connectionnewspapers.com or via the following form <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/>

Ideally, letters will be original, about local issues and less than 300 words. Please submit letters by noon Friday before publication week, although letters received on Mondays can be considered. Letters must include your first and last name, home address and a phone number. Letters are routinely edited for libel, length, grammar, good taste and accuracy. Your name and town will be published with your letter, other personal information will not be shared. If you are a student, your school name, age and grade will also be published.

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A Connection Newspaper



WHERE TO GIVE LOCALLY

FROM PAGE 5

❖ Lamb Center, www.thelambcenter.org, day center for homeless, Fairfax City. 703-691-3178.

❖ LINK, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more. holiday@linkagainsthunger.org. 703-437-1776 www.linkagainsthunger.org.

❖ Lorton Community Action Center (LCAC) provide low-income individuals, senior citizens, and families residing in Fort Belvoir, Lorton, Newington and other portions of southeast Fairfax County with access to basic needs and the opportunity to empower themselves. <https://lortonaction.org/>

❖ Mount Vernon At Home, 703-303-4060, www.mountvernonathome.org. Mount Vernon At Home membership helps connect senior members of our community. Neighbors helping neighbors with volunteer support is the power of Mount Vernon At Home. The group fundraises all year to make this possible and count on the generosity of the community.

❖ NAMI Northern Virginia (National Alliance on Mental Illness) works to raise awareness and provide education, advocacy, and support programs for people living with mental illness, families, students, educators, law enforcement, and the public throughout our neighborhoods. Many excellent programs. NAMI Northern Virginia serves Fairfax, Falls Church, Arlington, Alexandria, and Loudoun www.nami-northern-virginia.org/ HelpLine: (571)458.7310, Email: info@nami-nova.org

❖ National Capital Food Bank, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia, (571) 482-4770 . www.capitalareafoodbank.org

❖ Neighborhood Health, 6677 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA 22306. Treats the whole person through medical, behavioral health and dental programs. It has 10 clinics throughout Arlington and Fairfax counties. Participating with all insurance including commercial, Medicare, and Medicaid, 703-535-5568, www.neighborhoodhealthva.org

❖ New Hope Housing, ends homelessness in Northern Virginia by providing housing, offering hope, and building community. We currently offer various Housing Programs, and Support Services. 8407E Richmond Hwy., Alexandria, VA 22309 www.newhopehousing.org/how-to-help/donate/

❖ Northern Virginia Family Service. The organization provides the essential building blocks for financial, emotional and physical well-being, serving as leaders and innovators for the Northern Virginia community. Every year, it empowers 35,000 individuals to achieve self-sufficiency. www.nvfs.org Northern Virginia Family Service, 10455 White Granite, Drive, Suite 100, Oakton, VA 22124. 571-748-2500

❖ OAR rebuilds lives and breaks the cycle of crime with opportunities, alternatives, and resources for offenders and their families to create a safer community. 10640 Page Ave., Suite 250, Fairfax, VA 22030, 703-246-3033. OAR needs volunteers and financial donations. ornova.org/donate

❖ Our Neighbor's Child (ONC) volunteers are preparing for delivery of holiday gifts for children from financially struggling families in western Fairfax County – predominantly in Centreville and Chantilly. www.ourneighborschild.org/

❖ Pathway Homes providing non-time-limited housing and supportive services to adults with serious mental illness and co-occurring disabilities in Northern Virginia. Founded in 1980, Pathways currently serves more than 400 adults in community-based homes in Northern www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Virginia. www.pathwayhomes.org

❖ Potomac Riverkeeper Network works to protect the public's right to clean water in our rivers and streams; to stop pollution; to promote safe drinking water; to protect healthy river habitats; and to enhance public use and enjoyment.

3070 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007. (202) 888-2037 www.potomacriverkeepernetwork.org

❖ Potomac Conservancy, 962 Wayne Ave, Suite 540

Silver Spring, MD 20910; 301.608.1188; potomac.org, seeks to improve the Potomac River's water quality by building an impassioned base of river advocates to impart change at the local level. www.potomac.org

❖ PRS is now HopeLink Behavioral Health, "where hope meets help," nonprofit providing mental health, crisis intervention and suicide prevention services. We seek to change and save lives in our community by empowering hope, safety, recovery, wellness, independence and community integration. Seeking to change and save lives in our community by empowering hope, safety, recovery, wellness, independence and community integration.. PRS also provides crisis counseling and connection to supports CRISISLINK When crisis calls, we answer 24/7 Call: 988 Text: 988 <https://prsinc.org/>

❖ Rebuilding Together Arlington/Fairfax/Falls Church (Rebuilding Together-AFF) makes critical repairs at no charge for low-income homeowners and nonprofit organizations. Volunteers make homes safe and healthy, and they help seniors age in place. Since 1988 Rebuilding Together has repaired more than 2,273 homes and non-profit residential facilities in our area and mobilized more than 69,081 volunteers to do the work. 10723 Main Street, #135, Fairfax, VA 22030; Phone: 703-528-1999 <https://rebuildingtogether-aff.org/>

❖ Second Story — Second Story (formerly Alternative House) provides shelter and services for homeless, runaway or abused teenagers, unaccompanied youth, and young mothers and their children; Second Story for Teens in Crisis provides a short-term place to stay for youth in crisis, plus individual and family counseling. Second Story in the Community provides drop-in centers for families and after-school programs for youth who need more support outside their homes.

Second-story.org

❖ SHARE of McLean is an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff that has been helping for more than 50 years, supported by donations from local religious congregations, community organizations and individuals. Our year round and seasonal programs include family emergency financial assistance, food pantry, used clothing room, recycled furniture, back-to-school supplies and refurbished laptop computers. During the holidays, we also provide our neighbors in need with grocery cards and gifts.

Main Message Center: (703) 229-1414 info@shareofmclean.org www.shareofmclean.org

❖ Shelter House provides crisis intervention, safe housing and supportive services to promote self-sufficiency for homeless families and victims of domestic violence in Fairfax County. It is our mission to get families into stable housing in order to provide them the opportunity to continue their journey to self-sufficiency. www.shelterhouse.org

❖ Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna providing services, personal enrichment, volunteer opportunities for adults 50 and over. Currently serving 3,000-plus mature adults in the region.

SEE HELPING, PAGE 12



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.

Impact of Fairfax's High Rental Costs and Low Income

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

Part of an ongoing series.

Evaciation court is Friday in Fairfax County. Some county residents who are living on the edge cannot keep up with the area's high rental costs, given their low incomes and eviction proceedings are underway. It is causing immense stress for families and individuals and fractures their dreams.

In Fairfax County District Court, if the tenant does not comply with the 5-day nonpayment notice, the landlord brings proof of the notice to the General District Court to obtain a Summons for Unlawful Detainer, which is a civil claim for eviction. The landlord and the tenant will appear in court.

Joe Fay, the executive director of the non-profit FACETS in Fairfax County, said that on the Friday morning before Thanksgiving, 319 cases were on the docket in Fairfax County Court for eviction. Most individuals who appear in landlord/tenant court do not have an attorney representing them, and the process can be confusing.

County residents are stuck in cycles of poverty with this year's elevated inflation and rising household debt.

"There are a few things that you have to pay for if you cut to the bone," Fay said on Tuesday, Nov. 21. "You need to eat, a place to sleep, and the power and water on. ... And there are other things if you are trying to work. You have to figure out child care, which has become a challenge. If you are on public transportation, you take the bus," he said.

FACETS is one of the "largest social safety nets for our most vulnerable and marginalized neighbors, providing emergency shelter, life-saving services, and assistance in securing housing for neighbors in need," according to its website.

In 2023, Fairfax County has 64.7 percent higher Fair Market Rents for 2-bedroom housing at \$1,838 than the average of Virginia at \$1,116, according Virginia Fair Market Rents, USHousingData.com. Virginia Fair Market Rents rated Fairfax County the most expensive jurisdiction to live in out of the 133 counties in Virginia.

"Thirty percent AMI [area median income] for a family of four in Fairfax County is \$45,200," Fay said. At the \$15 an hour minimum wage, that would be a yearly salary of around \$30,000. You will not rent a \$2,000-a-month apartment in the county," Fay said.

FACETS's programs offer basic needs assistance and comprehensive case management, along with an emergency pantry and a hot meals program for people who are experiencing homelessness. The organization's Changing Lives Campaign raises flexible funds to provide emergency response to people in need. This emergency financial assistance includes help with rent, utilities, medical bills, transportation, childcare, and other urgent needs that can

be a tipping point for a crisis that could push people into homelessness. During the winter, FACETS operates a hypothermia prevention and response program in partnership with Fairfax County and 34 faith communities.

On April 12, 2023, Leah Tenorio, Director of Hispanic Ministry and Community Outreach at Good Shepherd Catholic Church testified at the Fairfax County Budget Hearing about evictions and their heavy cost. Tenorio is in charge of the Emergency Assistance Program taking calls and walk-in requests mostly for rent and utilities. Tenorio was surprised at how many callers had court notices, eviction notices and/or unlawful detainers. She said that people who called for rent assistance were short \$150 on their rent and that they were issued a notice on day six of the month that they must appear in court. "They are being charged additional fines, fees and penalties – all of which we end up helping to pay – which takes away funds that could have helped another family," Tenorio said.

The collective noun "the homeless," is dehumanizing. It can create negative stereotypes and stigma. In day-to-day life, people, including policymakers and advocates, have used the word "homeless" as a noun for years. Instead use construction like "people without housing," states the newest Associated Press Stylebook. Other variations are "those struggling with homelessness" or "people experiencing homelessness."

So who are the people experiencing homelessness? Some are individuals and families who sleep on the couches of friends and family, saying it is just temporary. Other individuals experiencing homelessness may be sleeping in tents and vehicles. Living in automobiles parked in a public right-of-way is illegal, according to Fairfax County Police, adding another element of uncertainty.

There were 1,310 people experiencing homelessness in Fairfax County on a single night in January, according to the 2023 point-in-time count. There are limitations to a point-in-time count, though, as it cannot reach all people who are experiencing homelessness in the community.

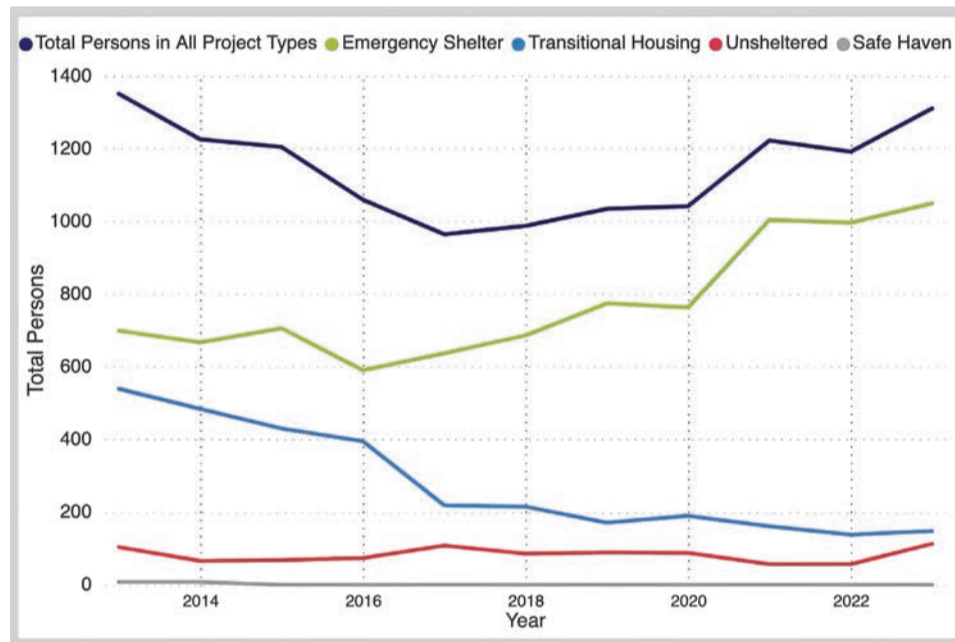
Officials in Seattle, Washington, released a report in December 2021 questioning the point-in-time counts claiming they undercount the number of people without housing in their area. Seattle officials developed



Staff at FACETS



LINKEDIN PHOTO
Joe Fay



SCREENSHOT VIA FAIRFAX COUNTY

Point-in-Time Count - 2023, Office to Prevent and End Homelessness

Year	Total Persons in All Project Types	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	Safe Haven
2023	1310	1049	148	113	0
2022	1191	996	138	57	0
2021	1222	1004	161	57	0
2020	1041	763	190	88	0
2019	1034	774	171	89	0
2018	987	686	215	86	0
2017	964	637	219	108	0
2016	1059	590	395	74	0
2015	1204	706	430	68	0
2014	1225	667	484	66	8
2013	1350	699	539	104	8

SCREENSHOT FAIRFAX COUNTY

Point-in-Time Count - 2023, Office to Prevent and End Homelessness

what they believe is a more accurate way of counting individuals who are unhoused than the federal count. "Integrating data from systems beyond those focused on homeless response enables better estimates of homelessness," states the report.

Compared to the 11,700 people counted under the federal Point in Time Count method for one night in January, Seattle officials say they estimate more than 40,800 people experienced homelessness in Seattle "at some point in the year."

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Willard Scott as Bozo the Clown and a young fan.

A Historic McDonald's?

FROM PAGE 1

up window. The company placed ads in several local yearbooks, including the former Groveton, Fort Hunt and Mount Vernon High Schools.

By 1959, Goldstein and Gibson had built five McDonald's and were "doing a booming business," Barbuschak said. In 1960, they opened four more, including one in Baileys Crossroads and one on Duke Street. In 1961, they opened one in McLean, one in Springfield and their first one in Washington, D.C. At the Washington opening, Undersecretary of Agriculture Charles Murphy gobbled up the chain's 500th million burger. In 1965, their filet of fish "went nationwide," remarked Barbuschak, "to keep Catholic customers happy on Fridays."

By September 1962, the Northern Virginia restaurants were open seven days a week and "Gee Gee was making a killing," with \$3 million in profits a year, said Barbuschak. By this time, their customers had consumed over one million pounds of meat and 100 railroad car loads of potatoes in one year. Gee-Gee owned the restaurants' land and their business had become "the most successful McDon-



After Bozo, Scott created a clown that became Ronald McDonald.

ald's franchise in history." McDonald's now has 25 restaurants in Fairfax County.

Many original restaurants had distinctive mansard roofs, but over time, most, including the Hybla Valley one, were remodeled and became what Barbuschak called "another boring gray box."

Earlier this week, on Nov. 26 at 1:20 p.m., 20 cars were lined up in

SEE A HISTORIC, PAGE 10

CALENDAR

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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MARKETING

EVENTS

COMMUNITY

The Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce is one of the largest Chambers in the metropolitan area representing more than 400 businesses in the eastern part of Fairfax County. The Chamber offers both businesses and nonprofits opportunities for networking, business development, community engagement, marketing and visibility within the community. View all of the benefits at www.mountvernon.springfield.com/member-benefits/.

Phone
703.360.6925

Email
info@mountvernon.springfield.com

Website
mountvernon.springfield.com

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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Barbuschak and McDonald's' first logo.

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Christmastide

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Mason Neck, VA, 22079
703 550-9220



Cars at the Hybla Valley McDonald's drive-through on Nov. 26.



McDonald's at 7614 Richmond Highway, Hybla Valley, today.

A Historic McDonald's?

FROM PAGE 9

the drive-through lanes and business was bustling inside that "gray box," with people loading up Big Macs, quarter pounders, French fries, chicken McNuggets and happy meals.

Bozo the Clown

In 1960, at the Duke Street McDonald's opening, thousands cheered Bozo the Clown, a. k. a. Alexandria native Willard Scott. Scott and Ed Walker had started the popular "Joy Boys" WRC comedy radio show in 1955 ("We are the Joy Boys of radio. We chase electrons to and fro!").

In 1959, Bozo had become a Channel 4 television phenomenon, a spunky, wide-eyed, McDonald's salesman, imploring, "Kids, get Mom and Dad to take you to McDonald's!"

"Bozo made McDonald's trendy and sales skyrocketed," remarked Barbuschak. Bozo highlighted 15 more openings.

In 1962, WRC television canceled Bozo and McDonald's asked Scott to create another mascot, who became Ronald McDonald, "the hamburger happy clown," with a paper cup nose, flaming red hair, white painted face and

a ketchup- and mustard-colored suit. His hat was a tray and he balanced a meal on his belt.

California Beginnings

Barbuschak traced McDonald's origins to two brothers, Richard and Maurice McDonald, who started with a Depression-era hot dog stand in California and their first McDonald's restaurant in 1940 in San Bernardino, with car hops and no indoor seating. In 1954, Kroc, a multi-mixer, milkshake machine salesman, joined them and over time built a vast franchise system, what some say is the most successful fast-food company in the world. In 1961, Kroc bought out the McDonald brothers. By 1968, McDonald's had sold over five billion burgers. Former President Bill Clinton made headlines for deviating from his jogging route to grab a Big Mac. Former President Donald Trump served over 300 McDonald's burgers and fries to college football champions in the White House in 2019.

Today the 1950s 15-cent burger is a Big Mac costing \$5.58 on average, the Washington Post reported on Nov. 25.



The familiar McDonald's golden arches sign of today.



Part of a McDonald's advertisement in the July 31, 1959 Evening Star newspaper.



The crowd at the Nov. 26 talk.



Inside the Hybla Valley McDonald's on Nov. 26.



Speaker Chris Barbuschak's opening slide for his Nov. 26 presentation.

NEWS



PHOTOS BY KATHERINE FOGDEN

Mount Vernon District School Board Member Mateo Dunne; Dale Green, keynote speaker; Ron Chase, Gum Springs Historical Society president; Del. Paul Krizek; and Sen. Scott Surovell.

Gum Springs 190 Founders Day Gala

FROM PAGE 1

complishments of a people shapes who they are and inspires them to continue the struggle. He said celebrating a 190th anniversary demonstrates the “epic victory of your survival and is a testimony to the legacy to your founder, West Ford.” Noting that most historically African American communities are no longer in existence, he outlined the challenges to keeping such a community alive in the face of overdevelopment, stereotyping and distortions of its history.

For Gum Springs, he said, recent challenges included its fight for a county historic overlay district to preserve its history and against county transportation plans that could substantially increase local density and pedestrian safety. He also noted a 2022 New Yorker article on whether George Washington was West Ford’s father, as claimed



Dale Green, professor at Morgan State University, gave the keynote address.

by many descendants, that he said contained errors that mischaracterized the community,

SEE GUN SPRINGS, PAGE 12



Members of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority helped with sign-in at the gala. From left, Regina Ware, Second Vice President, Karen Randolph, First Vice President, Erica Surratt, Member, Jennifer Pryor, Financial Secretary and Nikita Carter, Corresponding Secretary.

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GAYLORD NATIONAL

Berney was a misfit, so was Rudolph. They were two of a kind, so these new friends set off to see what they could find.

Gum Springs 190 Founders Day Gala

FROM PAGE II

“This anniversary reminds us that our history is our power,” he said. “Those who do not learn their past will never know their own power. The courage and tenacity of our ancestors have led us on our way.”

Recent efforts to ban books in schools and censor teachers have threatened our history and our strength, he said.

“They say they want to muzzle educators to prevent discomfort and guilt. What they fear is that by learning their history people will understand their power; that we come from a long line of titans and visionaries.”

Erasing our history threatens our future because the “courage and tenacity of our ancestors have shown us the way forward, Green said. He called education, especially about history, the Underground Railroad of our day to lead us out of bondage.

Green encouraged the audience to continue to “document the journey toward justice over four centuries of denial, discrimination and degradation.” West Ford, he said, “challenged what it meant to be three-fifths of a man” by establishing a place for his family to grow in freedom. By building on the dreams and accomplishments of ancestors, each generation can “stand on the shoulders of giants” and thus see further into the future.

He encouraged the audience to fight for funding to preserve their heritage and make the authentic story of Gum Spring known to descendants and the larger community.

Del. Paul Krizek announced that he has secured \$200,000 from the state this year for the Gum Springs museum, but it requires a \$100,000 match from the County for a total of \$300,000.

Surovell, who was recently elected the new Senate majority leader, spoke of a growing recognition by the county and state of “issues we have avoided for centuries.”

He noted that Mount Vernon



The King Family, including Kenneth King, left, one of the original Gum Springs families.



Loretta Singleton and Eleanor Lewis.

PHOTOS BY KATHERINE FOGDEN

Estate, which had ignored Gum Springs for years, recently held a moving wreath laying at its slave cemetery and is now allowing the historical society to rent its facilities for this dinner. He also pointed to the recent installation of local historical markers for West Ford; Ona Lee Judge, who escaped slavery at Mount Vernon plantation; and Annie Lee Harper, who was a plaintiff in a successful Supreme Court case on voting rights in 1964.

Surovell recalled that his grandmother used to tell him how their Jewish family relocated from New York to Mount Vernon District, where they were not welcomed by most of the local white population. They joined the NAACP and fought to desegregate schools and help Gum Springs get the roads and sewers that every white neighborhood already had.

“We need to appreciate and love our community for all that it is,” Surovell said.



The Chase Family: Gladys Ferguson, Sharon Grayson, Carl Ferguson.



Norman Chase, patriarch of an original Gum Springs family.

The Hamilton Gray Family.



GIVE LOCCALY

FROM PAGE 7

703-281-0538, www.scov.org

❖ Tahirih Justice Center, 703-575-0070, www.tahirih.org, Legal services, public policy advocacy, and education for immigrant women and girls.

❖ TAPS, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, 3033

Wilson Blvd., Third Floor, Arlington, VA 22201, Call 24/7 800-959-TAPS (8277) The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors offers compassionate care and resources to all those grieving the loss of a military loved one. Make a donation to support surviving military families and loved ones. You can also make a gift in honor or memory of a loved one. www.taps.org/donate

❖ Touching Heart in Herndon is a nonprofit organization focused on how to enlighten, excite, and educate children about how they can experience the true joy that comes from helping those in need. www.touchingheart.com,

❖ United Community, Mount Vernon, 703-768-7106, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, VA 22306 assists

low-income families and individuals living along the Route 1 Corridor. The mission is to build thriving communities and create equitable opportunities by providing supportive services and advancing community driven solutions.

UC’s vision is to end multigenerational poverty. Make a Financial Contribution 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria VA 22306. www.ucma-

agency.org
Donations of cash/checks and gift cards are also welcome.

❖ Western Fairfax Christian Ministries — 4511 Daly Drive, Suite J, Chantilly, VA 20151 in Chantilly. email Assistant Food Pantry Manager/Volunteer Coordinator Debbie Culbertson at volunteer@wfcmv.org wfcmv.org/

ENTERTAINMENT



The 23rd Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights takes place on Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023 in Alexandria.



A Taste of Scotland will be held Friday, Dec. 1, 2023 in Alexandria.

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 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/>

FRIDAY/DEC. 1

A Taste of Scotland. 6:30-10:30 p.m. At The Atrium Building, 277 S. Washington Street, Alexandria. 6:30 - 8 p.m. is VIP Patron Hour, returning for the first time since 2019. It will offer top-quality Scotch and special, delectably paired cuisine exclusively for Sponsors and Host Committee Members. 8 p.m. is when General Admission tickets grant you entry and access to high-quality Scotch and delicious food. Attending means that not only are you a part of this beloved holiday tradition, but that you are supporting Campaigna Center's core mission and programs that provide educational services to over 2,000 children and families in our community.

DEC. 1-3, DEC. 8-10, DEC. 15-17

Del Ray Artisans 28th Annual Holiday Market. At 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Offers unique handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Choose from wall art, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass, and much more! Free admission. First three weekends in December (Dec. 1-3, Dec. 8-10, Dec. 15-17), plus bonus market days Dec. 22 & 23. Different artists each weekend! Open Fridays 6-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Hours for Friday, December 22 are 3-9 p.m. Details: delrayartisans.org/holiday-market

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

23rd Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. 5:30 p.m. At Waterfront Park, 1A Prince



The 52nd Annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade will be held on Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023 in Alexandria.

Street, Alexandria. More than 50 brightly lit boats cruise along one mile of the Potomac River shoreline from Canal Center to Ford's Landing Park. Head to Waterfront Park at the foot of King Street for festivities from 1 to 8 p.m. including a pop-up beer garden from Alexandria's Port City Brewing Company with hard cider from Alexandria's Lost Boy Cider. Also at Waterfront Park, from 1 to 5:30 p.m. enjoy hands-on activities from independently owned Alexandria businesses. Head to Canal Center on the Old Town North waterfront from 3 to 9 p.m. for the Canal Center Holiday Art Mart to enjoy family friendly festivities and watch the start of the Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights on the terrace with parade assembly anticipated between 5 and 5:30 p.m. At 3:30 p.m., Santa and Mrs. Claus will arrive by fireboat at the Alexandria City Marina before attending the annual Holiday Festival at Torpedo Factory Art Center, which takes place from 12 to 6 p.m.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

52nd Annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade. 11 a.m. In Old Town Alexandria. Dozens of Scottish clans dressed in colorful tartans parade through the streets of Old Town, joined by pipe and drum bands, as well as terriers and hounds, community groups and more. Alexandria was founded in 1749 by Scottish merchants and was named after Scotsman John Alexander who owned the land that became Alexandria. Today, the city continues celebrating its heritage with the iconic parade. This year's Grand Marshals are Congressman Don Beyer and Director of the Office of Art in Embassies at the U.S. Department of State Megan Beyer. The 2023 Master of Ceremonies is Ian Houston, an international non-profit leader in the Washington, D.C. area who is dedicated to promoting cultural links between Scotland and the U.S. For more details on the parade route, transportation alternatives and weekend happenings, visit ALXScottishWalk.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Tall Ship Holiday Boat Parade of Lights Viewing Party. 5-7 p.m. Guests are invited to experience exclusive access to view Alexandria's Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. Guests can choose between two unique experiences: VIP Ticket (aboard Providence) \$85, includes glass of champagne upon boarding, onboard bar and food, TSP gift or General Admission Ticket (on dock) \$65, includes food and bar. Tickets at www.tallshipprovidence.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Classical Christmas Concert. 2 p.m. Featuring Barclay Brass and Adriano Spampanato. At St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 228 South Pitt Street, Alexandria. The hour-long program will feature familiar carols, Classical masterpieces, and a few surprises, designed perfectly for families with young children, and the young-at-heart. Tickets are available through EventBrite. \$10 for individuals, capped at \$25 for

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 15



23 24

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NEWS

Switch to Battery Powered Leaf Blower (or a Rake)

In an effort to reduce the county's carbon footprint, the Park Authority and Department of Public Works and Environmental Services plan to set an example by cutting their use of gas-powered leaf blowers in half over the next year.

In alignment with our vision for a greener future, we've ended the purchase of gas-powered blowers and are exclusively investing in battery-powered alternatives in our Fiscal Year 2024 budget. We are set to replace 55 gas-powered leaf blowers with electric ones.

This initiative is not only about environmental conservation but also about safeguarding the health and well-being of residents, in line with the Countywide Strategic Plan.

Contractors and residents alike can consider embracing battery-powered blowers. Or if your yard is quite small, maybe a rake.

WHY CHOOSE BATTERY-POWERED LEAF BLOWERS?

1. Eco-friendly: Battery-powered lawn equipment significantly reduces harm to the environment compared to their gas-powered counterparts.
2. Health benefits: By eliminating emissions that can heighten respiratory conditions such as asthma, battery-powered blowers contribute to a healthier environment and improved air quality for all.
3. Noise reduction: Battery-powered blowers operate at much lower decibel levels, creating a quieter and more peaceful environment for everyone.
4. Cost-effective: Electric versions of lawn equipment, including leaf blowers, offer a more economical choice for both battery-powered and plug-in models.

LEAVE THE LEAVES?

Fall Cleanup in Moderation
 If you've provided native and diverse habitat for pollinators during the growing season, helping those same pollinators and invertebrates in the winter is almost as simple as doing nothing, according to the Xerxes Society. Leave those habitats alone for winter. Great spangled fritillary and woolly bear caterpillars tuck themselves into leaf piles for protection from cold weather and predators. Red-band-

SEE SWITCH TO, PAGE 15

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 13

a family of four. For more information: Lisa Eskew (703) 298-3901 or www.Stpaulsalexandria.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

"Breakfast with Santa" will take place every weekend in December, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in three locations in Alexandria:

Joe Theismann's Restaurant
Mia's Italian Kitchen
Ada's on the River

Tickets range from \$0-\$65 and include a hearty and festive breakfast feast that will delight your taste buds. Children will receive take-home treats to continue the holiday spirit at home, while adults can indulge in some celebratory Prosecco.

Tickets can be purchased here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/breakfast-with-santa-in-old-town-alexandria-by-arp-1039279>

DEC. 8-9

Holiday Pops Concert. Friday and Saturday from 7:30-9:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m. At Washington Street United Methodist Church, 109 S. Washington Street, Alexandria. Share your spirit for the season. In lieu of a physical gift drive, online donations can be added at ticketing checkout for Alexandria's Carpenter's Shelter. Visit www.Alexandriasingers.com.

DEC. 16-17

"Holiday with a Twist." Featuring the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra. Saturday, Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Center, Alexandria; Sunday, Dec. 17 at 3 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial, Alexandria. Celebrate the Season "Holiday with a Twist" featuring Joshua Banbury, Baritone and Chris Ullman, whistler. Adults: \$20-89; Students \$15; Youth \$5.

SUNDAY/DEC. 17

Sunday Funday. 3 p.m. At Ainslie Arts Center at Episcopal High School, Black Box Theatre, 3900 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. Sunday Funday will feature a cast of local musical theater talent and singing drag queens, a three-piece band music directed by Marika Countouris, as well as bottomless drinks. Sunday Funday will be hosted by local drag queen and frequent Monumental collaborator Tiara Missou, also known as David Singleton. Individual tickets are \$30. Artist under 35 tickets are available for \$15 (patrons must show I.D. at the door). A table for four guests can be purchased for \$140. Table tickets include preferred seating and either a bottle of wine or champagne. Patrons may pay \$20 for bottomless specialty drinks or \$25 at the door. Tickets are available online at <https://www.monumentaltheatre.org/>.

SUNDAY/DEC. 31

First Night Alexandria is BACK this year with activities in Old Town from 2 p.m. until midnight on Sunday, Dec. 31, 2023. <https://www.firstnightalexandria.org/>

JAN. 5-27

"Visions of Resilience: Art for Climate Justice" exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, in partnership with the Changing Planet Justice Foundation, raises awareness about climate change and its impact on marginalized communities. By conveying issues through the universal language of image, we encourage action towards a just, climate-friendly future. Reception: Friday, January 5, 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (closed January 28). DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

THE BIRCHMERE

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

NOVEMBER

Wed. 29: Three Dog Night \$85.00 SOLD OUT!
Thu. 30: A Peter White Christmas with Mindi Abair & Vincent Ingala \$59.50

DECEMBER

Fri. 1: Scott Bradlee's Postmodern Jukebox "Life In The Past Lane Tour" \$89.50 SOLD OUT!
Sat. 2: Southside Johnny & The Asbury Jukes \$59.50

Switch to Battery Powered Leaf Blower

FROM PAGE 14

ed hairstreaks lay their eggs on fallen oak leaves, which become the first food of the caterpillars when they emerge. Luna moths and swallowtail butterflies disguise their cocoons and chrysalises as dried leaves, blending in with the "real" leaves. Bumble bees create nests in cavities underground, in trees, or in brush piles. They prefer abandoned rodent burrows. At the end of summer, mated queen bumble bees burrow only an inch or two into the earth to hibernate for winter. An extra thick layer of leaves is welcome protection from the elements. Close to one-third of native bees are tunnel-nesting, such as leafcutter and mason bees. These solitary-nesting species need narrow tunnels or other tiny spaces in dead wood, hollow stems, or brush piles.

Leaving the leaves and other plant debris doesn't have to mean sacrificing your yard to the wilderness, according to the Xerxes Society, advocates for pollinators. The leaves don't need to be left ex-

actly where they fall. You can rake them into garden beds, around tree bases, or into other designated areas. Too many leaves can kill grass, but in soil they can suppress weeds, retain moisture, and boost nutrition.

Avoid shredding leaves with a mower. Raking or electric blowing are alternatives that will keep leaves whole for the best cover and protect the insects and eggs already living there.

If you decide you need to clean up the leaves and debris in spring, make sure you wait until late in the season so as not to destroy all the life you've worked to protect.

Leaves have a tendency to blow in the wind, often passing through several yards on the way to their final destination. Let your neighbors know your yards are playing an important role in the ecosystem.

Another option is to share your dedication to the cause on social media with the hashtag #LeaveTheLeaves.

<https://xerxes.org/leave-the-leaves>

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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 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.

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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Uncertainty



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not that you regular readers know when I write these columns, relative to when they publish; but suffice to say, given the publishing/ go-to-press schedules of newspapers, these columns must be written/submitted in adherence to those schedules/publication dates. As such, some columns, depending on subject matter of course, are written before the outcome of whatever cancer-related circumstance is top of mind at the time – for me; and then published after I know said outcome. This column is one of those and is always difficult because the dominant feeling I have – which contribute most to the subject matter of these columns, is basically I don't know. Moreover, the associated difficulty I have is knowing that by the time you read this column, I'll know what I didn't know before it subsequently publishes/you read it. And since I like to share everything with you in as real a time is as possible; the timing of this column means I'm not able to do that.

In a round-about way this column is about the diagnostic scan, a PET scan, I'll be having on Mon., Nov. 27th, the results of which I'll likely know by Wed., Nov. 29th-ish, the day this column publishes and days to late to modify is pre-publication content. By the time you read this, all the anxiety, conjecture, et cetera, will have passed, and the interpretation of the scan will be known, and then the fun begins, hopefully. Presuming I can gather my thoughts together about that interpretation – which will determine the next three-to-four months of cancer treatment, vis-à-vis my life, I will submit a column for Dec. 6, publication date which will address these concerns and update all you interested readers, which I assume after nearly 26 years my column has been published in The Connection, I assume I have a few. It's these kinds of moments when my brother's death rears its ugly head. Not having that backstop emotionally takes away much of what us patients truly need: support, understanding, encouragement and a positive outlook no matter the results. One doesn't survive a disease of this magnitude without help, and as my biggest booster, Richard was a multi-year backstop-of-the-year award-winner. And when you consider that I originally was given a "13 month to two years" prognosis, perhaps you imagine the frequency and type of conversations Richard and I regularly have had over the many years of my ongoing cancer treatment. Every step of the way. And scans, such as these are a very big step, always.

In my view then, this column is nothing about very much ado. The various scans I have throughout the year, as they are for many patients, are when the rubber hits the road and the doctor (an oncologist in my life) can really tell how you're doing health-wise. As my doctor has said: he doesn't need to see me in person, as much as he needs to my scan results. That will tell him what he needs to know about my thyroid cancer/overall health to decide if what happens next is more of the same or God help me, a change for the worse.

Apart from my monthly lab work and quarterly zoom call, this scan will indicate whether my warranty, so to speak, is to be extended and my life will go on relatively unchanged. (I imagine you can all appreciate then the depth and range of emotions we patients feel; before, during and after these high-tech diagnostic scans have been completed and interpreted. It's only a matter of life and death.) Unfortunately, it's difficult to affect the scan. If the results say something unpleasant then the conversation that follows with your doctor and of course your family, will be equally unpleasant. I remember when Team Lourie (Dina, Richard, and myself) attended our "ground zero" meeting with my oncologist when the doctor first told me my diagnosis. Richard was there then. Now he won't be, ever again. Without him around to help absorb some of inevitable fear and anxiety, the experience going forward scares me. Certainly, I've been there and done that. However, from now on, I will be doing it differently. Not alone exactly. But definitely missing my wingman.

Therefore, writing a column of some substance before these potentially life-changing facts are known is challenging. Which means this column says very little about something so big. In effect, I feel as if I'm wasting your time, sort of by telling you nothing about something. I'll try to write the ship and update you accordingly in next week's column. Until then, wish me luck. I need as much of it as you can spare. Enduring this cycle as much as I have over nearly 15 years (upwards of 100 exposures; all types of scans to consider: CT, PET, and bone scan, and yearly MRIs since I was diagnosed), doesn't make this process any easier. Experienced: yes, comfortable: no.

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



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