

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

SEPTEMBER 4, 2025

## Hints of the Richmond Highway Widening Project

Empty Buildings, 'No Trespassing Signs': Widening Project Is Finally Coming to Fruition.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

There's an uproar going on in Mount Vernon about the empty businesses that are going to be demolished when the Richmond Highway widening moves forward. The current road configuration must be widened to make room for bus rapid transit that will run down the middle of the highway sometime in the future, The One.

Cheryl Jelks is the HOA president for the Terrace Towne Homes of Woodlawn which is right in the Engleside area. She posted pictures of the empty business shells and got responses immediately. Knowing about it and liking it are two different things though. "They are trying to be a Crystal City," she said.

Jelks posted about 30 pictures of construction impacts in place already. One shows an auto shop all boarded up; a former 7-11 has the windows all papered up; a few VDOT 'No Trespassing' signs; the Mount Vernon Auto Clinic has new plywood in the windows; and there is one gas station with the pumps taken out. The Roy Rogers at the Jeff Todd intersection looks like it's still in business though.

There were a few responses on Jelks social media post, but it wasn't clear whether the responders were current residents, past residents or possible internet trolls trying to rile opinions.

"All so sad and a big waste of money for all of us!" wrote Gina



A former 7-11 was too close to the action.



This office space in Hybla Valley is ready for destruction.

Marion.

Pam Entwisle had a similar opinion. "Looking at these pictures is so sad," she wrote. Entwisle is a past resident and heard about the widening project from a high school friend. "It doesn't really hit your gut until looking at these pics," she said.

Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon) has put a lot of effort into modernizing the streetscape on Richmond Highway through this part of Fairfax County. In tandem with the Virginia Department of Transportation's widening project, he has launched "Embark Richmond Highway," which is a blueprint to modernizing the area.

"It's great to finally see, after de-

acades of community meetings and planning, so much change happening on the highway," Storck said in a statement. "As we bring our 21st century walkable, bikeable, modern transit-oriented future to life with highway widening, 'The One' Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System and accompanying redevelopment, the next years will be challenging as we remove older buildings not part of our future and begin the utility relocations and construction to transform and modernize our community. It has been more than 100 years since changes this big last occurred. Much like remodeling a house, some tough steps have to happen before we can enjoy and benefit from the beautiful new

space."

### Phased Project

The widening project will be in three phases. Phase one is from Jeff Todd Way north to Sacramento Drive, then from Sacramento Drive to a spot north of Frye Road, and finally from Frye Road to Sherwood Hall Lane. It's a three-mile stretch that will go from four to six lanes. According to VDOT, the pricetag is not known at this time. "Estimated costs continue to be

developed," it said on the project webpage.

Construction is scheduled to begin in early 2026 with utility relocations and construction on phase one will begin in mid-2027. To the residents and drivers along this stretch of highway, there will be lane closures and traffic cones starting next winter regardless of whether its utility relocations or road construction. It all looks pretty much the same from a passerby in the driver's seat.



No pumps anymore at this gas station in Mount Vernon.



PHOTO BY ELLIOTT RUBINO

### Firefighters and Friends provide back-to-school backpacks.

A young boy proudly puts on his new backpack at the Firefighters and Friends back-to-school event Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11.

SEE MORE, PAGES 8, 9



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ACM ATLANTIC COAST  
MORTGAGE



# Second Hearing on Fort Belvoir Stormwater Discharges

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

## DEQ Seeks Comments on Agency Responses.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will hold a hearing on Sept. 15, 2025, to receive testimony on the agency's summary of public comments addressing Fort Belvoir's permit application. The 8,700-acre military installation in southeastern Fairfax County has applied for a permit to release industrial stormwater into several waterbodies.

At a June 2 hearing, DEQ official Sarah Sivers reported that Belvoir releases industrial stormwater from the "airfield, a hazardous waste storage facility, operations and maintenance, marinas and a contractor laydown area," from seven outfalls into Accotink Creek, Accotink Bay, Gunston Cove, Dogue Creek and Mason Run, Potomac River tributaries.

DEQ's notice says, "No new information will be accepted at the hearing. Only comments regarding the Department's Summary of Comments will be accepted." When asked why DEQ will not accept "new information," Irina Calso, Communications Manager, responded that it is an opportunity for all previous commenters to address DEQ's responses to their comments. "This helps ensure that DEQ staff understood what commenters meant in their comments and that DEQ's responses address what was conveyed in the comments."

The meeting will be at 6:30 p.m., Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria.

Twelve people spoke at the June 2 hearing. Some advocated stronger limits and monitoring of PFAS contamination, as we reported on June 19.

On Aug. 28, officials from the Potomac River Keeper Network (PRKN) and Wild Virginia issued a

statement by PRKN president Betsy Nicholas asserting that the draft permit "places human health at serious risk because it fails to regulate PFAS – dangerous and toxic 'forever' chemicals – discharged in stormwater from the base." Nicholas said that "stormwater discharges likely contain significant quantities of PFAS, because the Army's own sampling demonstrates surface water, groundwater, and soil contamination at the base."

### DEQ's Response to Commenters

DEQ has posted a 10-page summary of comments received, 37 during the first comment period, 27 during the second comment period, including four elected officials, and 12 at the June hearing.

Responding to recommendations that DEQ should require PFAS discharge limits, monitoring and corrective actions, DEQ says that the agency is "following current federal and state guidelines and requirements ..." Citing 2024 and 2025 state laws, DEQ also contends that these state laws' intent was to protect drinking water sources, and that "Fort Belvoir is not subject to this initiative because the receiving waters at the installation's discharge points are not designated as public water supply waterbodies in the Virginia Water Quality Standards and it is also not upstream of any raw water intakes for a public water system."

Furthermore, the discharge points are not within the Occoquan watershed upstream of the reservoir's dam."

DEQ also states that "there are currently no water quality standards for PFAS" and therefore, they have no basis to put limits on PFAS chemicals. One source of PFAS chemicals at Belvoir is Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF). DEQ notes that there are no water quality standards "upon which to develop a water quality-based effluent limit nor are there any ELGs (effluent limitation guidelines) for AFFF or any specific PFAS in AFFF."

❖ One commenter urged environmental studies analyzing the long-term effects of PFAS releases. DEQ maintains that these studies

SEE DEQ SEEKS, PAGE 5



One of the entrances to Fort Belvoir, the Walker Gate.



Around 30 people attended DEQ's June 2 hearing.

## Information

**Virginia DEQ:** Summary, <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?meetingid=42197>; contact, Susan Mackert (571) 866-6514, [susan.mackert@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:susan.mackert@deq.virginia.gov) or [NRO.VPDESPermits@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:NRO.VPDESPermits@deq.virginia.gov) PFAS Basics, <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>





White-tailed deer doe with multiple fawns.



White-tailed deer buck.

# Fairfax County to Cull White-Tailed Deer

Deer population has grown to poses safety and health hazards and environmental damage.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
THE GAZETTE

Many Northern Virginians find their backyard plants like hostas and day lilies chomped down to a nub, often a sure sign that deer paid a visit. White-tailed deer are too numerous in Fairfax County, county officials maintain.

The county recently announced that “deer management” will occur from Sept. 6 to Feb. 14, 2026, in certain county parks, primarily using archery by “qualified bowhunters” who must meet certain standards.

A county map shows where the hunting will occur. In the Mount Vernon area, for example, hunting will take place in Hunt-

ley Meadows, Grist Mill, Mount Vernon and John Byers Parks.

White-tailed deer are most active at dawn and dusk and breeding season is from late September through February. Most does have at least two fawns. Deer are herbivores and easily adapt to human landscapes.

## Predators Gone

Historically, animals like mountain lions, bobcats and wolves were the primary deer predators. Today, the major predator is people. Deer are killed by hunting, vehicle collisions, dogs and trains, says the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. “Deer have few natural predators in Virginia, and other sources of mortality (e.g. diseases, injuries) are not sufficient to control populations,”



White-tailed deer doe

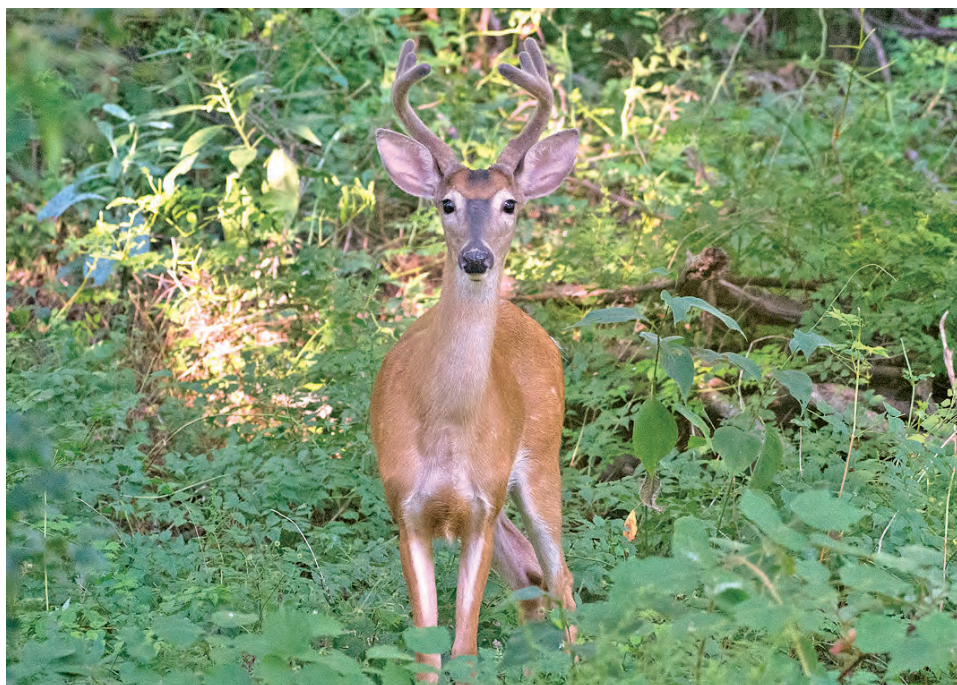
says DWR.

Both the state and Fairfax County governments base their deer management on the

concept of carrying capacity. “The maximum number of deer a habitat can support on a sustained basis is the biological carrying capacity,” explains Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources’ website.

Fairfax County’s deer management plan says, “A healthy ecosystem can support 15 - 20 deer per square mile without damage to the environment. Estimated deer density at many sites in Fairfax County is a minimum of 40 - 100 deer per square mile. ... The deer population in Fairfax County has grown to a level that poses safety and health hazards to our communities and is not sustainable by the environment over time. An integrated deer management program is necessary for

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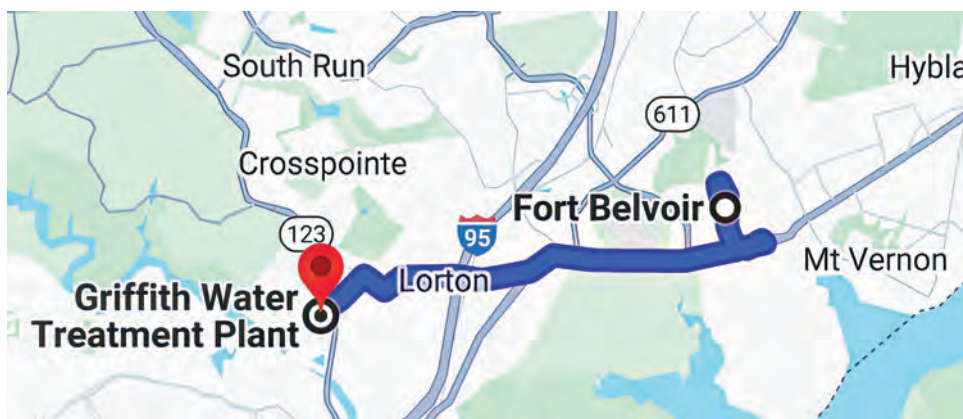


White-tailed deer, a young buck.



Fawns





# DEQ Seeks Comments On Agency Responses

FROM PAGE 3

are “not within the purview” of the permitting program.

❖ Some commenters requested a PFAS threat analysis. DEQ responded that Belvoir is investigating PFAS releases installation-wide into soil, groundwater, surface water and sediment as part of the federal CERCLA process. CERCLA, known as “Superfund,” is the 1980 federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act.

## Belvoir’s Report

When this writer in June asked Belvoir officials if the installation is releasing PFAS chemicals, they provided a 2022, 164-page “preliminary assessment/site inspection report” by Arcadis. The report’s summary concludes that 12 of 17 sites examined had “PFOS, PFOA and/or PFBS present at concentrations greater than the risk-based screening levels ...” and that “the majority of OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense] risk screening level exceedances ... can be attributed to historical and present fire station management and firefighter training activity, as well as fire truck maintenance activities.”

The report is at [https://aec.army.mil/Portals/115/PFAS/2022\\_Final\\_Fort\\_Belvoir\\_PFAS\\_PA\\_SI\\_Report\\_Volume\\_I\\_Compressed.pdf?ver=mhQpHyJiJob\\_3KEfbQnT-gw%3d%3d](https://aec.army.mil/Portals/115/PFAS/2022_Final_Fort_Belvoir_PFAS_PA_SI_Report_Volume_I_Compressed.pdf?ver=mhQpHyJiJob_3KEfbQnT-gw%3d%3d).

## The Army PFAS Elsewhere

The U.S. Army’s Environmental Command posted, “The Army is assessing the potential historical use of PFAS-containing materials at Army installations nationwide and is committed to transparently handling PFAS-related issues, sharing information, and maintaining open dialogue with communities, regulators and other stakeholders. As part of that commitment, the Army will publish PFAS drinking water testing results and cleanup data on this webpage (<https://aec.army.mil/PFAS/>). The site lists eight Virginia installations, including Fort Belvoir.

## EPA Rollbacks

A May 14 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) release said that the agency will retain current drinking water limits for for PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid) and PFOS (perfluorooctane sulfonic acid) and that the agency will “rescind the regulations and reconsider the regulatory determinations for PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA (commonly known as GenX), and the Hazard Index mixture of these three plus PFBS to ensure that the determinations and any resulting drinking water regulation follow the legal process laid out in the Safe Drinking Water Act.”

The Aug. 29 New York Times reported that Steven Cook, an EPA official, proposed repealing a rule that would make the public responsible for PFAS cleanups instead of entities that knowingly release the chemicals.

## BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event. Or email to [calendar@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:calendar@connectionnewspapers.com)

## VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League’s programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email [info@alnv.org](mailto:info@alnv.org), or visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org).

STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12

STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science’s STEM Volunteer Program, [stemvolunteers.org](http://stemvolunteers.org), during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or [donaldrea@aol.com](mailto:donaldrea@aol.com).

Volunteer Drivers Needed. Drivers needed by the American Cancer Society to take cancer patients to treatment in Northern Virginia. To volunteer, call 1-800-227-2345 or go to [cancer.org/drive](http://cancer.org/drive).

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

THE ORIGINAL

23rd Annual

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Hungry deer visit bird feeders.



White-tailed deer on roads and highways can collide with vehicles.

# Fairfax County to Cull White-Tailed Deer

FROM PAGE 4

long-term reduction of deer-related conflicts in Fairfax County.”

## Forest Regeneration at Risk

Deer primarily eat leaves, twigs, buds of woody plants, forbs, acorns, nuts, fruit, grass, mushrooms and lichens. “An average adult white-tailed deer requires five to seven pounds of food daily per 100 pounds of body weight, which equates to over one ton of vegetation consumed by one deer in one year,” DWR points out.

Because they eat tree seedlings and saplings, deer can disrupt natural forest regeneration and succession. The National Park Service (NPS) maintains that deer browse is one of several factors threatening forest regeneration in Washington-area national parks, including the George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP), to the point that “patterns of consistently insufficient regeneration or altered species composition call into question the long-term viability and resilience of forest ecosystems,” one study found.

On Aug. 27, GWMP Superintendent Jennifer Madello said via email that they do not have a deer management plan or funding for one. “The NPS is reassessing deer management in National Capital Region parks by refining white-tailed deer modeling tools and ensuring population reduction targets directly support park ecosystem recovery and conservation goals. ... The potential for future collaboration with adjacent state and county programs is a possibility for the future.”

Fairfax County’s website echoes NPS’s conclusions, noting, “In many areas within Fairfax County, there is little to no regeneration of trees due to consumption of seedlings and saplings by deer. Forest structure has become impaired and simplified with removal of understory and shrub layers by deer. Additionally, seed banks (seeds stored in forest soils for future generation) will not



Deer roam around Northern Virginia in all seasons.

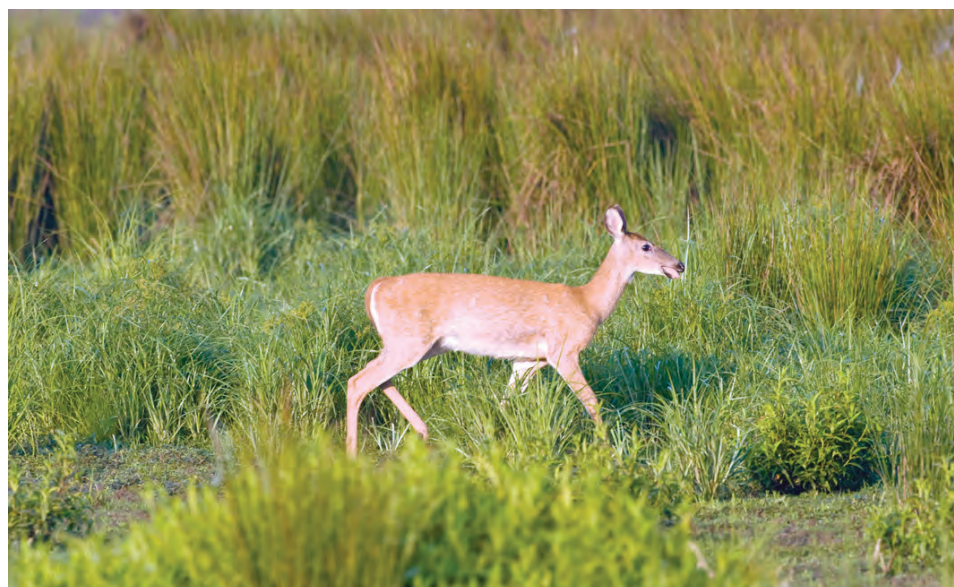


PHOTO COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

The size of the deer population is hurting the environment says Fairfax County’s deer management plan.

be replenished and will decline over time. White-tailed deer not only alter vegetation structure through direct browse damage to native plants (lowering their ability to become established), but also impact forest health through the dispersal of non-native, invasive plants.” Deer browsing can also have cascading effects such as loss of insects, birds and other wildlife that depend on these habitats.

## Another View

Fairfax County’s deer management is “inhumane and cruel,” asserts Gina Lynch, Chair of the Animal Services Advisory Commission, a board appointed by the Board of Supervisors. She views bow hunting as recreation and says that “about 10 percent of arrows are never accounted for or collected,” which means that some deer run off with arrows embedded in them. In testimony to the Board of Supervisors, she requested a moratorium “until a reliable assessment could be developed which studied the full spectrum of issues associated with wildlife within the County.” Lynch has advocated for non-lethal contraception. “At some point, we have to coexist,” she said in a recent interview.

Charles Smith, a restoration ecologist and board member of the Virginia Native Plant Society, argues that there are few practical alternatives to the county’s program. In a 2022 article, he wrote, “Immuno-contraception and sterilization are not effective on open deer herds. Simply put, you cannot sterilize enough does and deer move around a lot.” He also contends that fenced exclosures “can be effective, but most landowners and localities lack the resources to implement effective exclosure programs.

“With lethal control of deer populations, we can reduce the impacts and ultimately reduce browse to levels that allow native plants to regenerate and support local biodiversity,” Smith wrote.

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WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



# Fairfax County To Cull White-Tailed Deer

FROM PAGE 6

## Vehicular Collisions

Virginia ranks ninth in the country for deer-related vehicle crashes, according to the insurance company State Farm. There are 1.3 million animal collisions in the country annually and State Farm processed over 1.8 million claims involving animal collisions from

July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. The most dangerous months are November, October and December, according to State Farm.

Conservation groups like Wild Virginia are advocating for more wildlife corridors – connecting natural lands – to keep animals off roads and improve ecosystem health. They helped create Virginia's Wildlife Corridor Action Plan.

## How to Discourage Deer

Deer find some plants unpalatable, like mountain mint, yarrow, milkweed, wild indigo and goldenrod. Generally, deer avoid prickly and strongly scented plants. Check the deer-resistant plants and tips for protecting plants at Plant NoVa Natives, <https://www.plantnovanatives.org/deer-and-native-plants>.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

It can be hard for an untrained eye to see deer browse impacts on vegetation. Compare these pictures of an overbrowsed forest with barren forest floor and a seedling recruitment area (oak regeneration).



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# Leader of the Pack

**Firefighters and Friends provide back-to-school backpacks.**

By JEANNE THEISMANN  
THE GAZETTE

**F**irefighters and Friends to the Rescue distributed more than a thousand new backpacks to families and children in need Aug. 14 at Station 11 in the Penn Daw section of Alexandria.

"I used to be a single parent and these programs helped my daughter to get a backpack when she was young," said Sheleash Sharpe, a volunteer with Modern Technology Solutions Inc. "I didn't have to worry about her school supplies or her backpack so for me being here feels like we're paying it forward."

Former Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Battalion Chief Willie Bailey founded the Firefighters and Friends organization nearly 30 years ago, adding the backpack initiative to the annual holiday toy drive more than two decades ago.

"This program has been running for greater than two decades and I have been here most of those years," said IAFF Local 2068 Fairfax County Professional Firefighters and Paramedics Unit President Robert Young, a 22-year firefight-

ing professional. "I appreciate the firefighters who are here today, the volunteers here today and especially Will Bailey, who has spearheaded this for several decades. Without this program most of these children would unfortunately go without these items and start out the school year at a severe disadvantage."

Sponsors for Fire Station 11 Backpack Giveaway include: Ken Saviterra Foundation; United Community; Apple Federal Credit Union; Local 2068; Progressive Firefighters of Fairfax County; The Clifton Community; Modern Technology Solutions, Inc.; Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Retirement Association; Nationwide Credit Corporation; Medocracy, Inc.; Tysons Corner Rotary; Promax Realtors, Springfield; Primo Family Restaurant; Mount Vernon Gazette; and Firefighters & Friends to the Rescue.

"We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to all the businesses and individuals who generously sponsored our annual backpack giveaway," Bailey said. "Because of their support we were able to provide 1,600 local students with new backpacks filled with notebooks, pens, pencils, and other supplies helping them start the school year with confidence. When firefighters are not running 911 emergency calls we are trying to find other ways to help our community and today it was providing much needed items for the start of the school year."

**"Without this program most of these children would unfortunately go without these items and start out the school year at a severe disadvantage."**

— IAFF Local 2068 President Robert Young



A young boy proudly puts on his new backpack at the Firefighters and Friends back-to-school event Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11.



Firefighters and volunteers pose for a group photo at the Firefighters and Friends backpack drive distribution Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11



Volunteers prepare backpacks as part of the Firefighters and Friends back-to-school drive Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11. More than 1,600 backpacks filled with school supplies were distributed to families in need as part of the drive.



More than 1,600 backpacks filled with school supplies were given away as part of the Firefighters and Friends distribution Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11.



Employees from Modern Technology Solutions Inc. volunteer at the Firefighters and Friends backpack distribution Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11.



Firefighters and Friends founder Willie Bailey gives instructions to volunteers at the Aug. 14 backpack distribution at Penn Daw Station 11.



Volunteers fill backpacks with school supplies Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11.



School girls pick out new backpacks at the Firefighters and Friends distribution Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11.



Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Battalion Chief Kristopher Johnson brings filled backpacks to waiting social service representatives Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11.



Dolores Spencer of the Mount Vernon Lions Club volunteers at the Firefighters and Friends backpack distribution Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11.



A mother and her son at the Firefighters and Friends backpack distribution Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11.



Students proudly wear their new backpacks Aug. 14 at Penn Daw Station 11.



# Crime Down, Community Up! Public Safety Keeping Us Safe



Supervisor Dan Storck with Chief Kevin Davis at Cherry Arms.

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK

**T**hank you to the many neighborhoods and community leaders who hosted National Night Out (NNO) events on August 5! Team MVD had a great time getting out in the community and celebrating the partnerships that keep us safe. NNO is the perfect opportunity for our public safety officials to connect with residents, listen to concerns and foster trust.

Feeling safe in our community is important to all of us, and I'm proud to represent you in a County that is the SAFEST jurisdiction of our size in the country. Crime in the Mount Vernon District is down with 1,370 crimes reported through mid-May compared to 2,051, a 1/3 less than the same period last year. Sometimes our perception of crime does not match reality. In fact, when looking at crime

data in each of the County's nine magisterial districts, Mount Vernon District falls in the middle. According to heat maps and data, much of the crime happening across the County is centered in and around commercial centers (like Richmond Highway). Those areas receive increased attention from our officers, who proactively patrol and respond quickly to keep our neighborhoods and businesses safe.

You can visit the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) Crime Data Dashboard anytime to explore trends by each magisterial district and the County as a whole. [fcpcrime.com/pages/crime-data](https://fcpcrime.com/pages/crime-data)

Keeping residents and the community safe is a 24/7 job. Just recently, Major Jeff Mauro, Commander of the MV Station, led a successful effort to shut down a drug house, arresting inhabitants and getting it boarded up. This case required detailed coordination with our office, the Health Department

and Code Compliance team.

We also recently connected with over 800 residents during a Richmond Highway pedestrian safety event to remind drivers, pedestrians and cyclists to stay alert and always use crosswalks. Take a Moment to be safe (<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/pedestrian-bike-traffic-safety>).

I am pleased to introduce a new leader, Major Marques Lowery, who will serve as Commander of the Franconia Station, bringing a wealth of experience and leadership. Major Lowery began his FCPD career in 2007 in Franconia as a Patrol Officer and Neighborhood Patrol. He has led specialized units including Search and Rescue, and served as Assistant Commander of the Fair Oaks District and Special Investigations Division. Major Marisa Kuhar, who previously served as Commander, has been promoted to Deputy Chief for



Major Jeff Mauro



Major Marques Lowery

Patrol Bureau I.

As always, I continue to work very closely with our police, firefighters and medics to ensure our safe, vibrant community stays that way. To stay up to date, sign up for FCPD News and FCFRD News, and follow @FairfaxCountyPD and @FairfaxCountyFireRescue on Facebook and X. Thinking about a career in law enforcement? Discover the opportunities waiting for you—learn more and apply (<https://joinfcpcd.org/>).

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A Connection Newspaper



## Local Park Renovations Include New Skateboard Park

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

**S**kateboarders in Mount Vernon will soon have a place to catch air as the Fairfax County Park Authority recently gave the green light to construction of the skate park at Mount Vernon Woods Park. If all goes well, the new skate park will be open some time in late winter, just in time for the spring skating season.

This park in Mount Vernon is newly renovated and the skate park has been part of the plan for years but it was always designated to be built later in the park schedule which FCPA calls "Phase II." Phase I included a playground, fitness area, multisport court, soc-



Mount Vernon Woods Park plan.

SEE LOCAL PARK, PAGE 14





Katie looks on as Bea saws away at a bracket for the art boxes.



The scouts are artists too, painting the art box a bright color to liven things up.

## It's Give and Take with Art Supply Boxes in Fort Hunt

### Creative Girl Scout project will share art supplies.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

A few years ago, creating a community book box mounted on the side of the community street acted as an exchange venue for other readers to grab a book or donate a book without any strings attached.

A few Girl Scouts in Fort Hunt have taken that idea a step further with art supplies and are now seeing their project through for a Girl Scout Silver Award, which is similar to the Boy Scout Eagle Badge.

The scouts involved are West Potomac students Katie Damsky,

age 14, Bea Slaton, 14, and eighth grader Scarlett O'Brien. They joined forces with Owen Hammett at the Hollin Hall senior center to build the boxes and put it all into action over the Labor Day weekend. When completed, the art box will be placed in a neutral spot on Riverside Road. They plan to restock it with donated art supplies in the weeks following.

The Fort Hunt art supply box these scouts are making is a form of the nationally-known boxes called "Free Little Art Galleries," started by Stacy Milrany from Seattle. She created the first box in 2020 but it was for actual art, not art supplies. Locally, there are quite a few of these galleries sprinkled around the area in Alexandria, Arlington and Reston among others where people leave artworks such as little paintings, drawings and sculptures. There are two dolls in the mini gallery named "Clare" and "Don" overseeing the operation, but they hope no one takes the

dolls. A lot of this is based on trust.

The book exchange that started this give and take movement is called "Little Free Library," which began in 2009 as a non-profit organization that promotes neighborhood book exchanges. There are over 150,000 registered little libraries. The wooden container is designed to look like a one-room schoolhouse and the idea is to take a book to read and leave a book for others to read.

Now in Fort Hunt, the idea is to take an art supply and leave an art supply so others can create art for their house, their classroom or to donate.

**Katie and Scarlett pose by their completed project with Owen Hammett, who helped them in the Hollin Hall woodshop.**

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE



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# ENTERTAINMENT

## NOW THRU SEPT. 21

**Sally Kauffman - Pleasure Park.** At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. Sally Kauffman, a Washington, DC-based visual artist, is known for her large-scale, abstract yet illusory paintings depicting people and animals in social and communal settings. Her recent series, inspired by scenes from Malcolm X Park, captures Washingtonians engaging in activities including picnicking, hula hooping, Jiu Jitsu, juggling, gymnastics, skating, playing, dancing, and listening to music. These works celebrate the joy of gathering after pandemic isolation, emphasizing the fundamental human instinct for connection and restoration.

## MGNV PLANT CLINICS ARE OPEN

**The Alexandria Old Town Farmer's Market Plant Clinic** at 301 King St., Alexandria operates on Saturdays from 7 - 9:30 a.m. Del Ray Farmers Market Plant Clinic at Oxford & Mt. Vernon Avenues, Alexandria operates on Saturdays from 8:30 - 11 a.m. The Arlington Farmers' Market at N. 14th and N. Courthouse Roads, Arlington operates on Saturdays from 8 - 11 a.m. The Fairlington Farmers' Market Plant Clinic at 3308 S. Stafford St., Arlington, operates on Sundays from 9 - 11 a.m.

## YEAR ROUND ON SUNDAYS

**Farmer's Market. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.** At Casa Chirilagua Community Center, 4109 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Experience fresh foods, native plants, artisan crafts, music and community at Four Mile Run Farmers & Artisans Market in the heart of Arlandria outside the Casa Chirilagua Community Center, every Sunday 9-1 p.m.

## NOW THRU SEPT. 14

**REVISITED Exhibit.** At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Studio 312, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Alexandria. REVISITED is a solo fine art photography exhibition by Stacy Smith Evans. In her series of color images, Evans explores a deep connection to nature, the land, and memory, revisiting the places she turns to for solitude and renewal, and when joined by family and friends, for celebration and tradition. Through the exhibition, Evans invites viewers to join her as she traverses the rivers, mountains, and forests that shape the Eastern landscape.

## ONGOING

**Revolutionary War Exhibit.** At the National Museum of the U.S. Army, Alexandria. The National Museum of the United States Army has opened a special exhibition, Call To Arms: The Soldier and the Revolutionary War. The two-year exhibition commemorates this year's 250th Birthday of the U.S. Army and next year's 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. This 5,000 square-foot exhibition features a rare collection, specially curated by the Museum, that includes Revolutionary War artifacts from the original colonies, England, France and Canada. Among the exhibit's highlights are a pair of General George Washington's pistols, the original flag of the 1st Rhode Island Regiment carried by the Army's first African American Soldiers, and a complete

Loyalist uniform—one of the rarest items in the collection. The sword of British General Charles Lord Cornwallis, presented to Washington at the surrender at Yorktown, Virginia, will also be displayed for a limited time.

## AUG. 7 TO SEPT. 29

**Masterpiece Mini Golf.** Thursday: 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Friday and Saturday: 11 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.; Sunday: 12 – 5 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Masterpiece Mini-Golf isn't just a game—it's an interactive journey through the world of art like you've never seen before! Imagine 18 artist-designed holes bursting with bold colors, iconic imagery, and mind-bending creativity. From Monet's water lilies to Banksy's graffiti walls, every twist and turn brings you face-to-face with art history's greatest paintings—reimagined in wild, surreal, and playable form. It's part gallery, part game, and 100% fun for all ages. Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/masterpiece-mini-golf>

## SEPT. 5-27

**The "Second Time Around" exhibit at Del Ray Artisans gallery** features artwork made out of recycled materials. This exhibit focuses on the thought-change concept of sustainable creativity and enhancing artistic environmental ethos, from the art to the earth-conscious workshops and events. View at Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Opening Reception: Friday, September 5, 7-9 p.m.. Gallery hours: Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](http://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits).

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 6

**First Saturday 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> for information on other days and times for the library's ongoing book sale.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 6

**Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy Discussion. 7 to 8:30 p.m.** At Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, 3606 Seminary Road, Alexandria. Dr. Cook will share the inside scoop about how Virginia Interfaith works with community members, advocacy, organizations, and legislators, to impact positive social change. You'll learn about legislation we work on advocating for maternal health, higher education in prison, affordable housing and worker rights.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 6

**Writers in Residence Reading. 12 to 1 p.m.** At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, Alexandria. Each summer, Woodlawn and Pope-Leighey House collaborates with The Inner Loop to invite writers to the historical site to explore place,



The Chalk-a-Block Party takes place Sunday, Sept. 7, 2025 in Old Town Alexandria.

ownership, and history to bring awareness to critical social and environmental issues we face today. These writers will be sharing their experiences with an on-site reading on Saturday, September 6th.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 6

**Introduction to Basketweaving. 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.** At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. (16-Adult) Join expert basket maker Sharon Shaeffer for a hands-on workshop where you'll learn the art of basket weaving from start to finish. Sharon will guide you through each step of the process—from selecting materials to adding personal embellishments—so you can create a beautiful basket to take home. Whether you're a beginner or looking to refine your skills, this class offers inspiration, instruction, and everything you need to get started. Bring a lunch. \$66 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code MGM.QFWG

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 6

**Little Gardeners. 10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.** At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. (2-6 yrs.) Explore the ever-changing landscape of the garden. Each week, participants will explore and discover the changes in the garden. This program will feature seasonal activities that can include planting seeds, pollinators, harvesting vegetables, digging in the soil and exploring plant parts. Adults must attend with a registered child. Kids must be accompanied by a parent or guardian who does not need to register for the program. \$10 per

child. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code ZF6.IPJ5

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 7

**Farewell to Lafayette: A Bicentennial Tribute.** At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, Alexandria. In collaboration with the American Friends of Lafayette, this event will take place during the final week-end of bicentennial celebrations in honor of Lafayette's 1824-1825 tour of America. Join us as we reflect on Lafayette's legacy, his enduring influence on American liberty, democracy, and friendship at a site Lafayette visited during his celebrated visit to America.

Schedule of events:  
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Open House Tours at Woodlawn  
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Specialty Presentation: "Lafayette at Woodlawn"  
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Panel Discussion: "Embodying Lafayette"

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 7

**Chalk-a-Block Party. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.** In Old Town Alexandria. Chalk artists will transform the sidewalks and parking lots of Old Town North into their canvases. Live music will fill the air from a variety of artists including local favorites The Okays, The Frontier, and Alejandro Villareal. Local artisans and makers organized by Made in ALX will be on hand to showcase their works. From stained glass to stationery to jewelry to spices to baked goods and more, there's something for everyone!

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 7

**MIN ~ World Music Duo. 2 p.m.** At

the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Saïs Kamalidiin & Leonard Brown have performed together, in various contexts, for more than ten years. They have traveled to every continent (except Antarctica) studying and performing in many of the world's great music traditions. Dr. Saïs Kamalidiin performs on nine different instruments and has taught music at the collegiate level for more than a quarter century. Maestro Leonard Brown helps lead one of the world's great music organizations and has also taught music for more than a quarter century.

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 7

**Portals to the Past. 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.** At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (Adult) Doors and thresholds have been symbolic portals, defenses, and status symbols, revealing details about their time in history and about what lies within. Explore the fascinating – and sometimes humorous - history of doorways, their purposes and their accessories, from medieval portcullises to door knockers, bolts and boot scrapers. Hear about the recent project to replace the front steps and stoop of Green Spring's 1784 Historic House and what its doorways – past and present - reveal to us about the house as a home. \$42 (lecture + tea); \$18 (lecture only). To register, call Green Spring Historic House 703-324-3988.

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 7

**Family Fun – Monarch Migration. 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.** At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (4-Adult) Learn about the amazing migration of the monarch butterfly as we search the garden for caterpillars and butterflies. Discover the secrets of this butterfly's life cycle, from egg to flight and beyond. Take home a monarch-themed craft. All attendees, including parents, must be registered for the program. All attendees, including parents, must be registered for the program. \$10 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code E09.YQ2G

## MONDAY/SEPT. 8

**Garden Sprouts Fall - Nature Playgroup. 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.** At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (3-5 yrs.) Your preschooler will enjoy nature-themed activities and crafts while you meet other playgroup parents one Monday a month. Through games, songs, activities and a garden walk, we will explore seasonal topics. Kids must be accompanied by a parent or guardian who does not need to register for the program. Siblings under 3 welcome to accompany parent without registering. \$12 per child. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code C72.BK02

## SEPT. 12 AND 26

**Wright at Twilight. 6:30-9 p.m.** At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, Alexandria. Enjoy the iconic Pope-Leighey House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, at twilight! Sit



# ENTERTAINMENT

back with complimentary snacks and a glass of wine, as you watch the changing light bring out the beautiful architectural details of the house. Play games in the yard, listen to period music, and tour the house at your leisure as the sun slowly sets.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 13

### Historic Marker Dedication Honoring Colored Rosemont. 3-4 p.m.

At the intersection of Wythe and West Streets (1300 block of Wythe Street) Alexandria. The public is invited to attend the dedication of a Virginia State Highway Historic Marker honoring Colored Rosemont, a vibrant African American neighborhood established in the early 20th century that fostered community, resilience, and pride in Alexandria. You might know it today as West Braddock. The program will feature remarks from Mayor Alyia Gaskins, the Office of Historic Alexandria, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR), and the Colored Rosemont Descendant Group. This marker commemorates the legacy of the Colored Rosemont community and highlights ongoing work of the Colored Rosemont Oral History Initiative, which is collecting stories and memories of residents to preserve this important history for future generations. In case of rain, the ceremony will be held at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe Street.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 13

### Fall Old Town Arts & Crafts Fair. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

At Tavern Square 415 King Street (behind Made in ALX), Alexandria. Arts & Crafts Fair supporting Volunteer Alexandria and sponsored by Made in ALX. Same great vendors new location from the June event. Tavern Square is across N Royal Street from the Farmers Market and City Hall. You can enter from N Royal Street, N Pitt Street, King St or Cameron Street.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 13

### Expungement Clinic. 9 a.m. to noon.

At Hybla Valley Community Center, 7950 Audubon Ave., Alexandria. Criminal charges that didn't lead to a conviction can make it hard for someone to get a job, housing, or other opportunities. Sign up for the Fairfax County Franconia District Expungement Clinic. Volunteer lawyers will be there to help and see if your charges are eligible to be removed from your record. Only charges from Fairfax County or the City of Fairfax can be considered.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 13

### Historic House Walk and Talk. 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (Adult) Take a brief outdoor stroll around the 1784 Historic House to learn about its architecture and historic designed landscape. Step inside the house to learn about residents of Green Spring past. Enjoy compelling stories of public service, trailblazing women, espionage, civil rights, enslavement and freedom. Hear what we know about enslaved people who lived and worked on Green Spring Farm, and ongoing research to discover more. \$15 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>



The Fall Old Town Arts & Crafts Fair takes place Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025 in Alexandria.

or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code R40.MFFZ

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 13

### Garden Talk – Fall Vegetable Gardening. 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (16-Adult) Planting a fall vegetable garden extends the gardening season so you can continue to harvest fresh produce. Many cool-season vegetables, such as, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts, produce their best flavor and quality when they mature during cool weather. Extension Master Gardeners share tips and recommendations. \$12 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>

or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code 3A3.OW9Q

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 13

### Fall Plants for Small Gardens. 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (16-Adult) Join Green Spring Gardens' horticulturist Brenda Skarphol on a walk to look at the variety of colors and forms of beloved plants with fall interest, including bloom, fruit and colorful fall foliage. See a mix of herbaceous perennials, trees, and shrubs that grow well in small spaces, from containers to gardens. Get plant recommendations tailored to your garden. Dress for the weather. \$19 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>

or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code DDX.WZR9

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 13

### Edible Garden Tour. 9:00 a.m.

- 10:00 a.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (16-Adult) Explore the bounty of Green Spring's Edible Garden with an Extension Master Gardener docent who showcases many food plants – from vegetables to fruit trees – suitable for home landscapes. See how edibles can grow in containers and small spaces and discover their ornamental

value in the garden. \$15 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>

or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code 96U.CCNS

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 13

### Historic House Walk and Talk. 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (Adult) Take a brief outdoor stroll around the 1784 Historic House to learn about its architecture and historic designed landscape. Step inside the house to learn about residents of Green Spring past. Enjoy compelling stories of public service, trailblazing women, espionage, civil rights, enslavement and freedom. Hear what we know about enslaved people who lived and worked on Green Spring Farm, and ongoing research to discover more. \$15 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>

or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code R40.MFFZ

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 13

### Family Fun – The Story of Rain.

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (7-Adult) Cultures around the world have legends and myths dedicated to rain, the bringer of life and hope. Listen to our storytellers and take home a craft. All attendees, including parents, must be registered for the program. All attendees, including parents, must be registered for the program. \$10 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>

or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code NTB.2HZI

## SEPT. 13-14

### 23rd Annual Alexandria Art Festival.

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At John Carlyle Square, 300 John Carlyle Street, Alexandria. The popular, free showcase featuring thousands of fine art works from local and national artists happens September 13 - 14 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both

days. The annual Alexandria Art Festival is presented by the nation's top art festival producer, Howard Alan Events (HAE). Throughout the decades, it has become a hallmark staple event for residents and visitors alike. Consistently ranked by Sunshine Artists Magazine as one of the top art festivals in the nation, it showcases the works of both local and national artists. The show encompasses fine jewelry, exquisite works of art, and handcrafted apparel and decor. Attendees can look forward to discovering spectacular paintings, life-sized sculptures, jewelry, glasswork, photography, ceramics, and more. All artists will be on site for the duration of the festival, allowing visitors to uncover the inspiration behind each original piece. Admission for patrons is free, and ample parking is available. Visit [artfestival.com](http://artfestival.com).

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 14

### Meditation in the Gardens. 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (16-Adult) Explore how nature, metaphor, and deep listening can enhance connection—with yourself, others, and the world around you. This immersive garden-based class combines guided reflection, emotional awareness practices, and practical tools for mindful communication. Learn to tune into your inner landscape while engaging with the natural one. End with a relaxing sound bathing experience to help you integrate, unwind, and return to your day grounded and refreshed. Class goes outside, weather permitting. \$24 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>

or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code 3DC.NHIQ

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 20

### American Horticultural Society Gala.

The American Horticultural Society (AHS), the national organization dedicated to inspiring Americans to garden for the benefits to all, will host its annual Gala at River Farm, its headquarters in Alexandria. Individual Gala tickets are available

for purchase at [ahsgardening.org/gala](http://ahsgardening.org/gala). AHS will honor Skipp Calvert, long-time Alexandria resident, local champion of River Farm, and former AHS Board member, and Brian Kemble, winner of AHS' 2025 Liberty Hyde Bailey Award. The Gala will feature a pop-up sculpture garden with whimsical works from Nepenthe Gallery, sure to surprise and delight. The sculpture garden will include works by Vadim Kharchenko, Kevin Carman, Dorothy Gillsepie Foundation, David Turner, and Michael Alfano – many available for purchase.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 20

### The HalloWEIRD Art Market. 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Features a variety of artwork from local artisans celebrating the spooky and playful sides of the autumn season. Join us for lots of fun at this outdoor, family-friendly, rain-or-shine event. HalloWEIRD takes place in the Mount Vernon Recreation Center fields adjoining Del Ray Artisans gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, VA. Details at [DelRayArtisans.org/halloweird-2025](http://DelRayArtisans.org/halloweird-2025)

## WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 24

### Evening with Dr. Krystyn R. Moon.

7 p.m. At The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, Alexandria. The Alexandria Historical Society invites you to join them for an evening with Dr. Krystyn R. Moon as she presents Proximity to Power: Rethinking Race and Place in Alexandria. Dr. Moon will explore how Alexandria's proximity to the nation's capital shaped African Americans' access to schools, transportation, and resources compared to other southern towns. Her work highlights the long-standing advocacy of Alexandria's Black residents, offering new insights into the intersection of race, place, and power.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 27

### Alexandria Oktoberfest. 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

At John Carlyle Square, 300 John Carlyle Street, Alexandria. Celebrate the season with the best of German culture, food, music, and fun at the beautiful John Carlyle Square in Alexandria. This family-friendly event captures the unmistakable spirit of Bavarian merriment with traditional music, lively entertainment, and a lively beer garden. Whether you're here to enjoy the delicious food, shop for unique handmade crafts, or dance to the rhythms of authentic German tunes, there's something for everyone.

What to Expect: Live German Music and Traditional Dance Performances: Enjoy lively German tunes and classic Oktoberfest songs that will fill the air with festive energy all day long.

Beer Garden: Sip on a variety of refreshing German beers in our beer garden. Whether you love a classic lager or something a little more adventurous, you'll find the perfect brew to enjoy.

Delicious German Food: Indulge in delicious Oktoberfest favorites, from bratwurst and pretzels to strudels and more. It's the perfect way to experience authentic German flavors.

Handmade Arts & Crafts: Explore a variety of unique, handcrafted items by local artisans. Whether you're looking for a special gift or something for yourself, you'll find a treasure here.



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# News

## Fairfax County Expungement Clinic Offers Free Legal Assistance and Waived Fees

Fairfax County is hosting its first ever Expungement Clinic on Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at the Hybla Valley Community Center, 7950 Audubon Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22306. For individuals with criminal charges from Fairfax County or the City of Fairfax that did not result in conviction, this clinic provides a vital opportunity to determine eligibility and petition for removal of these charges from their record. Expungement can help individuals eliminate barriers to accessing jobs, housing, and other opportunities.

Volunteer attorneys will be on-site to offer guidance and prepare expungement petitions at no cost to attendees. In addition, the filing fee (normally \$86) will be sponsored for pre-registrants.

### Key Details:

- ❖ **What to Bring:** Certified copies of the warrant of arrest/final disposition for each charge.
- ❖ **Fees:** The filing fee (\$86) will be waived for those who register early while sponsorship funds last.
- ❖ **Eligibility:** Only non-conviction charges from Fairfax County or the City of Fairfax are eligible. Applicants must not have active arrest warrants.

Register Today: Spots are limited, and early registration is encouraged. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/circuit/criminal-case-information/expungement](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/circuit/criminal-case-information/expungement) or call (703) 691-7320 for more information and to register.

## Local Park Renovations

FROM PAGE 10

cer field, picnic shelter and parking lot.

The skate park is being built by Spohn Ranch Skateparks, a company in California that builds skateparks all over the country, with a large concentration in the west. The closest one Spohn Ranch built here is the Lake Fairfax Skatepark in Reston and the Eric Brown Skate Plaza in Leesburg.

This California-based company began with founder Aaron Spohn's backyard half-pipe and has grown substantially.



# BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at [chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org) or call RSVP at 703-403- 5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit [www.rsvpnova.org](http://www.rsvpnova.org).

**Mentors Wanted.** Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria's pre-teens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for "Space of Her Own," and "Space of His Own," serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making healthy choices and succeeding in school and in life. Visit [www.spaceofherown.org](http://www.spaceofherown.org) and [www.spaceofhisown.org](http://www.spaceofhisown.org). For more information on how to become a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at [sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov](mailto:sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov) or phone at 703-746-4687.

**Farmer's Market Volunteers Needed.** To volunteer for the Farmer's Markets, email Brian Morreale, [brianmorreale@gmail.com](mailto:brianmorreale@gmail.com)

## SUPPORT GROUPS

**Postpartum Support Virginia** sponsors a free, bi-monthly support group for women suffering depression and/or anxiety during pregnancy or in the first year following childbirth. Meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at Inova Alexandria Hospital, Health Education Center, rooms 1-2, 4320 Seminary Road. Contact co-moderator Susan Doyle at [suzjdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:suzjdoyle@gmail.com) or 571-403-0673.

**The Parkinson's Disease Support Group** of Alexandria meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. At the Hollin Hall Senior Center, Room 109, 1500 Shenandoah Road. All Parkinson's patients and caregivers are welcome.

**The Caregiver Support Group** is facilitated by the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services Division of Aging and Adult Services. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the Adult Day Services Center, 1108 Jefferson St., 4-5:30 p.m. Participants are full- or part-time caregivers providing care locally or long distance to a family member or friend. Participants share their experiences, provide support for each other and receive resources to assist them with caregiving. The next Caregiver Support Group meeting is June 7. For more information or to register, contact Jennifer Sarisky at 703-746-9999 or email [DAAS@alexandriava.gov](mailto:DAAS@alexandriava.gov).

**FACE Center Support Groups** provide parents with a space to share their daily parenting frustrations and triumphs

while offering new strategies for helping parents to cope, build positive parent-child relationships and best support their children's learning.

❖ **Support Group in English,** every Monday, 6-7:30 p.m. at ARHA Main Building, 401 Wythe St.

❖ **Support Group in Spanish,** every Wednesday, 6-7:30 p.m. at Community Lodgings Brookside Center, 614 Four Mile Road.

**Registration not necessary.** A light dinner and childcare services provided free. Contact Krishna Leyva at 703-619-8055 or [krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us) for more.

**Divorce Workshop for Women.** Second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King St. The workshops are designed to provide education on the legal, financial, family and personal issues of divorce in a logical, yet compassionate way. The workshop fee is \$25. Visit [www.novasecondsaturday.com](http://www.novasecondsaturday.com) for more.

## ONGOING

**Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program.** The City of Alexandria has reinstated its sewer Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program for homeowners in designated areas that historically experience basement back-ups or flooding. The program reimburses homeowners for up to 50 percent of the cost of installing a BFP device by a licensed plumbing contractor, up to a maximum of \$2,000. The current program period is through Dec. 31, 2019. Alexandria homeowners should call the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services at 703-746-4014 or visit [www.alexandriava.gov/tes](http://www.alexandriava.gov/tes).

**Robust Walking.** Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9 a.m. at Mount Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Ave. Free 55+ robust walking 1-hour exercise class (with chair exercise option). No class on holidays. Contact [jjkingconsulting@yahoo.com](mailto:jjkingconsulting@yahoo.com).

**Seeking Donations.** Computer CORE, which is dedicated to helping low-income adults become computer literate is seeking donations. Visit [www.computercore.org/contribute](http://www.computercore.org/contribute).

**Senior and Job Programs.** 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Queen of Apostles Church, 4650 Taney Avenue, Alexandria. St. Martin de Porres Center offers senior and job placement programming Monday through Friday at the parish. Email Kathryn Toohey, [ktoohy@ccda.net](mailto:ktoohy@ccda.net).

**Be Heard** at the City's Monthly Public Hearings. A schedule of the meetings can be found at [www.alexandriava.gov](http://www.alexandriava.gov). Voice opinions, speak about something on the docket or just speak about something you are concerned about. Sign up in advance to speak through the city's website. Anyone is welcome at any of the public hearings.

## Legals

## Legals

### INVITATION TO BID

#### NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS

Sealed bids will be received by Skagit County Fire District 15 also known as the Lake McMurray Fire Department at Fire District 9's facility at 16882 West Big Lake Blvd, Mount Vernon, WA 98274 for the construction of Station-1 Fire Hall Repair project in Mount Vernon, Washington.

Subcontractor's Listings may be hand delivered to the address above.

Time limits for receipt of proposals are as follows:

Section 00 41 00 – Price Proposal must be received by 2:00 pm, September 18th, 2005.

Section 00 41 10 – Subcontractor's Listing A must be received at the same time as the Price Proposal time limit.

Section 00 41 20 – Subcontractor's Listing B must be received at the same time as the Price Proposal time limit, regardless of extend time periods expressed in the RCW's.

Bids received after this time will not be considered.

#### SCOPE OF WORK

The project includes restoration of fire, smoke and water damaged fire hall. Previous work has included demolition of existing selected mechanical and electrical equipment, insulation, gypsum wall board, doors, fixtures, etc. Abatement of hazardous materials has also occurred.

New work continues demolition of certain items, including roofing, structural elements, doors, windows, plumbing, remaining mechanical/electrical components, etc. Restoration of the facility includes new mechanical systems, plumbing fixtures, electrical systems, alarm systems, communication systems, framing, asphalt roofing, insulation, siding, hollow metal and sectional doors, vinyl windows, etc.

#### PRE-BID WALKTHROUGH

One pre-bid walkthrough will be conducted. Dates for the walkthrough are as follows:

September 11, 2025 at 1pm at 22790 Front Street, Mount Vernon, Washington.

Attendance of the pre-bid walkthrough is not mandatory. The site is secured, locked and unattended. The only access that will be provided is through the walkthrough.

#### CONTRACT DOCUMENTS

Bidding Documents, including Instructions to Bidders, Form of Agreement, General Requirements, Drawings and Specifications entitled, Station-1 Fire Hall Repair may be requested from the Architect in Portable Document Format (PDF) and may also be examined at various construction councils and builder association plan centers, a list of which is available from the office of the Architect.

Architect: The DOH Associates, PS, 7 N. Wenatchee Avenue, Suite 500, Wenatchee, WA 98801, (509) 662-4781

Bidders and suppliers may purchase sets or parts of sets, by paying for the cost of reproduction from the office of the Architect.

Prime Bidders, Mechanical and Electrical sub-bidders who are bidding without procuring plans from the Architect are required to send a written request to be included on the bidder's list and shall identify the source of their bid documents.

#### PREVAILING WAGE

The State of Washington prevailing wage rates are applicable for this public works project located in Skagit County. Bidders are responsible to verify and use the most recent prevailing wage rates. The "Effective Date" for this project is the Bid Proposal due date above. The applicable prevailing wage rates may be found on the Department of Labor and Industries website located at:

<https://secure.lni.wa.gov/wage/lookup/>

Upon request, the Owner will mail a hard copy of the applicable prevailing wages for this project. Please contact the DOH Associates at (509) 662-4781.

#### BIDDER RESPONSIBILITY CRITERIA

Bidders shall comply with the Bidder Responsibility Criteria as provided in the Instructions to Bidders.

#### BID OPENING

Bids will be opened and read publicly by the Owner's representative immediately following the hour set above.

Bidders are welcome to attend the public opening.

The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive irregularities or informalities, without cause.

By Order of: Skagit County Fire District #15

#### PROTESTS

Bidders shall comply with the Bid Protest Procedures of the Owner as provided in the bid documents.

#### PUBLICATIONS

Published as legal advertisement:

Mount Vernon Gazette September 4th, 2025

## Remind Me Again



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I can understand receiving reminders from my healthcare provider concerning appointments and medicine refills - as I'm a cancer patient still undergoing treatment. I can understand receiving reminders from pet superstores concerning food and pharmacy items which as an owner of four cats and a dog - I might need reminding. I can understand receiving reminders from a high-end kitty litter distributor given their product's time-sensitive effectiveness in identifying a cat's overall health status since I'm paying an extra premium for the privilege. And I can certainly appreciate reminders from car dealers about miscellaneous service intervals and recommended repairs/replacements for our cars that we likely would otherwise let pass. But I cannot understand - other than the company's motivation to nudge me to buy their products as often as possible, maybe even prematurely, that I'm "arrowed" to a line near the bottom of a plastic dish soap bottle pointing to the advisory "Refill."

Really? I need to be encouraged/nagged about dish soap? You mean to tell/advice me that I can't be left alone to my own homeowners' devices to know when and if I want to refill a bottle of dish soap? Is there some other reason - other than emptying my "refill" inventory as soon as possible in order to create a need, possibly, to replenish my reserves? Does the product lose its effectiveness if I don't refill the bottle at the exact line as indicated? There's not a shortage of dish soap in the market, is there? I mean, this isn't a pandemic-era shortage of toilet paper type-situation, where I need to hoard dish soap in case the market/bottle dries up, is it?

Let me rework the great Alfonso Bedoya's response to Humphery Bogart in "The Treasure of Sierra Madre" (1948) as my reply: I don't need no stinkin' line on a bottle to show/tell me what to do. I may not be the most capable homeowner in the world (least capable more likely), but neither do I need to be held by the hand. And I don't need any help from the long arm of corporate America reaching into my wallet and extracting dollars for a purchase that might not make any sense - and don't really benefit me. Well, not as much as the purchase benefits them. This is dish soap. It's for cleaning dishes. It's not penicillin. It's not insulin. And more to the point - for me, it's not chemo/targeted therapy. It's a product for a sort-of-a-daily, somewhat mundane task: washing dishes. We're not sterilizing anything here. We're handwashing. There's no surgery scheduled. Just life in the kitchen.

A life with which we're all familiar and likely equipped to manage. As you might have guessed, I've taken offense with this, in my opinion, money grab. Can't I be left alone concerning my purchases for the kitchen. It's not an operating theater. The only eyes watching me belong to either a cat - wanting a treat, or the dog - wanting to go out. Moreover, I'm not giving any lessons. I'm not you-tubbing my handiwork. There's nothing particularly time-sensitive going on. And there's certainly no spouse monitoring my every wipe. She knows I'm capable of "doing the dishes" and trusts me to know what kitchen-centric products need to be purchased when. However, as indicated by the line on the bottle, apparently corporate America thinks I'm a dufus and needs to tell me what to do with their products and when. What products are next? Tissue paper? Paper towels? Toilet paper? (God forbid.) A line may not have been crossed but it has been drawn. And as a consumer, I take objection to its appearance and corporate America's reach. If I need any help managing my day-to-day/activities of daily living, I'll let you know. Otherwise, mind your own business, and I'll mind mine.

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



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