

# THE CONNECTION

CENTRE VIEW ♦ Chantilly ♦ Great Falls ♦ Herndon ♦ McLean ♦ Oak Hill ♦ Oakton ♦ Reston ♦ Vienna

Admiring a plant from their herbology class are Brenna Pond, Clark Dalton, Mary Campbell and Morgan Palmer.

## Spells, Spoofs and Castles

PAGE 11

## Danger Lurks in Near Misses

PAGE 3

## FCPS Faces Federal Challenges

PAGE 8

SENIOR LIVING, PAGE 6 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 16 ♦ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 9, 18

PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

OCTOBER 1-14, 2025

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



# Capital Bikeshare Expands North, South on Fairfax County Metro Lines

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County is expanding its Capital Bikeshare program to include the Huntington and Innovation Center Metro stations, according to a recent online announcement. It is adding bike availability at the Huntington Metro station in Mount Vernon and the Innovation

Metro Station in Herndon.

Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck (D) and Dranesville District Supervisor Jimmy Bierman (D) highlighted the benefits of the expansion in a statement.

**Capital Bikeshare expands to Huntington Metro station in Mount Vernon and the Innovation Metro Station in Herndon.**



PHOTO: [HTTPS://X.COM/BIKESHARE](https://x.com/bikeshare)

“The introduction of Capital Bikeshare in Huntington is a big step forward in providing opportunities for residents and visitors to make local trips without having to drive themselves — especially for those without access to vehicles or bikes of their own,” said Storck.

Bierman added, “We have way too much traffic in Fairfax County and we need to get people out of their cars and off the roads to reduce the traffic for the people who do need to use the roads. Things like Capital Bikeshare help us do that. They help us alleviate traffic, they help us make your commute better and they give people more options for how to get to and from where they want to go.”

There will be ten new Capital Bikeshare stations in and around the Innovation Center Metro Station at 13747-A Sunrise Valley Drive, Herndon, Va., which is the northernmost station of the Washington Metro Silver Line within Fairfax County, and the Huntington Metro Station in the Alexandria region, south on the Yellow Line, situated just outside the City of Alexandria. “This last-mile transportation system is so essential to our mass transit system,” said Storck.

Capital Bikeshare is a regional bicycle transit system jointly owned by Fairfax County, Arlington County, City of Alexandria, City of Fairfax, City of Falls Church, Prince George’s County, Montgomery County and the District of Columbia. The entire network includes more than 800 stations with more than 8,000 classic-style and electric bicycles.

Information about Capital Bikeshare purchase options, station locations, bike availability and more can be found at <https://capital-bikeshare.com>.



## October 10, 11, 12

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

#### ADDRESSING HUNGER FOR STUDENTS

No one likes to be hungry, but that’s a stark reality for a surprising number of residents in Northern Virginia. The most recent annual Capital Area Foodbank report found that 27% of households in Fairfax County and 46% of households in Prince William County experienced

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 4



# Danger Lurks: Near Misses On the Roads

New report reveals key factors in vehicle-pedestrian and cyclist near-miss incidents.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

In the Fairfax area — a near miss motor vehicle crash involving a pedestrian or cyclist is reported on average every two days and six-and-a-half hours, with more than half of the reports involving children.

This statistic is based on 254 near miss reports collected over 18 months, from January 2024 to July 2025. The data sourced for the statistic is cited in the “Fairfax Near Miss Summary Report-Sept 2025,” by Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets (NoVA FSS), provided to The Connection on Thursday, Sept. 19. The report’s purpose is to identify and analyze locations on Fairfax’s roads where people report feeling unsafe while walking or bicycling.

The analysis of near-miss reports reveals several key trends and prime spots for reporting incidents throughout Fairfax County. While reports of collisions by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) are crucial, the near-miss report provides a different kind of insight. It fills in the gaps using a Near Miss survey app and documents a wider range of unsafe interactions that don’t escalate into a reportable crash, but still cause people to feel unsafe.

Eighty-six percent of the incidents are recurring, and peak during prime commuting hours in the mornings and evenings. Reports that cite infrastructure or environmental factors as a risk often mention poor visibility and inadequate traffic controls. The most frequently cited behavior posed to pedestrians is “failure to yield,” at 59 percent, followed by speeding at 49 percent and distracted driving at 26 percent.

The highest number of reports was submitted in the Hunter Mill District (51), followed by Franconia (48) and Providence (44).

However, as stated in the report’s executive summary, “It doesn’t mean that other jurisdictions like Mason, Mount Vernon or Springfield, etc. don’t have Near Miss incidents occurring on their streets. Rather it shows how much more NoVA FSS needs to do to raise awareness of the NM (Near Miss) survey app.”

The top roadways in Fairfax for reports involving children include Telegraph Road, Fairfax County Parkway and Gallows Road. Most incidents occurred on 25 mph roads and involved dangerous driving behaviors, such as failure to yield, speeding or distracted driving.

Case studies in Hunter Mill reflect near miss trends countywide.

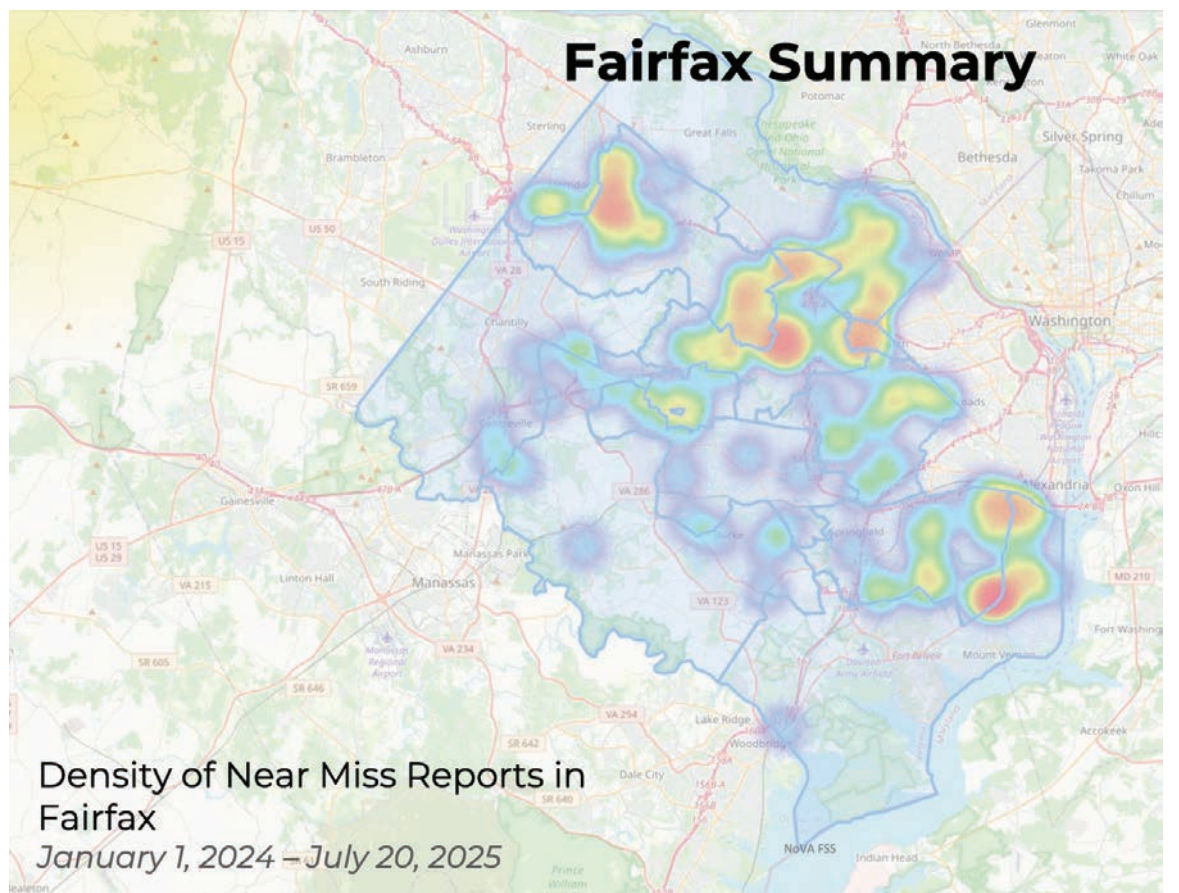
The Hunter Mill District report provides two case studies that highlight several key trends across Fairfax County. The report notes that incidents in this district are “recurring or involve children at a slightly higher rate than the average for Fairfax. They show a higher-than-average rate of drivers speeding, being distracted, and running lights/signs.”

Lake Newport Road, Reston: Reports from this area frequently mention speeding and running red lights, with a higher-than-average rate of children involved due to the nearby Armstrong Elementary School. The road’s position between busy parkways makes it especially dangerous.

One resident described a harrowing incident. “The light at the intersection of Fairfax County Parkway and Lake Newport Road is extremely dangerous. A child was crossing the street on a bike and had the walk signal to do so when a car came speeding through on a red light, almost hitting the child.”

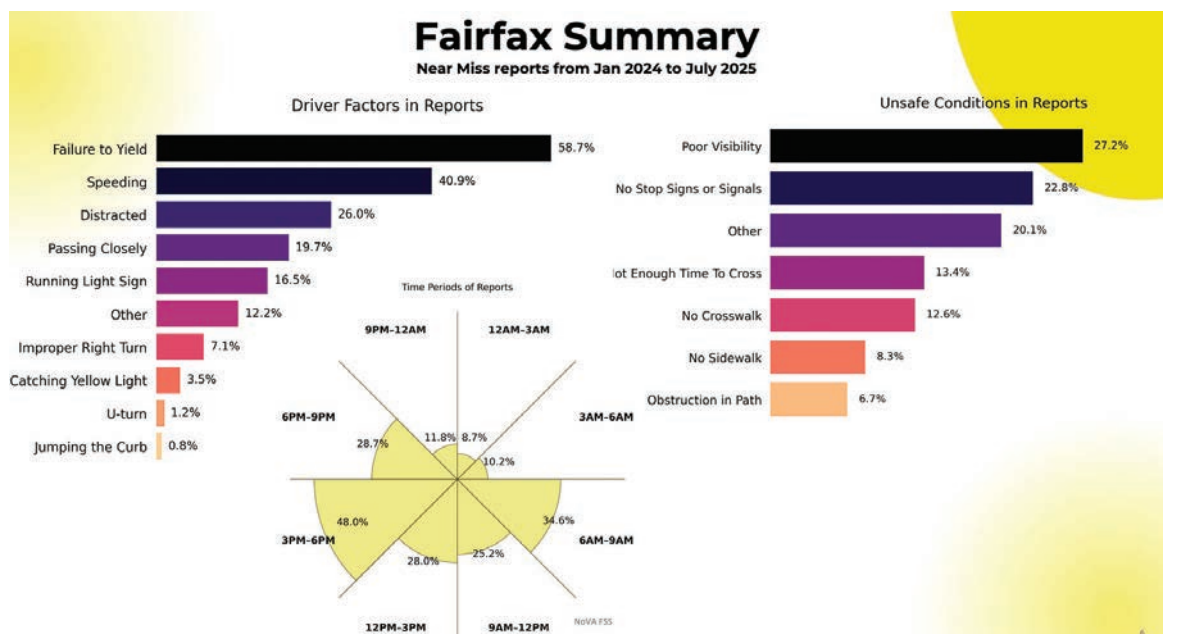
Reston Town Center: Another case study focuses on Reston Town

SEE DANGER LURKS, PAGE 12

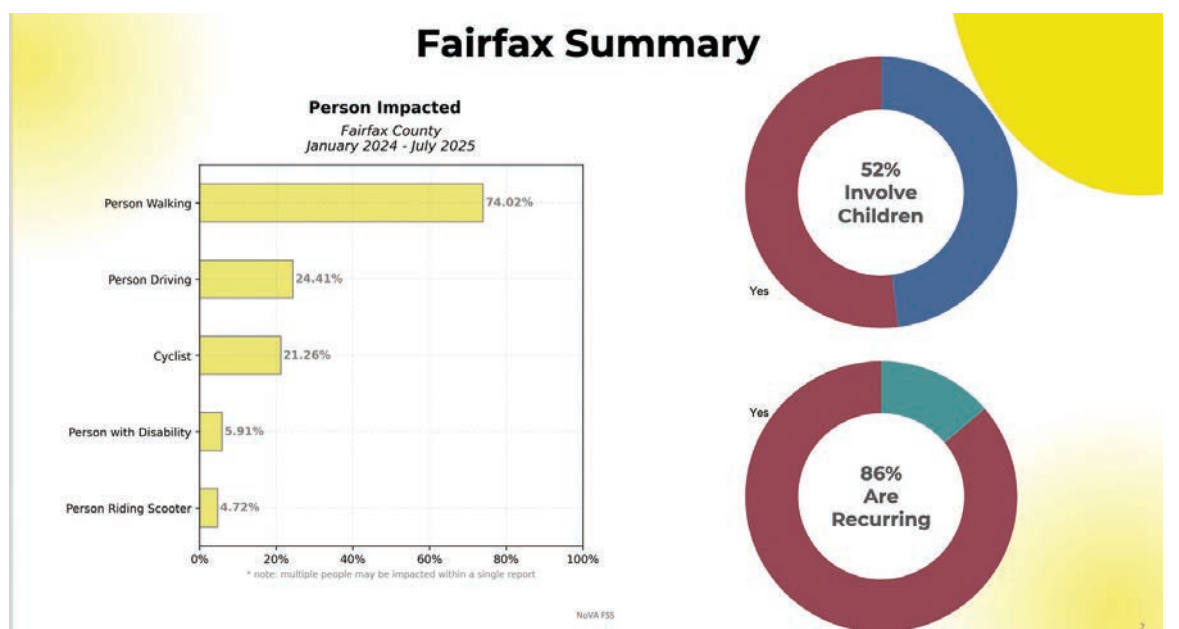


GRAPHICS BY FAIRFAX NEAR MISS SUMMARY REPORT-SEPT 2025

The map’s coloring depicts the density of reported near miss vehicle-pedestrian and vehicle-cyclist collisions.



The three graphs show the Fairfax Summary reported near miss incidents from January 2024 to July 2025 for driver factors, unsafe conditions and the time periods.



A graphic from the Fairfax Summary report shows percentages for people impacted, with 74 percent being pedestrians. It also shows that 52 percent of near miss incidents involved children, and 86 percent were recurring.



# Herndon to Appoint New Town Manager

Former manager of Winchester, Daniel C. Hoffman is praised there for leadership and vision.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The Herndon Town Council appointed Daniel C. Hoffman as its new town manager, effective Nov. 10, at its Sept. 23 council meeting. A nationwide search conducted by the town's Human Resources office and its recruitment firm, Raftelis, led to the staff recommendation to approve Resolution 25-G-48 appointing Hoffman.

Hoffman, who announced Sept. 18 that he would be stepping down from his Winchester city manager position effective Oct. 17, has held the role since September 2020.

The Winchester Star reported that Hoffman's most enduring legacy in Winchester will be the creation of Neighborhood Design Districts, which are areas that will be proactively rezoned to focus future residential,



SCREENSHOT LINKEDIN  
Daniel C. Hoffman is set to be the next town manager for the Town of Herndon.

retail, restaurant and office development.

The Star also reported that Hoffman's current annual salary in Winchester is \$210,995, while the recruitment firm, Raftelis, advertised a starting compensation of \$220,000 for the Herndon position.

A statement released by Winchester Mayor Les Veach and council president Corey Sullivan praised Hoffman for "advancing many of our key initiatives, including economic development, public safety and infrastructure improvements." The statement concluded by wishing him well and expressing confidence that his contributions would have a "lasting, positive impact on the City of Winchester."

The Star quotes former mayor David Smith as saying, "I would have liked for him to stay longer, but the life of a city manager in most localities is probably about five to seven years because they get poached by

other communities when they've seen the work they've done."

Winchester and Herndon differ in population, budgets, and workforces. Winchester's population of 29,294 is about 5,000 larger than Herndon's. Winchester's FY 2026 total general fund expenditures are \$120.5 million, which is more than double Herndon's \$50.4 million. This difference is largely because Winchester, as an independent city, funds services such as education, fire and rescue, transit and social services, whereas Herndon relies on Fairfax County for many of these. Winchester employs 961 people, while Herndon has 207 employees. The two municipalities also have different tax structures, with Winchester's real estate tax rate at \$0.795 per \$100 of assessed value, while Herndon's is \$0.2700, plus a 4.5 percent meals tax.

## Small Window to Apply For Affordable Housing Spots

The Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) will accept waitlist applications for select, new-construction Project-Based Voucher (PBV) units. Applications become available on Oct. 6, 2025 at 8 a.m. and will remain open through Oct. 12 at 11:59 p.m.

Project-Based Voucher waitlist applications will be accepted for:

Indigo at McLean Station at 1750 Old Meadow Road, McLean, VA 22102, two-bedroom units (eight Project-Based Vouchers units)

Fairfax Crest at 12020 and 12040 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22030, 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom, and 3-bedroom units (14 Project-Based Vouchers units)

### How to Apply

Interested individuals can apply on the Fairfax County Housing and Community Development website. Application instructions are available in English and Spanish.

Individuals who need assistance can call 703-449-9050 or visit the FCRHA office at 3700 Pender Drive in Fairfax, VA during normal business hours 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

### How Waitlist Applications Work

Applications will be selected at random and placed on the waitlist. Once a unit becomes available, the waitlist applicants will be contacted, screened, and determined eligible based on income level, household size, and the size of the rental unit.

Applications are not yet open at these properties beyond the above Project-Based Voucher waitlist opportunities

Additional homes at Indigo at McLean Station,

not included in this waitlist opportunity, are expected to become available in Spring 2026. Please contact the property directly for more information and monitor IndigoMcLeanStation.com for updates.

Fairfax Crest is anticipated to become available in 2027. Those interested in applying to other units, not included in this waitlist opportunity, should monitor the website of the property developer, Lincoln Avenue Communities, for updates.

### About the Project-Based Voucher Program

The Project-Based Voucher program is a subsidized rental housing program where households pay a portion of the rent up to 35 percent of the adjusted gross household income, while the FCRHA pays the remaining portion of the rent to the owner. Program participants are ineligible to receive other Federal Housing Assistance subsidies.

### Other Housing Waitlist Opportunities

The Housing Choice Voucher and Fairfax County Rental Program waitlists are currently closed. However, interested persons are encouraged to reach out to the communities below who might have waitlist opportunities. Please contact the community directly to inquire about their specific waitlist.

Crescent Apartments (Reston): 703-471-4663  
Gum Springs Glen (Alexandria): 703-780-9072  
Herndon Harbor House I and II (Herndon): 703-904-9444  
Hopkins Glen (Falls Church): 703-207-9770  
Morris Glen (Alexandria): 703-719-7268  
Stonegate Village Apartments (Reston): 703-620-0203  
Mount Vernon Gardens Apartments (Alexandria): 571-388-3473  
Wedgewood Apartments (Annandale) and Little River Square (Annandale): 703-256-0400.

## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 2

food insecurity in 2024. Unfortunately, it's the case that a higher percentage of households struggling to provide food include children.

Assistance League's Weekend Food for Kids program works to help address hunger for students at several Title 1 elementary schools across Northern Virginia. You can help support this effort by contributing items from our September Food for Kids Wish list. Use this link: <https://tiny.alnv.org/FoodForKids> or scan the QR code on the flyer to access the list. Please select Assistance League of Northern Virginia as the mailing address to assure timely delivery. If you would prefer not to order through Amazon, you can pay by personal check for these items. Please send your check, made out to ALNV, to P.O. Box 209, Herndon, VA 20172 and include "Wish List/month" in the memo line.

It's difficult for students who come to school hungry to concentrate and engage in class. Every gift can help students come to school with the energy they need to participate and learn. Visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org) to learn more about Assistance League.

### VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED

Have some extra time to drive a neighbor to a doctor's appointment? You pick the days, times, and places that are convenient for you. There is no minimum driving requirement. Not only do you help older adults in need, you also get to meet wonderful folks, often with very interesting backgrounds and stories to tell. The Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church

(SCMAFC), is an all-volunteer, non-sectarian, non-profit organization. Its mission is providing free transportation to seniors for medical and dental appointments or run errands to grocery stores and pharmacies. Visit the website at <https://scmafc.org/volunteer>, or email [contact@scmafc.org](mailto:contact@scmafc.org).

### VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME

Would you like to help a neighbor feel less lonely? Will you help someone get much-needed groceries? Form new connections and make a meaningful difference. Older adults in the Annandale, Falls Church, and Alexandria regions are waiting for volunteer social visitors and grocery shoppers. If you can give the gift of your time, consider providing invaluable support to someone in your community. Learn more about Volunteer Solutions at [bit.ly/FXVSVOL](http://bit.ly/FXVSVOL) or email [VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov](mailto:VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov) or call 703-324-5406.

### SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax) or [www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html](http://www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html). The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia Caregivers' Support Group takes place the first

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 14



# ‘Accidental Discharge’ Kills Woman in Fair Oaks

**D**etectives from FCPD Major Crimes Bureau arrested a man after an accidental discharge from a firearm left a woman dead inside a home in Legato.

On Sept. 26, at 3:35 p.m., officers responded to the 4500 block of Derring Lane in Legato (Fair Oaks Police District) for a weapons

call reporting that a man accidentally discharged a firearm striking an occupant inside the home. Officers located the victim and began performing life-saving measures until relieved by Fairfax County Fire and Rescue personnel.

Jennifer Kim, 30 of Fairfax, was transported to a local hospital

where she was later pronounced dead. Detectives from FCPD Major Crimes Bureau responded to assume the investigation.


Preliminarily, detectives determined Richard Huynh, 31, of Fairfax was securing his firearm in a gun box on the third level of the home when the firearm went off.

The bullet traveled through the floor and entered the second level of the home, striking the victim. Huynh responded downstairs and began first aid.

Huynh was arrested and transported to the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center. He was charged with Unlawful Discharge of a Firearm in

a Building. He was held on no bond.

Detectives are asking anyone with information regarding this case to call our Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 2. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone – 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477)




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# SENIOR LIVING

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION



Northern Virginia Senior Olympics has a record enrollment of 1,200 participants in 2025.

## Just When You Think NVSO Can't Get Bigger, It Does

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
THE CONNECTION

**I**t is a week into the 2025 Northern Virginia Senior Olympics (NVSO). The opening ceremony on Sept. 13 was followed by nine field and track events, and the next week is packed with everything from diving, crossword puzzles, miniature golf, tennis, bocce and the increasingly popular Mah Jongg (American style).

On Saturday, Sept. 20, Herb Levitan stands in the Thomas Jefferson Community Center gym instructing volunteers on the rules for the basketball goal competition. Levitan has been organizing the registration for NVSO events for over 15 years. He has also been competing for many years and had been swimming at Dulles yesterday but says he has a whole drawer full of medals from past years so he doesn't take the medals anymore.

Today they have men's and women's basketball categories competing from 50-89 years old in field goals and free throws. The competition begins at 11 a.m. with the field goal event where one person takes four shots from each of five different stationery positions.

The women sit in chairs beside the court calling out encourage-



Ann Pugh (center) and Nancy E. Jogner (right) wait their turn to compete in the basketball goal event. This is the first year for Pugh to compete in the NVSO but she has already won a medal in poker. Jogner has been competing for eight years but entered rowing for the first time this year where she won a gold medal.

ment to each other.

"Nice."

"Good job Stephanie."

And clapping enthusiastically for an especially impressive shot.

Ann Pugh says this is her first time competing in the NVSO. "I entered poker last week and got a bronze medal."

Sitting beside her is Mary Lynne Brown who is entered in four events and will be defending her corn hole medal from last year.

Nancy E. Jogner says she has been competing in different events for eight years but this is her first year as an 80-year-old. "I did rowing for the first time. It was really fun. They showed me what to do, and I won gold."

The men seem focused on their turn to shoot, watching their competitors and occasionally twirling the ball around in preparation. They rotate around the court one



This successful shot hangs in the basket in the women's basketball field goal competition on Sept. 20 at Thomas Jefferson Community Center.



Will it or won't it? One of 20 attempts to get a successful basket in the field goal competition at the NVSO event on Sept. 20.





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# Standoff with Feds, Challenges for FCPS

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Public Schools is bracing for a financial squeeze after the federal government, through its Department of Education (DOE), targeted the school division and two others — Chicago Public Schools and New York City — with a financial penalty.

The DOE is withholding \$3.4 million in funds from FCPS, effective Oct. 1, which means Fairfax County Public Schools will not receive the specialized Magnet School Assistance Program grants. The DOE is also altering FCPS's access to over \$167 million in critical federal aid.

The DOE had given FCPS and the other two divisions deadlines of Sept. 23 to agree to rescind their transgender-inclusive policies regarding use of school restrooms and locker rooms consistent with their gender identity, arguing the policies violate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The law is a federal civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

"Rather than reviewing FCPS' letter outlining why our policies and regulations are consistent with controlling state and federal law, and requesting further action be stopped until the legal issue is clarified by the courts, DOE took hasty and harmful action," said Dr. Michelle Reid, superintendent of FCPS.

Legal, financial and political considerations drive this selective enforcement to the given school divisions. It is engineering a circuit split in the lower courts and is fast-tracking a national showdown at the conservative-leaning U.S. Supreme Court over Title IX's scope, specifically, whether the law includes gender identity.

USDOE spokesperson Julie Hartman said the department "will not rubber-stamp civil rights compliance for New York, Chicago and Fairfax while they blatantly discriminate against students based on race and sex."

The local confrontation in Fairfax County is central to the DOE's legal rationale. The DOE is challenging FCPS's policies within the 4th Circuit, where the precedent-setting 2020 case, *Grimm v. Gloucester County*, established that gender identity is protected under Title IX. The ruling required the school district to allow the student to use the facilities consistent with gender identity, and FCPS fol-



FACEBOOK BAILEY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS & SCIENCES

Students at Bailey's Elementary School for the Arts & Sciences.



INSTAGRAM OFFICIALTJHSST

A physics lab at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology

lows that policy.

By forcing a confrontation in the same jurisdiction that established the key legal precedent, the DOE could be able to solidify a split with other circuits that have ruled differently, creating an apparent nationwide conflict for the Supreme Court to resolve. In other words, the DOE selected this local confrontation in the specific legal territory of Fairfax County, which falls under the 4th Circuit, precisely because it serves their national legal rationale paving the way for a Supreme Court review.

## The Financial Threat

Financial leverage, which FCPS has called "unconstitutional coercion," is at play. The DOE had previously placed FCPS on "high-risk" status, freezing access to approximately \$167 million.

The breakdown of the funding is as follows: Approximately \$41 mil-

lion supports services for students under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); \$61 million supports staff and provides for the Free and Reduced-Price Meals program; and the remaining \$65 million supports other essential services, including Title I funding for low-income students, Title III funding for English learners, services for students experiencing homelessness and professional development and teacher quality program.

The DOE altered how this \$167 million is administered by placing FCPS on reimbursement-only status. FCPS must pay all expenses upfront using its local operating budget to front the costs typically paid for with federal dollars. FCPS has stated it might have enough reserve funds to cover essential services like the Free and Reduced-Price Meals program for a few months, but continuing this

indefinitely would require diverting money from other local budget priorities (like teacher salaries, smaller class sizes or after school programs). The district would then request reimbursement from the DOE for approved expenditures. This shift creates a significant cash flow and financial management burden for FCPS, as it must temporarily cover the costs for all federally mandated and funded programs.

"FCPS always seems to make the wrong choice in these matters," said Bob Eitel of the Defense of Freedom Institute for Policy Studies in a Sept. 24 press release titled "DFI Files Federal Civil Rights Complaint Against Fairfax County Public Schools for Authorizing a Boy to Repeatedly Use the Girls' Locker Room."

## The Direct Cut, MSAP Grant

Covering the lost \$3.4 million



YOUTUBE

Dr. Michelle Reid

in Magnet School Assistant grant money works differently. That is the money that has been officially withheld or lost for the new fiscal year, starting Oct. 1. This loss is a direct cut, and funding is denied; it will not be received.

This creates a budget shortfall that requires a direct reduction in spending or an immediate backfill from the local budget. If FCPS wants to maintain the magnet programs at Thomas Jefferson High School and Bailey's Primary School at their current quality, it will need to find \$3.4 million from its existing local budget.

The cut directly impacts the high school's Science and Technology program, which is the school's entire magnet curriculum. The funding supports an elementary-level magnet program. The magnet program at Bailey's Primary School is one of two such elementary programs in the district that relies on this specific grant.

## Long-Term Strategy and Legal Action

The long-term solution to restore the federal dollars is through the courts. The Fairfax County School Board filed a 31-page lawsuit, titled "Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief," against Linda McMahon in her official capacity as Secretary of Education of the United States, and the United States Department of Education, in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia (Alexandria Division). The suit argues the DOE's actions violate the Spending Clause of the U.S. Constitution by imposing requirements that contradict existing federal court precedent in the 4th Circuit (unconstitutional coercion). The "high-risk" designation and funding freeze are unlawful attempts to force the district to violate state law and federal court rulings. The ultimate source of the money will be determined by whether the courts rule the DOE must reinstate the regular funding mechanism.

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## SENIOR LIVING

# Just When You Think NVSO Can't Get Bigger, It Does

FROM PAGE 6

at a time, and when the competition is finished the volunteer adds up the numbers in the multi-age competitive category. "No ties; that's good. Everybody gets a trophy."

"That's what we want."

NVSO is open to participants 50 years old or older by Dec. 31, 2025 and who live in one of the sponsoring jurisdictions, Arlington County, City of Alexandria, City of Fairfax, City of Falls Church, Fairfax County, Fauquier County, Loudoun County and Prince William County.

NVSO has grown from its 40th anniversary in 2021 with 50 events and 691 participants to 92 events with 1,200 participants in 2025 with 50-yard butterfly and poker added as new events this year and duplicate bridge brought back.

Sponsors of NVSO 2025 include AARP Virginia, Adobe, The Beacon Newspapers, Belmont at One University, CareFirst Blue Cross Blue Shield, Goodwin Living, Greenspring by Erickson Senior Living, John Hopkins Health Plans, The Jefferson, The Landing and The Riviera in Alexandria, Retirement Unlimited Inc., United Health Care, Vinson Hall Retirement Community, Woodbine Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center, Woodlands Retirement Community, Chesterbrook, and others.



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

A volunteer at the men's basketball goal event tallies up the final score with a possible 20 for successful completion of all baskets.

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\*Rate is current as of September 22, 2025. Promotional rate offer valid through November 5, 2025. Accounts opened with new money (funds not currently on deposit with Bank of Clarke) are eligible to receive a promotional interest rate of a 0.75% premium above the standard non-promotional rate, which range from 0.00% to 3.00% on a tiered scale. Promotional rate is effective for six (6) months from the account opening date. After the promotional period ends, the account will earn interest at the standard rate applicable to the account type and tier at that time. Interest will not be paid on the aggregate deposit balance that exceeds \$5 million. Minimum of \$500 to open. Minimum Balance of \$25,000 required to avoid \$10 service charge. Annual Percentage Yields are variable and subject to change at any time. Fees may reduce earnings on account. Offer is valid for the Warrenton & McLean Branches ONLY and subject to change at any time.

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# A Play about Resiliency and Underdogs Fighting Back

## Chantilly High presents 'Newsies, the Musical.'

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

In 1899, Joseph Pulitzer, owner of the New York Sun, made his newspaper boys (newsies) buy their papers before they could sell them. So when he raised the paper's price, the boys had to work harder to sell the same number of papers for no increase in their pay.

Frustrated, they went on strike to try to change Pulitzer's mind, and that's the plot of Chantilly High's upcoming show, Disney's "Newsies, the Musical." The curtain rises Thursday-Saturday, Oct. 16, 17, 18 at 7 p.m., and Sunday, Oct. 19, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$15, adults; \$12, students; at the door or via [www.chantillydrama.org](http://www.chantillydrama.org).

It features a cast and crew of 75, and Director Shannon Spicer is so proud of her talented thespians that she can hardly wait for the community to see them, too. "We have lots of new faces joining us for this show, and their energy and excitement is through the roof," she said.

"It's a dance-heavy show – which has called for long rehearsals – but it's completely student-choreographed, which is incredible with a cast this large. The kids have been working tirelessly to make sure they uphold the integrity of this play and the love people have for it."

Calling "Newsies" a real fan favorite, Spicer grew up watching the original Disney movie. Then when deciding which shows to produce this season, she found this one contained "so many themes relevant to what so many people are going through today. And the beauty of theater is being able to show 'Newsies' in a different light for the audience. I'm super excited for the community to bring the entire family to this show, since it has something for everyone to learn about and enjoy."

Playing Jack Kelly, the 17-year-old leader of the newsies, is sophomore Ben Corliss. "The other newsies look up to him," said Corliss. "He acts like a tough guy and doesn't like to show his soft side. He only lets down his guard when he's around his best friend, Crutchie, and Katherine, the girl he loves."

Corliss said it's lots of work playing the lead because he has so



From left are Meghan Bernet, Ben Corliss, Tiernan Zizolfo (as Crutchie) Griffin Sebulnia, and Megan Fry (as newsie Les).



Rehearsing a scene are Meghan Bernet and Ben Corliss.



Posing in costume are (from left) Megan Fry (as Les), Griffin Sebulnia, Ben Corliss, Meghan Bernet, and Tiernan Zizolfo (as Crutchie).

many lines to memorize, plus all the blocking to learn. But, he added, "It's also a lot of fun and I love it, especially because Jack stands out from the other characters and I get to sing so many songs. I'm more of a follower in real life, so it's kind of fun to switch roles."

His favorite number is "I Never Planned on You," which he sings to Katherine. "It's in my range, and it's different from the other songs in the show because they're more staccato, loud and in-your-face," he explained. "But this is a smooth, soft ballad."

As for the audience, Corliss said

people will enjoy the set and "the relationships of the newsies with each other. Pulitzer was a really important guy, and it's inspiring how these teenagers were able to band together to take him down." Scenes take place in locations including the street square, Pulitzer's office and a theater club.

Junior Meghan Bernet portrays Jack's love interest, Katherine Plumber. "She's very interested in equality for women and women's rights," said Bernet. "She's cunning, witty and outgoing – not afraid to speak her mind. She's a newspaper reporter for the Sun

and supports the newsies by writing a story about the strike and what they hope to gain from it."

Enjoying her role, Bernet said, "I like Katherine's comedic aspects, as well as the times when she's serious. I like showing both sides of her. And I get to be in the tap number, 'King of New York,' which is exciting for me because I love dancing and that's my favorite number in the show."

"It's the only big dance number Katherine gets to be in, other than the finale. And I get to interact with all the newsies and the members of the ensemble. It's a

high-energy routine and is a celebration of Katherine's story being on the paper's front page."

Bernet said this production is nostalgic for her because she was in this same show as an eighth-grader at Franklin Middle School. She's also happy to be part of such a welcoming cast and crew at Chantilly. Bernet said audiences will like the musical's "high energy and message of fighting for what you believe in. And I hope it'll leave an impact on everyone to stay resilient and determined."

Playing Davey, a newsie and Jack's righthand man, is junior Griffin Sebulnia. "He organizes the strike and gets the workers to participate," said Sebulnia. "He's not like the other newsies because he and his brother were able to attend school. But now, they're selling papers because their dad got hurt on the job and can't work, so they need the money. Davey's anxious and shy at the start; but along the way, he becomes more courageous and willing to do whatever it takes to help the strike succeed."

Sebulnia portrayed Jack in Franklin's production. "But Davey's personality is the opposite of his, so playing him was a new challenge for me," he said. "But it's fun because Davey's so different. He's positive, uplifting and very smart, so he knows what to do to help the newsies' cause."

Sebulnia especially likes the song, "Seize the Day," which he sings. "It's a big, group number, but I have a significant part in it," he said. "I think it's the most powerful song in the show. It's the culmination of everything the newsies have been leading up to, and this song finally puts the strike into motion."

He said audiences will love the show's catchy songs and every dance number's "fantastic choreography by Jessica Abshire. She's doing a wonderful job of portraying the story in the movements of the dances."

Senior CJ Berejik plays Pulitzer. "He's the one cracking down on the newsies and charging them more money for their papers," said Berejik. "He's a control freak and is worried about the paper losing money. He's used to being in charge – a money-grubbing capitalist counting every dime. He's never lost control of the newsies before, so he's struggling to assert his dominance. He's very serious but can also be a braggart when things are going well for him."

Berejik's "having a blast" portraying Pulitzer because "it's a more serious role for me. He's an

SEE CHANTILLY HIGH, PAGE 15  
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# Step into a Magical World of Spells and Castles

## Westfield High presents Harry Potter spoof, 'Puffs.'

By BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

A fast-paced, comedic romp told from the perspective of the Hufflepuffs – that's Westfield High's upcoming play, "Puffs." It's a spoof of the mega-popular Harry Potter book series, with a story spanning its entire time frame from 1991-98.

It's a fun time at the theater, with a witty show that doesn't take itself seriously. And for copyright reasons, it finds humor in intentionally avoiding the real words, character names and locations associated with Potter and his adventures.

Show times are Thursday-Friday, Oct. 16-17, at 7 p.m.; and Saturday, Oct. 18, at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15, adults, \$10, students, at the door or via [www.westfieldtheatre.com](http://www.westfieldtheatre.com).

The Puffs are the underdogs of the series and aren't seen as brave, smart and cunning as the students in the other houses. But they form close friendships and bonds and create a strong community among themselves. And part of this play's appeal is that it glosses over the major happenings in the series in favor of showcasing the Puffs' own wizardly shenanigans.

Featuring a cast and crew of 54, it's also Westfield's Cappies production. "It's an ensemble play, so everyone has an opportunity to shine and have their moment onstage," said Director Christine Maxted. "We also have actors with strong comedic talents, and this show puts them on display."

"The story is about what it means to belong, and that friendship, loyalty and courage come in many forms," explained Maxted. "And this message resonates deeply in high-school theater – a place where students all bring their unique personalities and talents together."

She said the set will depict different aspects of the magical school that students from all the different houses attend, and most of the scenes will take place inside it. As for the costumes, the Puffs' outfits will look warm and homemade and will be in gold and black, just like Westfield's colors. So, said Maxted, "We're joking that we're



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

From left: Believing she's a Slytherin, Brenna Pond (as Megan) pouts, while Clark Dalton (who also plays a Puff named Ernie) has fun with Morgan Palmer and Mary Campbell during rehearsal.

the Puffs." And indeed, she added, "Our rehearsals have been a whirlwind of creativity and heart."

"The actors have discovered larger-than-life characters, and the tech crew has transformed the stage into a magical world of spells and castles. And our student leaders have been the glue holding the chaos together – proving that school theater is as much about teamwork and trust as it is about lines and cues."

Maxted said this show will make audiences laugh "a lot. And hopefully, they'll walk away reminded that being in third place just means you've found your purpose, your people and your pride."

Senior Morgan Palmer portrays Wayne Hopkins from ages 11-18. "He's a young, dorky boy who loves pop culture and is obsessed with being a wizard but isn't very good at it," said Palmer. "He cares about his friends, is loyal and passionate and has lots of courage and a general, plucky charm that sets him apart from the other Puffs. He wants to be a hero and do something really big with his life, and he idolizes the Puffs 'leader,' Cedric."

Enjoying their role, Palmer said, "I love everything about Wayne; I see a lot of myself in him. And it's fun showing him going through puberty and character changes as the years go on, and how big events change him and his goals as he matures."

"This show has so much charm,



Admiring a plant from their herbology class are (clockwise from bottom) Brenna Pond, Clark Dalton, Mary Campbell and Morgan Palmer.

joy and genuine heart, and audience members will be able to see themselves in the Puffs," said Palmer. "Backstage and onstage, this show radiates community and

friendship. So much work, love and passion have gone into it, and the audience will be able to feel it.

"And that's why this show is so important. It lets people know

that their group who'll ride or die for them are out there waiting to meet them. The Puffs go through hardship and loss, but still come together in the end to pull through and support each other, even when nobody expects anything from them. This play also shows that, at the end of every night, there's always a dawn."

Playing Megan Jones – the female in the trio of Puffs buddies Megan, Oliver and Wayne – is junior Brenna Pond. "Originally, Megan thought she'd be a Slytherin like her mom, so it takes a while for her to accept that she's a Puff. But being friends with Wayne and Oliver helped her realize it and see that she belongs with the Puffs."

"She's super confident, blunt, sharp with her words, protective of her feelings and doesn't let many people in," continued Pond. "But once she accepts that she's a Puff, she's distinctly happier and is loyal to and supportive of them."

Pond said it's probably the most difficult role she's ever played because Megan is so "three dimensional, has a big turning point and has really complex emotions to portray. But it's also my favorite role because it's my first lead, and I love how her behavior switches from the start to the end of the play – and conveying that to the audience."

Besides the show's humor, Pond said people will like that "the whole play is an ode to Harry Potter and has lots of references to the series. They'll also like our two-level set with a revolving bookcase, plus all our props – including an inflatable dragon. And we all made our own wands."

Senior Clark Dalton portrays the villain, Mr. Voldy (a non-subtle nod to Voldemort). "He's immortal, quirky and has a weird walk," said Dalton. "But he's evil to the core. Although he sometimes shows his vulnerable side when he's conversing with his 'death buddies' – his crew of cronies. He wants to kill Harry but, for some reason, a curse doesn't seem to work on him. Despite seven years of murder attempts, Harry's still standing."

Glad to play this part, Dalton plays Voldy with a raspy voice while speaking into a megaphone. "I can own the stage because, as the villain, I have more power and ego than the others. Everyone's scared of me; I make hilarious jokes, but the others are too scared to laugh."

Dalton said audiences will like "the sharp contrasts between the Puffs' unwarranted cheerfulness

SEE WESTFIELD HIGH, PAGE 15



# Danger Lurks: Near Misses On the Roads

FROM PAGE 3

Center, where drivers are reported to “make unsafe or illegal maneuvers from the right turning lanes at red lights.” A resident provided a detailed report, stating that they daily witnessed cars “not stop behind the line and run the light in right-turning lanes from Bluemont and turning into Stratford condo parking.”

Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets reports that “traffic calming measures are recommended in dangerous locations such as Lake Newport Road, which currently sees higher-than-average rates of unsafe driving behaviors.”

The executive summary of the “Fairfax Near Miss Summary Report-Sept 2025” clarifies that although the highest number of reports were in Hunter Mill, Franconia and the Providence Districts, this “doesn’t mean that other jurisdictions like Mason, Mount Vernon or Springfield, etc., don’t have Near Miss incidents occurring on their streets.” Instead, it highlights the need for NoVA FSS to raise awareness of the survey. The organization encourages anyone who has experienced a near miss to “fill out a report to share your experience,” as stated on Novasafestrees.org.

A report, “Deadly Pedestrian Trends Northern Virginia (NOVA) Region & Alexandria, Arlington & Fairfax” from Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets provides the most recent data on record. As of August 2025, Northern Virginia as a whole recorded 10 pedestrian/cyclist fatalities on its roads, with six in Fairfax County.

“Fairfax had the highest number of crashes involving pedestrians or cyclists that resulted in fatalities or serious injuries from Jan 2024 - Apr 2025. Arlington County had no fatalities in this time period,” states the report.

Richmond Highway South corridor had the most pedestrian and cyclist fatalities or serious injuries in the Northern Virginia region.

In a call to action, Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets proposes to “reduce pedestrian-cyclist fatalities by 10 percent in 2026 vs 2025 [and a] 15 percent reduction in serious injuries should also be set as a 2026 goal vs. 2025 result.”

Among other recommendations are to reduce vehicle speed on high crash corridors, such as Richmond Highway; increase driver, pedestrian and cyclist safety campaigns during late summer through the fall and improve traffic enforcement via technology to supplement the police.

The goal of Northern Virginia



SOURCE: ADAMEBBIN.COM

Sen. Adam P. Ebbin (D-39)

Families for Safe Streets is to create streets that are safe for people of all ages, abilities, and modes of travel by sharing impact stories to increase public awareness and understanding. Key to this is to educate people driving, walking and biking on safe behavior, educating public policymakers, and advocating for measures to make streets safer. NoVA FSS has chapters in Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax counties. For further information email: [contact@novafss.org](mailto:contact@novafss.org) or call: 703 946-8401.

## Challenges: No Sidewalks; Poor Visibility

Highlights of near miss hotspots elsewhere in Fairfax point to Dranesville’s Live Oak Drive. “Every report brings up the lack of sidewalks and poor visibility along this stretch. Despite frequent pedestrian and bike use, the road has no infrastructure for them.”

“Adding sidewalks along several high Near Miss reported roads would improve pedestrian safety.”

In Sully, “Near Miss small sample size limits the conclusions that can be drawn regarding patterns in reports, failure to yield, distracted driving, and speeding continue to be reported at higher-than-average rates in Sully when compared to Fairfax overall. 4 of the 5 reports within the analyzed period in Sully reported cyclists as an affected party. Specific conclusions [are] difficult to draw from [the] data pool, but traffic calming measures may see decreases in the high speeding and failure to yield rates.”

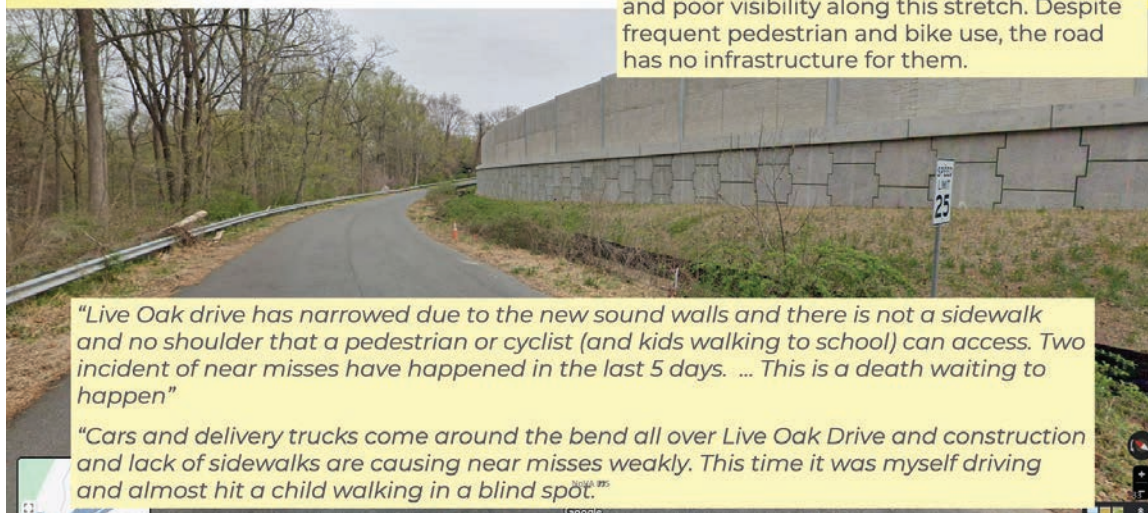
In the Dranesville district, reports bring up the lack of sidewalks and poor visibility along a stretch of Live Oak Drive. Despite frequent pedestrian and bike use, the road lacks infrastructure for these users.

## Failure to Yield; Children at Risk

In the City of Fairfax, key issues

SEE DANGER LURKS, PAGE 13

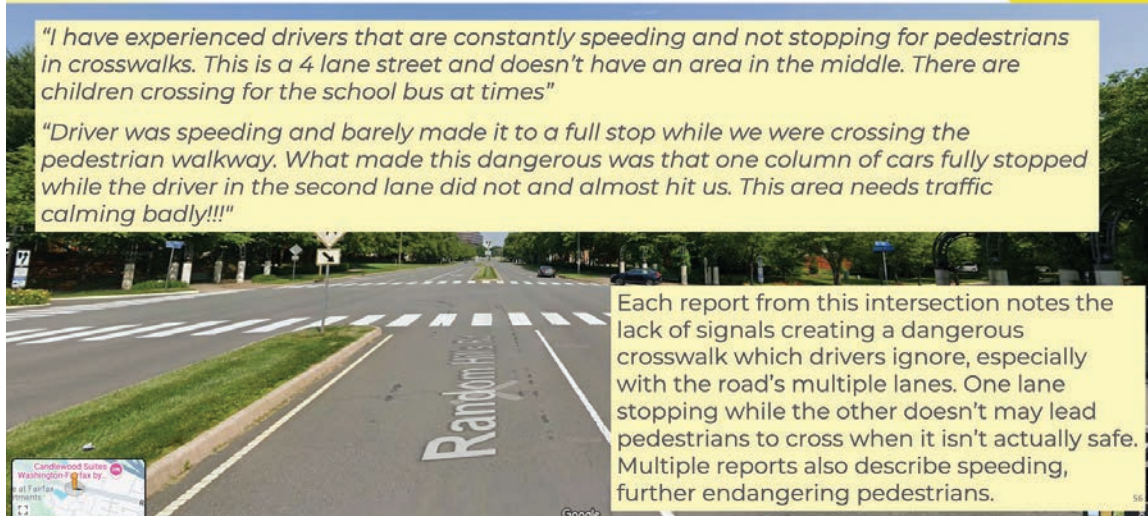
## Case A: Live Oak Drive



GRAPHICS BY FAIRFAX NEAR MISS SUMMARY REPORT-SEPT 2025

Live Oak Drive in McLean, where a lack of sidewalks and poor visibility contribute to near-miss incidents despite frequent pedestrian and bike use.

## Case A: Random Hills Road



A graphic from the report highlights Random Hills Road in Fair Oaks where lack of signals creates a dangerous crosswalk that drivers ignore, especially with the road’s multiple lanes and high speeds.

## Case B: Reston Town Center



A photo from the report details a near miss hotspot at Reston Town Center, where drivers are reported to make unsafe or illegal maneuvers from right turn lanes.



# Danger Lurks: Near Misses On the Roads

FROM PAGE 13

include failure to yield, distracted driving, speeding, the absence of stop signs or signals, and poor visibility. “City of Fairfax has the fewest reports of all districts in this analysis, but of the four reports from January 2024 through July 2025, all were recurring, half involved children, and three reported failure to yield. Interestingly, none of the reports can be grouped, as all four reports were spread out across the city. Specific conclusions [are] difficult to draw from data pool, but traffic calming measures may see decreases in the high speeding and failure to yield rates.”

In the Braddock district, Random Hill Road elicits recurring reports that note, “The lack of signals [creates] a dangerous crosswalk which drivers ignore, especially with the road’s multiple lanes. One lane stopping while the other doesn’t may lead pedestrians to cross when it isn’t actually safe. Multiple reports also describe speeding, further endangering pedestrians.” Examples: “I have experienced drivers that are constantly speeding and not stopping for pedestrians in crosswalks. This is a 4-lane street and doesn’t have an area in the middle. There are children crossing for the school bus at times.”

The Franconia district is reported to have an “unsafe intersection with frequent foot traffic from children going to Hayfield Secondary School,” and several reports bring

up lack of signals leading to driver behaviors of speeding and failure to yield.

“Pedestrians, mostly children, are always in danger when crossing Telegraph Rd to go to and from Hayfield Secondary School. None of the crosswalks in the area has flashing lights to indicate that someone is present. If Alexandria City can do it, so should Fairfax County.”

A case study in the Springfield district is Houndmaster Road, which has experienced recurring incidents of drivers ignoring the stop sign, leading to near misses, including incidents involving children.

In Mount Vernon is the intersection of Sherwood Hall Lane and Midday Lane. “This intersection is unsafe for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. The crosswalk gives pedestrians a false sense of security — vehicles rarely stop to let people cross, and when a car does try to stop for the crosswalk, the cars back up behind and often will swerve around to pass because they assume the vehicle is trying to turn, as a result, speeding right into the crosswalk.”

## Increasing Penalties

A new Virginia law, Senate Bill 1416, went into effect on July 1, 2025, to increase penalties for drivers who injure or kill pedestrians and other vulnerable road users in a crosswalk. Introduced by Sen. Adam P. Ebbin (D-39), the law makes it a Class 1 misdemeanor



SOURCE: FAIRFAX NEAR MISS SUMMARY REPORT-SEPT 2025

A graphic from the “Fairfax Near-Miss Summary Report-Sept 2025” highlights a near miss hotspot on Lake Newport Road in Reston, citing “cars speeding in excess of 50 miles an hour” and a higher-than-average rate of incidents involving children due to a nearby elementary school.

or if a driver’s failure to stop for a pedestrian results in serious bodily injury or death.

This legislation is a significant change from the previous law, which treated such a violation as a minor traffic infraction with a much smaller penalty. The new law aims to make drivers more accountable, act as a stronger deterrent to reckless driving near crosswalks, and make Virginia’s roads safer.

Ebbin, who received the “Bicycling-Friendly Legislator” award for his work on the bill, highlighted the law’s importance during

Bike to Work Day 2025. “A few years ago,” he told the crowd, “we started dealing with distracted driving and to better define that because there’s a penalty but it’s rarely enforced.

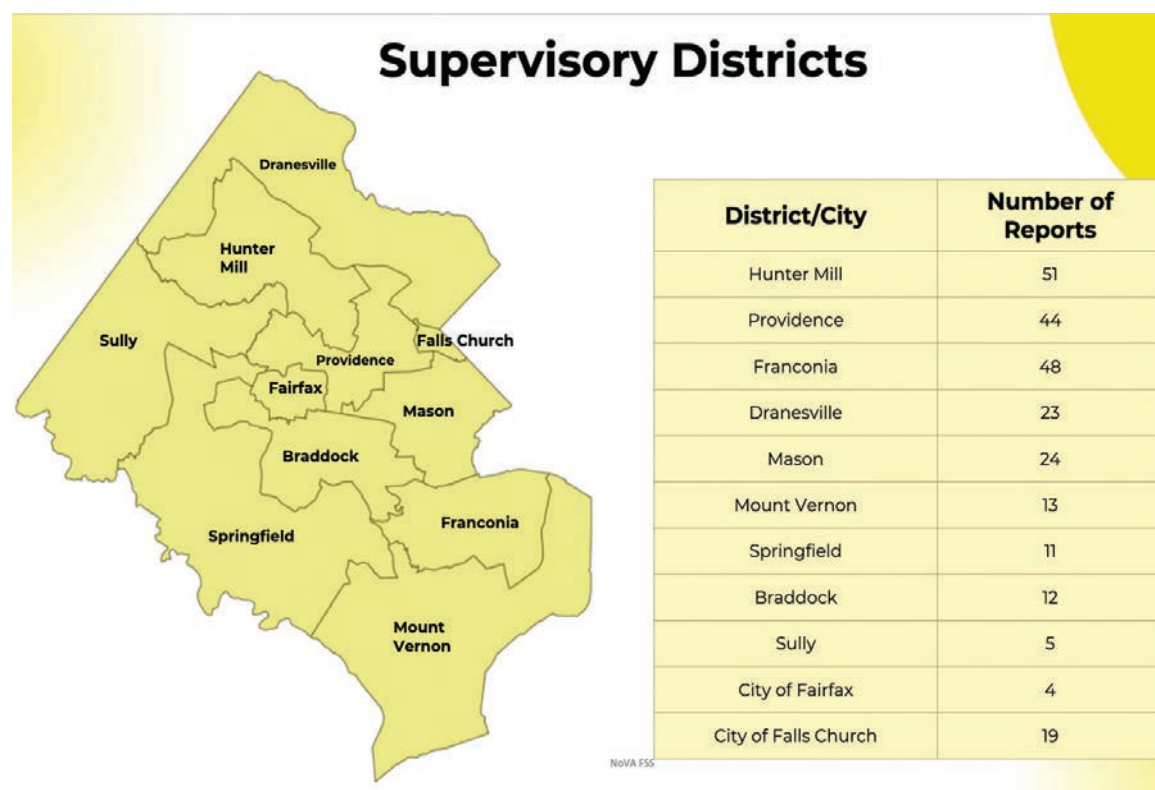
And then this year we came at it from a different approach, alarmed at the people being stricken in crosswalks and the perpetrators receiving just a slap on the wrist for failure to yield.”

## NOW IS THE TIME FOR ACTION

Now is the moment we’ve been waiting for. With new treatments emerging in the fight against Alzheimer’s and all other dementia, now is the time for hope. But not the time to stop.

Help us keep the momentum going in your community at the Alzheimer’s Association Walk to End Alzheimer’s®, the world’s largest fundraiser to fight the disease.

Join us at [alz.org/walk](https://alz.org/walk)



GRAPHICS BY FAIRFAX NEAR MISS SUMMARY REPORT-SEPT 2025

This map and chart spotlight the top three districts for near miss reports: Hunter Mill, Providence, and Franconia.

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# Giving a Voice to Trees

**Dominion continues  
'degrading' W&OD.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

A coalition of local groups including the Sierra Club Great Falls Group, the Washington Area Bicyclist Association, and the Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling (FABB) organized a rally to protest Dominion Energy's aggressive tree cutting along the W&OD Trail. Held on Saturday, Sept. 6 on the Vienna Town Green, the event noted Dominion recently walked away from a 20-year agreement with NOVA Parks and has since cleared at least four miles of trees and vegetation between Vienna and Dunn Loring. The electric utility has announced plans for more cutting along 33 miles of power lines.

According to a recent FABB blog post, trees are still being "unnecessarily" damaged and felled, and Dominion "has yet to commit to a new agreement that would balance utility needs with environmental stewardship."

The Sierra Club is advocating for a return to selective pruning and for the "restoration of native habitat on the areas that have been clear-cut," the organization said online in "Stand Up for the W&OD Trail." Sign a petition to tell Dominion Energy to halt its clear-cutting plans at [https://waba.org/action-page/stop-dominions-degrading-the-wod/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://waba.org/action-page/stop-dominions-degrading-the-wod/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



Protesters hold up banners at the rally.

OFFICE OF SUPERVISOR WALTER ALCORN

## FCPD, Sheriff's Office Achieve Accreditation

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Todd Clingenpeel, program manager for the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission, addressed the high standards of the Fairfax County Police Department and Sheriff's Office at a Board of Supervisors meeting in September. Both agencies received accreditation certificates, with Sheriff Stacey Kincaid and Police Chief Kevin Davis accepting.

"This is a fantastic day for Fairfax County, and what I mean by that is the people that protect you, all the citizens of Fairfax County, this board and every member of the business community, knows that they are performing at the highest level possible," Clingenpeel said.

Mike Cox, one of the 12 commissioners, praised both agencies' commitment to professional standards. "This isn't just a check a box. This isn't just an automatic thing," Cox said. "I will tell you, when those assessors come into an agency, they go through those files with a fine-tooth comb. They're asking questions."

In a second public safety item, the board approved a Memorandum of Understanding with the FBI authorizing the police chief to sign the document. Supervisor Dahlia Palchik (D) noted that Karol Marcela Escalan-



Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid and Police Chief Kevin Davis accept accreditation certificates from the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission.

FAIRFAX COUNTY

te, the Fairfax County Director of Immigrant Community Affairs, was involved in the

MOU and "it is in accord with our Trust Pol-

### BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 4

and third Tuesdays of each month, 10-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. This group is for caregivers of family members with dementia. Meetings are gently facilitated. For more information and to get the Zoom link, contact Jack Tarr at [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net) or 703-821-6838.

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, [www.havenof-nova.org](http://www.havenof-nova.org) or [havenofnova@verizon.net](mailto:havenofnova@verizon.net).

Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group Meets from 1:30-3 p.m. the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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).

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15



# Volunteers Fight Food Insecurity During Hunger Action Month

**T**he spirit of Hunger Action Month, a nationwide effort each September to raise awareness about food insecurity and inspire action, was evident as volunteers and community organizations partnered to relieve hunger in local schools.

Nearly 1,000 Food For Neighbors volunteers supported 54 schools and over 10,000 students in Fairfax, Arlington and Loudoun counties by collecting and sorting more than 28,000 pounds of food for local school children on Sept. 13.

"Because of this community, students are starting the year with one less worry and families know their neighbors truly care," said Karen Joseph, Founder and Executive Director of Food For Neighbors.

At a food sorting event at Herndon Middle School, Joseph accepted a \$20,000 grant from Journey for Good Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charity dedicated to fighting poverty through food, shelter, education, and workforce development and the charitable arm of Avolta in North America.

Food For Neighbors, now in its ninth year, helps schools establish in-house food pantries and mobilizes local communities to fill them with food and toiletries donated through the non-profit's Red Bag Program.

Despite Northern Virginia being among the most affluent areas in the state, over 1 in 3 students in Fairfax County and more than 1 in 4 students in Arlington and Loudoun counties qualified for free or reduced-price school meals during the last school year. Food For Neighbors works to ensure that food is readily accessible to students during the school day and to take home over weekends and holidays.

Food For Neighbors invites you to help end teen food insecurity by registering as a Red Bag donor. The group will leave a "Red Bag" with the grocery list and collection dates on your doorstep, send a reminder when it's time to shop, and pick up the donations from your home. It's that easy! To learn more visit <https://www.foodforneighbors.org/get-involved/>.



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## Westfield High Presents Harry Potter Spoof, 'Puffs.'

FROM PAGE 11

and their childlike petrification at the morbid events happening in the world around them."

Playing Harry is senior Mary Campbell.

"He's an iconic and heroic character," she said. "But in this show, he's portrayed as the annoying protagonist who thinks everything's all about him. He's loud and egotistical and likes to make big pronouncements and be in the center of the spotlight. He's really

quite one dimensional. The Puffs hate him and are upset that everything interesting happening at school happens to him."

Campbell said it's fun to play someone who's "self-absorbed and feels like he's the main character, even though he's not. And I like it because it's different from the roles I typically play."

She said audiences will especially enjoy the show's physical comedy, which is a big part of the action. "There are fights and stage

combat, and everything is over the top," said Campbell. "So it's campy, and even mundane movements are enhanced. People will also like the Puffs' group dynamic as a found family, and it will really resonate with them."

## Chantilly High Presents 'Newsies, The Musical.'

FROM PAGE 10

unflinchingly cruel guy who commands respect in every situation he's in. And it's cool to play someone mean just for the sake of being mean. It lets you tap into the more primal parts of yourself that you don't get to show in your everyday life."

His favorite song is "Bottom Line," which he sings. "Pulitzer's

saying, 'I have everything, and you have nothing,'" said Berejik. "I've always been a sucker for villain songs and the villain's charisma in them. This song starts subdued and then builds to a crescendo, much like Pulitzer does in this show."

"All the music in 'Newsies' is really good, as is the chemistry among the cast members," continued Berejik. "We have a lot of strong voices and skilled dancers that really work together to drive the show forward."

Regarding those dances, Abshire choreographed all five of them and said it took about a week to do each one. A junior, she's been dancing for five years and hopes to have a future career in both dance

and theater. And like Bernet, she particularly loves the song, "King of New York."

"It was especially challenging because it has lots of intricate moves and many of the students hadn't done tap before," said Abshire. "But it was so much fun because they were all really hardworking. I also liked choreographing that

number the best because tap's my favorite style of dancing. And because the students were so eager to learn the moves, it made it even more fun to teach them. When all the steps finally click in their heads, you can see it by their smiles and in the way their faces just light up. I like teaching them that love of dance and of moving their bodies."

### BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 14

**Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed.** Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and

neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil at Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-4547. Operation Paws for Homes, a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See [www.ophrescue.org](http://www.ophrescue.org) for information and all volunteer opportunities.

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. 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).



## HALLOWEENKEND THRILLS

### AWAIT IN FAIRFAX PARKS!

**Step into a Halloween season** packed with thrills, treats and traditions across Fairfax County parks. Ghostly golf, costumed parades, harvest festivals and family-friendly haunts fill the calendar with festive fun. Create memories with loved ones, explore new adventures and celebrate the magic of fall at Fairfax County Park Authority events designed for every ghost, ghou and goblin.

**Goblin Golf**

Burke Lake Park, Oct. 4-5, 11-12, 18-19, Choose times between 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Grab your Halloween costume (not required) and join us at Burke Lake Park for Halloween-themed mini golf, treats and family fun! Cost is \$10 per person.

**Farm Harvest Festival – Big Trucks, Carnival Rides and Fall Fun!**

Frying Pan Farm Park, Oct. 17-19

Join us at Frying Pan Farm Park for the Farm Harvest Festival, featuring Big Truck Night, carnival rides, games and tasty fair food. Enjoy unlimited ride specials on Friday night or Sunday for \$25, or grab individual tickets on Saturday for even more fall fun. Parking is just \$10 per day, so bring the family and celebrate the season with us. Learn more.

**Sensory-Friendly Family Trick-or-Treat**  
Clemjyjontri Park, Oct. 19, 1-6 p.m.

Celebrate Halloween in a calm, inclusive, sensory-friendly way at Clemjyjontri Park. Enjoy a variety of fun and accessible activities, including the carousel, train, arts and crafts, sensory tent and themed treat stations throughout the playground, all with reduced noise and sensory support. Costumes are welcome but not required. Tickets cost \$20 per person. Secure your ticket to the all-inclusive fun.

**Halloween on the Farm**

Frying Pan Farm Park, Oct. 25, 5-7 p.m. or Oct. 26, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Trick-or-treat at Halloween on the Farm. Enjoy trick-or-treating on the farm, visit with farm animals, make spooky crafts, play Halloween games and take a tour of the decorated farmhouse. Cost is \$12 per person. Register today.

**Haunted Mini Golf**

Oakmont Rec Center, Oct. 24-25, 4-9 p.m.

All werewolves, vampires and goblins (and their families) are invited for a fun night of mini golf. Trick-or-treat and win various goodies at Oakmont Mini Golf. Enjoy food trucks, face painting, popcorn and games. Come dressed in your best costume! Cost is \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door. Register today.

**Ghost Town**

Burke Lake Park; Oct. 25-26, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Get ready for a full day of fun at Burke Lake Park's Ghost Town. Enjoy themed activities, a train ride, carousel, crafts, mini golf and tons of treats — no scares, just treats. Join the fun and make it a Halloween to remember. Cost is \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. Ticket pickup for registrants, 3 p.m. Register today.

**Halloween Bash**

South Run Rec Center, Oct. 25, beginning at 3:30 p.m.

Hustle down to the South Run Rec Center to join in some Halloween fitness fun featuring the Monster Mash 5K Dash, Halloween Fun Run 1-Mile and Spooktacular Tiny Tot Trot. Come in your best costume to enjoy the spooktacular atmosphere with your community. Cost is \$25 for the 5K and \$15 for other runs. Register today.

**Family Skate Night - Halloween Costume Skate and Dance Night**

Franconia Rec Center, Oct. 25, 5-10 p.m.

Ghouls and goblins beware — Halloween Family Skate and Dance Night is coming to Franconia Rec Center. Gather your favorite spooky crew and head out for this thrilling family-friendly event with tunes sure to bring you back from the dead. Cost is \$10 per person. Register today.

## FILL THE BINS

**To help Virginians protect their personal information and support neighbors in need,** AARP Virginia hosts Fill the Bins — free paper shred and pantry events in October. Four collection locations — Woodbridge, Lorton, Dulles, and Manassas — make the secure



**What's Calling You Now? Three Steps to Discover What Lights You Up will be presented on Saturday, Oct. 11, 2025 at Reston Library.**



**The Workhouse Haunt Returns Oct. 10 thru Nov. 1, 2025 at Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton.**

disposal of personal documents available to more people. Examples of documents for shredding might include bank statements, cancelled checks, credit card junk mail and receipts with identifying information. Each vehicle is limited to no more than three bags or boxes of documents; registration for this free event is required.

Fill the Bins event dates, times and locations are as follows:

Saturday, October 4, 2025, between 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Parkway Church, 3713 Pennington Lane, Woodbridge

Sunday, October 5, 2025, between 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Lorton Community Action Center, 9520 Richmond Hwy, Lorton

Saturday, October 11, 2025, between 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Dulles South Food Pantry, 24757 Arcola Mills Drive, Dulles

Saturday, October 25, 2025, between 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church, 9325 West Street, Manassas

## NATURE HIKE WITH A RANGER

**Along the George Washington Memorial Parkway.** Join a ranger on nature hikes:

Oct. 6 at 9 a.m. at Great Falls Visitor Center Courtyard

Oct. 21 at 9 a.m. at Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve All hikes will be 1.2 to 2 hours of slow, moderate hiking. Turkey Run hike will have steep stairs both ways. Join NPS Natural Resources Program Manager Brent Steury for a hike. Brent has worked as a scientist in this area for over 20 years.

## OCT. 1 AND 2

**Dassara Hindu Festival.** All Day, and Thursday 4-6 p.m. At 2030 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna (private house). Families create “Golu,” beautiful stepped displays of dolls and figurines that show gods, goddesses, everyday life, and mythological stories. Friends and neighbors visit each other's homes to see the Golu, exchange sweets, and share songs or prayers. You can think of Dassara as a mix of the fireworks of the Fourth of July, the family togetherness of Thanksgiving, and the storytelling and decoration traditions of Christmas — colorful, loud in some regions, creative and community-focused in others, but always centered on celebrating the triumph of goodness and light. As it is a residence, and due to limited parking please RSVP - 703.826.1521 (text message).

## FRIDAY/OCT. 3

**Academy of St Martin in the Fields Chamber Ensemble. 8 p.m.** At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Join London's Academy of St Martin in the Fields Chamber Ensemble for a riveting program featuring Schubert's Octet in F major, D. 803, considered one of the greatest chamber works of all time; Françaix's witty Octet, commissioned as a companion piece to Schubert's Octet; and a special work commissioned by the Academy.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 4

**Walk to Stop Suicide. 12:30 p.m.** At Mosaic District, Fairfax. Join the American Foundation

for Suicide Prevention's Fairfax Out of the Darkness Community Walk. Check-in & Pre-Walk Activities Begin: 11:00 a.m. Program Begins: 12:30 p.m. Event Ends: 2:00 p.m. The Fairfax Out of the Darkness Community Walk Support for mental health and suicide prevention is needed more now than ever before, and proceeds raised through AFSP's Out of the Darkness Walks fund lifesaving research, education, advocacy, and survivor support programming.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 4

**Parktoberfest. 12 to 5 p.m.** At E.C. Lawrence Park, 5235 Walney Road, Centreville. The celebration will be filled with live music, local food and drink, artisan vendors, and activities for all ages.

Highlights include:

Live performances by The Walkaways, Lucas Mason and Georgia Rae Braun

Craft beer from Ono Brewery and food trucks Burgorilla & TacoOne

Artisan and maker marketplace with local vendors

Tours of the brand-new Woodlands Stewardship Education Center

STREAM Loop adventures for kids and families.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 4

**Oktoberfest. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.** At Historic Church Street, downtown Vienna. Oktoberfest celebrates its 16th anniversary this year with its biggest festival yet! More vendors, more food, great music & entertainment, plenty of free kids' activities and, of course, locally sourced beer and wine selections! Vienna's 2025 Oktoberfest will feature:

- ❖ Live entertainment on three stages: Beer Garden, Town Green, Mill Street
- ❖ Large Beer/Wine Garden featuring: Caboose Brewing Company, Norm's Beer and Wine, Settle Down Easy Brewing and Vienna Vintner
- ❖ Large selection of multinational food
- Free kids' activities, inflatables, games and entertainment on the Town Green
- ❖ Business Expo Showcase
- ❖ Large Vendor Market
- ❖ Artisan Market
- ❖ Wellness Expo
- ❖ Free shuttle from Vienna Metro North and James Madison High School
- ❖ Bike Park right off the W&O trail: ride your bike, park and fest!
- ❖ Loads and Loads of Fun! Visit [www.viennaoktoberfest.org](http://www.viennaoktoberfest.org).

## SATURDAY/OCT. 4

**Papermoon Puppet Theatre: Puno, Sewing Memories. 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.** At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Indonesia's innovative Papermoon Puppet Theatre presents a spellbinding, non-verbal puppetry work. A bittersweet and hopeful piece, Puno tells the story of Tala, a young girl who is coping with her father's passing, exploring how we can hold and appreciate what has been left to us.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 4

**D.C.-Metro Modern Home Tour. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** At six homes located in: Washington DC, Arlington VA, Vienna VA, Fairfax Station VA, and Rockville MD. Local architects, builders, designers, and homeowners will be showing off their work/homes for just one day (Saturday) for 6 hours. Attendees have the opportunity to meet the architects, designers, builders, and owners of these residences, engage in discussion, and -hopefully- find some inspiration or a partner for their own project. Website: <https://mads.media/2025-dc-metro-modern-home-tour>

## SATURDAY/OCT. 4

**Open House.** At Historic Sydenstricker Schoolhouse, 8511 Hooes Road, Springfield. The Sydenstricker Schoolhouse has arranged for the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation to come to the Schoolhouse on October 4, 2025. During this Open House, facilitators from the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation will be utilizing science skills to help families better connect and understand the history of



# ENTERTAINMENT

Jamestown. The facilitators will present two educational hands-on programs: Archaeology Discovery and Science on The James. These programs will be presented from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm and are open to the public free of charge. At the "Archaeology Discovery" station, the Foundation will host a simulated archeological dig. But no dirt is involved at this dig site! Families will analyze artifacts laid on a simulated archaeological dig to participate in a hands-on activity, interpret those artifacts, and share their findings while learning all about the Powhatan people. The analysis of each square will help piece together what happened in the historic Jamestown-Yorktown-Williamsburg tide water triangle.

## OCT. 4-5

**Celebration of the Arts. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.** At 1803 Capital One Dr, Tysons. Designed for all ages, this immersive two-day outdoor festival will transform the streets of Capital One Center into a multi-block celebration of the arts—featuring interactive installations, hands-on workshops, live music, and culinary experiences for every generation. Guests can engage in participatory artmaking with regional artists and arts organizations, take part in workshops designed for all ages and skill levels, and discover unexpected moments of creativity throughout the campus. The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts' traveling Artmobile will showcase Love, Laughter, Tears: An Artist's Guide to Emotions—a curated art exhibition featuring works from VMFA's renowned collection spanning over 6,000 years of global history, exploring how artists across cultures and time have expressed universal human emotions through their work. The festival features a full schedule of live music performances, a curated selection of food and dessert vendors, and dedicated beer and wine tasting experiences. The food and beverage district will also host culinary workshops and highlight the vibrant restaurant offerings within Capital One Center, including Sisters Thai, Ometeo, Star Hill Brewpub, Stellina Pizzeria, and others.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 5

**Vienna CROP Walk.** The Walk begins at Emmaus United Church of Christ, 900 Maple Avenue, Vienna, at 12:45 p.m., with onsite registration starting at 12:30 p.m. The Walk supports local and international hunger relief efforts. It is approximately 2 ¾ miles and takes about an hour. A shorter walk is also available. You can register at the walk or online. To volunteer to help, register, donate, or for more information, go to <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/crophungerwalks/event/viennava> or contact Lisa Hechtman at [lhechtman@gmail.com](mailto:lhechtman@gmail.com). There is no fee to walk, but walkers are encouraged to donate or to find sponsors who will support their efforts. You can even form your own team. Three-quarters of the funds raised go to Church World Service (a hunger relief nonprofit), and for the Vienna walk, one-fourth will go to the Committee for Helping Others (CHO), which provides a food pantry and clothes closet in Vienna and Oakton, as well as other emergency assistance to local residents.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 5

**Friends of Reston 5K.** Join the Friends of Reston for their 5th Annual Friends of Reston Fall 5K, to help raise funds for their scholarship and enrichment programs. All proceeds for this event support the Friends of Reston, a 501(c)(3) supporting organization of Reston Association.

The race will start and finish at Browns Chapel Park, 1575 Brown's Chapel Road, Reston. Race will start at 8:00 am. Runners will run along the Reston paved trails.

### Registration Fees:

5K - \$40 through August 31  
\$45 September 1 through September 30  
\$50 October 1 through Race Day.  
5K (14 & Under) - \$25 through August 31  
\$30 September 1 through September 30  
[www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



The Town of Vienna celebrates Oktoberfest on Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025.



The Capital Art & Craft Festival takes place Oct. 10-12, 2025 at the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly.

\$35 October 1 through Race Day.

On-Line registration will remain open through Race Morning. All registrations must be completed on-line. Packet pick up will be at the Browns Chapel on Saturday, October 4 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 5

**Servire Chorus Concert. 4 p.m.** At St. Andrew the Apostle, 6720 Union Mill Road in Clifton. Servire is known for its "Sing and Serve Mission"—combining musical excellence with community service. In addition to presenting a program of a cappella works from the Renaissance to today, the ensemble will conduct outreach with local school choirs and collaborate on a service project supporting Marian Homes, Inc., a nonprofit that provides housing and care for adults with intellectual

disabilities. Visit [www.st-andrew.org/concerts](http://www.st-andrew.org/concerts).

## SUNDAY/OCT. 5

**Venture into Volunteering. 12-4 p.m.** At Springfield Town Center, Upper Level, Springfield. Have you been thinking about volunteering? Looking to add new and enriching activities to your life? Want to create new connections? Volunteer Solutions, in the Fairfax County Department of Family Services, is coordinating the annual Venture into Volunteering fair, with the support of Fairfax County's Park Authority and Neighborhood and Community Services. Meet representatives from nonprofit organizations and local government agencies who will tell you about ways to volunteer in the community and answer your questions. If you have questions, please email [VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov](mailto:VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov) or call 703-324-5406.



The 22nd annual Great Falls Studios Art Tour runs Oct. 18-19, 2025 in Great Falls.

## OCT. 9-13

**Washington West Film Festival.** At LOOK Dine-In Cinemas, Reston Town Center, Reston. Headliners include two-time Olympic gold medalist Edwin Moses, who will attend to present his film *Moses 13 - Steps*; the documentary *In Waves and War*, which explores how psychedelics may help veterans confront invisible wounds of war; and a 30th-anniversary celebration of *Apollo 13* featuring special guest Sen. Bill Nelson, a former NASA administrator. To view a full schedule, visit: <https://www.filmfest.com/schedule-tickets/>

## OCT. 10-12

**Capital Art & Craft Festival.** At Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly. The Capital Art & Craft

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 19



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# ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 17

Festival will feature 225 artists from throughout the country with art in more than a dozen mediums including glass, jewelry, leather, paintings, prints, photography, pottery, wearable art and wood. Attendees may buy directly from the artisans who create the work, all of which is crafted by hand. Hours: Friday, Oct 10 and Saturday Oct 11: 10 am – 5 pm; Sunday Oct 12: 10 am -4 pm. Tickets: \$11 in advance; \$12 at the door; Senior & Military discounts available; children under 12 free. Ticket information: [www.CACFart](http://www.CACFart)

## OCT. 10 – NOV. 1, 2025

**Workhouse Haunt Returns.** At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. Haunt Nights: Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. This year's event, Apocalypse: Kingdom of Shadows, promises even darker thrills, more immersive storylines, and terrifyingly interactive experiences designed to challenge even the bravest thrill seekers. Guests travel in small groups for frightening experiences that bring them through the abandoned, historic buildings and into the dark woods where they will encounter terrifying characters and sights unfit for the faint of heart. Visit [www.workhousearts.org](http://www.workhousearts.org).

## SATURDAY/OCT. 11

**What's Calling You Now? Three Steps to Discover What Lights You Up. 2-3 p.m.** At Reston Regional Library, Reston. Join in this session where together we will learn:

How to listen for what's calling you now

How to uncover what truly excites you today—not just what used to

How to take small, inspired steps toward a future that feels aligned

Led by Patty Hagan, CEO of Lighthouse Coaching. Website: What's Calling You Now? Three Steps to Discover What Lights You Up - Fairfax Library Calendar - Library Home

## SATURDAY/OCT. 11

**Repair Cafe Event. 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** At Thomas Jefferson Library. They are a group of volunteer repair experts with a focus on community. Once a month, they bring tools and knowledge to a library in Fairfax County to provide repairs and advice for a variety of things. Volunteer link: [https://volunteernow.volunteerfairfax.org/custom/1427/opp\\_details/190807](https://volunteernow.volunteerfairfax.org/custom/1427/opp_details/190807)

## OCT. 11-12

**Taste of NoVa.** Produced by Northern Virginia Magazine, Taste of NoVA will be held October 11–12 at the National Museum of the U.S. Army in Fort Belvoir, in partnership with Northern Virginia Food Rescue, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit fighting food insecurity and waste. Guests can enjoy unlimited tastings and sips from 120+ of the region's most acclaimed restaurants and award-winning Virginia wineries, breweries, distilleries, and mixologists. This year's festival puts the spotlight on the culinary talent behind the region's most beloved dining destinations, featuring live cooking demos, beverage pairing sessions, and a dynamic speaker series with beverage experts and social media tastemakers. Visit [TasteOfNoVA.com](http://TasteOfNoVA.com).

## OCT. 11-12

**Cranford United Methodist Church 125th Anniversary.** At 9912 Old Colchester Road, Lorton.

Saturday, October 11 | 12:00–5:00 PM

Community Farmer's Market-style event with historical talks, family activities, vendors, and displays & talks from our recent Ground Penetrating Radar survey. Special remarks are planned for 3:00 PM

Sunday, October 12 | 10:30 AM–1:00 PM

Opening of our Year 2000 time capsule, followed by a special worship service and potluck luncheon.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 12

**Keyboard Conversations with Jeffrey Siegel:** Chopin — The Romantic. 7 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Experience some of the most stirringly melodious music ever

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composed in this Keyboard Conversations® with Jeffrey Siegel. The program Chopin—The Romantic features exhilarating polonaises, dreamy nocturnes, charming waltzes, poignant mazurkas, and the narrative Ballade in A-flat major.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 12

**Table Top (T-TRAK) N Gauge Model Trains. 1-4 p.m.** At the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Join them for a Table Top show of running N Gauge Model Trains. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5, \$6 for special events. Seniors, \$4; Military, active and retired, \$4. <http://www.fairfax-station-railroad-museum.org>, <http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR>, 703-425-9225.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 12

**Pet Expo. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.** At McLean Central Park, McLean. Leash up your furry friends and join us! Enjoy great DJ music, Fido's Bone Bar, the Bark-a-Lounge Beer and Wine Garden complete with a miniature pony to deliver goodies to your table. Take a picture with your pet at the professional photo booth—free! Meet the best in the business of pet-related exhibitors and find resources including pet rescue, adoption, pet sitters, groomers, trainers and more. Great giveaways! Stay for lunch and enjoy the gourmet food trucks. Join the fun for the Pet Parade at 3 p.m.—costumes are encouraged!

## SUNDAY/OCT. 12

**Documentary Screening: Homelessness in America. 3 to 6 p.m.** At Cinema Arts Theaters, 9650 Main Street, Fairfax. The film explores the human stories behind homelessness and the urgent need for community-driven solutions. Following the screening, there will be a Q&A session with Director and Producer Asad Sheikh, alongside community leaders, offering insights into challenges and initiatives addressing homelessness in the country.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 12

**Fashion for Love, Care, and Hope Charity Gala. 3 p.m.** At Hyatt Regency, Reston. Sponsored by Filipino American Cancer Care (F.A.C.C.) The F.A.C.C. Fashion for Love, Care and Hope Charity Gala and 5th anniversary are not just an event; it is a celebration of hope, resilience, courage, and community. During the gala, they will be presenting financial assistance of \$1,000 each to 15-25 cancer patient beneficiaries in the Philippines, United States, and other countries. Visit the website: <https://www.filamcancercare.org/>

## WEDNESDAY/OCT. 15

**Journey Within: Self-Discovery Book Club (Virtual). 6:00pm-7:30pm.** At Reston Regional Library, Reston. A literary discussion that focuses on a character's personal growth and how it relates to our own. Led by life coach Shabnam Curtis.

At September's meeting we will discuss the novel Gilead by Marilynne Robinson.

Website: Journey Within: Self-Discovery Book Club - Fairfax Library Calendar - Library Home

## OCT. 16-19

**Chantilly High School Presents “Disney's Newsies.”** Set in turn-of-the-century New York City, Newsies tells the story of Jack Kelly, a charismatic newsboy who dreams of a better life beyond the streets. When powerful publishing giants raise distribution prices at the expense of the young newsies, Jack and his friends band together to fight back. With grit, determination, and the power of community, they take on the big guys to demand fairness and justice. Performance Dates: October 16, 17, and 18 at 7:00 p.m. October 19 at 2:00 p.m.

Tickets are available online at [chantillydrama.org](http://chantillydrama.org).

## FRIDAY/OCT. 17

**The MCC Wayback Machine. 7 p.m.** At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. McLean historian and former MCC Board member Carole Herrick will present

a history talk highlighting the community efforts that brought about the creation of the center and its early history.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 18

**Community 50th Anniversary Celebration.**

**5-10 p.m.** At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Music through the decades, delicious food, a signature drink and many interactive attractions are on the menu at this community celebration that offers something for everybody.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 18

**Laurie Berkner Band. 11 a.m.** At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Back by popular demand, Laurie Berkner and her band perform a concert event for the whole family. Trick or treat yourself by wearing your costume for this performance of some Halloween songs as well as classics from the Laurie Berkner Greatest Hits album.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 18

**Health Fair. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** At Carlin Springs Elementary School, 5995 5th Rd. S, Arlington. Sponsored by The Virginia Hospital Center and the Kiwanis Club. Contact [bbertram@vhchealth.org](mailto:bbertram@vhchealth.org).

## OCT. 18-19

**Celebrate Creativity.** Join in the 22nd annual Great Falls Studios Art Tour, which takes place over two days - October 18th and 19th from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free, fun & family friendly! The Tour map <https://www.greatfallsstudios.com/home-2025-studio-tour> will lead you to private studios down the back roads and main roads of scenic Great Falls. Visit artists working and displaying in a variety of locations: remodeled barns, historic farms, converted garages, contemporary and traditional homes, group studios, a church, and other unusual places. Along the way you will explore our beautiful community and meet a unique and diverse group of artists who are excited to share their vision and engage you in the creative process. ABSORB the full spectrum of styles and mediums - the variety will amaze you! Questions? Email the social media director and Board Secretary, Elizabeth at [elizabethbertholonart@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethbertholonart@gmail.com).

## OCT. 23-26

**Annandale Book Sale. 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.**

At George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Browse a wide variety of high-quality used books, CDs, DVDs, and more at George Mason Friends Fall Book Sale. Preview sale on Wednesday, 5-8 p.m. Entry fee \$20 per adult. General sale, Thursday-Sunday, 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Free. Website: [georgemasonfriends.blogspot.com](http://georgemasonfriends.blogspot.com).

## SATURDAY/OCT. 25

**Open House. 12-4 p.m.** At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Whether you're a seasoned collector or just starting your journey into the fascinating world of model trains, this is an event you won't want to miss! There will be much to choose from as many of the Train Group Volunteers part with some of their collection. Model Trains are like Potato Chips, you can't just have one. Start your collection or build on to an existing one, knowing that your purchase has been expertly cared for maintained.

**A Wide Variety of Model Trains:** From classic steam locomotives to modern electric trains, discover an extensive collection of scales, brands, and types.

**Track Sets & Accessories:** Enhance your layout with extensive track pieces, switches, scenery sets, and more.

**Electronics & Power Supplies:** Browse through transformers, controllers, and other vital equipment to get your models running smoothly.

**Collectibles & Memorabilia:** Explore rare and collectible items, including vintage model train magazines, books, and themed artwork.

**Great Deals:** Enjoy unbeatable prices! Items will be priced to sell, with many bargains and surprises waiting for you.

## Practically Pavlovian



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I first heard/read about Ivan Pavlov in the fall of 1972. How can I be so specific? Because that's when I matriculated to the University of Maryland. And Ivan Pavlov was a topic of my Psychology 100 class. A class so large, over 600 hundred, that - at least where I sat near the back, could barely see him - or his canine companion (I don't remember the dog ever barking, by the way). The professor spoke into a microphone attached to a cord which he wore around his neck. He was going through various slides illuminated on the canvas behind him and commenting on them. There was never any stoppage to ask any questions or to clarify anything he had just said. We were meant to listen, not interrupt and relearn (learn the first time) all the information he was teaching by studying our textbook. This process was foreign to me. I never was taught in the fashion that I was now being subjected (yes subjected) and expected to grasp the lessons. Neither could/would I thrive by taking multiple choice exams, being graded on a bell curve (results of which were posted out the lecture hall), and never interacting with the professor. I got my first and only “D” in this class and I was probably lucky not to fail. I remember these feelings all too well, but I remember very little else except - wait for it: Ivan Pavlov.

Likewise, I can't remember if the class was held Mon./Wed./Fri at 8:00 am for 50 minutes or Tues./Thurs. from 8:00 am for 75 minutes. Neither can I remember the professor's name, nor the breed or name of his dog. I do remember he always dressed in black leather pants and a dark shirt and certainly never a sport coat. As for his many teachings and references to the textbook that we all bought at The Maryland Book Exchange, I remember very little except Pavlov's dog experiments. Pavlov discovered an animal behavior/human interaction that us pet owners (certainly dog owners) have come to rely on when training our puppies: “Classical Conditioning.” Something to do with a “learned response” resulting from a “neutral stimulus.” Moreover, he discovered dogs “could be trained to salivate at the sound of a bell after it was paired with the presentation of food.” (I get that way myself.) A more literal description: your dog comes/obeys you when there's a reward (food) for doing so.

Well, it's been over 130 years since Pavlov's experiments/research (they occurred the 1890s) and the worm, as is often colloquialized, has, at least in my house, finally turned. No more is the human (yours truly) the one doing the prompting. It is now the dog who prompts the human. (Moreover, in a parallel universe, the cat is also prompting/conditioning the human, but that's another paragraph.) As for my three-year-old male golden retriever Burton, he manifests a simple but recurring behavior when he wants/needs to go out: He gets up from wherever he is and walks throughout the house until he finds me, always me (we've bonded) and stands steady on all fours and stares at me. He will remain in that position until I acquiesce and say something like “OKAY Burton, I know you want to go out. Let's go.” Then he turns tail, literally, and trots into the kitchen where he waits to be “leashed” up by yours truly before he gets to go “out.” We don't have a fenced-in yard, so Burton has to be walked. After he goes outside first thing in the morning with Dina, the rest of the time (day and night) I am responsible for his comings and goings. This standing and staring behavior is repeated by Burton four to five times throughout the day. He comes into any room where I am, stands and stares at me until I get up, then he gets to go out. Very simple. He has me “conditioned.”

It's the same story with Andrew, our cancer-surviving cat; when he walks into the kitchen, I know he's hungry. That's when I give him food. Other times, I'll put the food on the floor: nothing. However, when we meet in the kitchen, he'll sit by his bowl, look up at me and I know he wants me to get him some food. His terms. Not mine.

These kinds of behaviors are all too familiar to dog and cat owners. It's the cost of doing business, so to speak. You have to give up control and in so doing, acknowledge that you are at the animal's mercy. It's akin to the inmates running the asylum except in this context, it's not the inmates who are crazy.

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





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