

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

OCTOBER 2, 2025

## Gala-goers Celebrate Gardening, Art and Conservation



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH/THE GAZETTE

The early 20th century house at River Farm houses AHS's offices.

### American Horticultural Society's gala at River Farm.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
THE GAZETTE

**N**asturtiums brightened the dinner plates, parsley greened up the centerpieces and strawberries and rhubarb starred in the dessert. Plants were inside, outside and all around.

On a balmy Sept. 20 evening, 300 gardening enthusiasts gathered under a big white tent to celebrate gardening and to honor two champions at the American Horticultural Society's (AHS) gala at River Farm in the Mount Vernon area.

Welcoming guests, AHS President and Chief Executive Officer Suzanne LaPorte said, "Horticulture is essential to life. Plants and gardens feed us, cool our cities, purify our air and bring beauty into our lives."

SEE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL, PAGE 12



**Skipp Calvert, long-time Alexandria resident, local champion of River Farm, and former AHS Board member, and Scott C. Plein, AHS Board Chair. At the AHS 2025 Gala, Skipp Calvert received the AHS Meritorious Service Award**



PHOTOS BY MICHEL ANDRÉ GAUTHIER PHOTOGRAPHER, ATELIER IMAGES, LLC  
**Skipp Calvert, long-time Alexandria resident, local champion of River Farm, and former AHS Board member, at the AHS 2025 Gala.**



**Suzanne Laporte, AHS President and CEO, Skipp Calvert, long-time Alexandria resident, local champion of River Farm, and former AHS Board member, and Scott C. Plein, AHS Board Chair.**



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH/THE GAZETTE

Guests enjoyed a three-course meal.



**Brian Kemble, winner of AHS' prestigious 2025 Liberty Hyde Bailey Award, and Suzanne Laporte, AHS President and CEO.**

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**1103 Prince Street**

\$1,675,000 | 3-bed, 2.5-bath home with original floors, exposed brick walls, 2 staircases, 2 fireplaces, and an open chef's kitchen. Vaulted ceilings and spa-like bath in primary suite. Private patio.

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**Old Town**  
**520 S Pitt Street**

\$1,200,000 | Beautifully updated 3-bed, 1.5-bath home with wood floors, bright kitchen, renovated baths, and a lush deep garden with vibrant landscaping and parking for 2 cars.

**Lauren Bishop** : 202.361.5079  
LaurenBishopHomes.com



**Porto Vecchio**  
**1250 S Washington Street #816**

\$825,000 | Beautifully maintained 2-bed, 2-bath penthouse has views of Belle Haven, Hunting Creek, and city night lights, a fireplace, and enclosed solarium. 2 garage parking spaces.

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**Old Town**  
**909 Pendleton St**

\$800,000 | Beautifully updated 2-bed, 1.5-bath house with hardwood floors, stylish kitchen, screened porches, fenced yard, finished garage, and wood barrel sauna.

**Sandy McMaster** : 571.259.2673  
SandyMcMaster.realestate



**Taylor Run**  
**131 & 133 E Taylor Run Parkway**

\$690,000 & \$775,000 | 2 adjoining, brick, half duplexes. Each with 3 bedrooms and 2.5 bathrooms. Sold separately. Great either for the investment-minded or resident owners!

**Sarah Bobbin** : 571.225.8716  
SophisticatedLivingNOVADC.com



**The Glen of Carlyn**  
**5936 Munson Court**

\$720,000 | 2-bed, 3.5-bath home with renovated kitchen, 2 bedroom suites, multiple fireplaces, private patio, balcony, and updated systems including HVAC, roof, and windows.

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TammiCurran.com



**Springfield Park**  
**5808 Ash Drive**

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**Miriam Miller** : 703.598.6619  
MM-RealEstate.com



**Old Town**  
**1205 N Pitt Street #3C**

\$515,000 | 2-bed, 1-bath condo with bright rooms, wood-burning fireplace, parking, storage, landscaped grounds, and pool—offering modern updates and historic charm.

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MaryKernHomes.com



**Belle View**  
**6507 10th Street #B1**

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MORTGAGE



FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

The suspected 2016 black Mercedes C300 involved in the fatal crash.



IMAGE VIA GOOGLE MAPS

The hit-and-run crash site is near the Mount Vernon Crossroads Shopping Center on Richmond Highway in the Mount Vernon area of Fairfax County.

# Fatal Nighttime Hit-and-Run Crash in Mount Vernon

Nationwide, pedestrian deaths have soared 80% since 2009.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE GAZETTE

**O**n the evening of Sept. 23, 62-year-old Trina Jones of Alexandria was struck in a hit-and-run crash while she was crossing Richmond Highway at Belford Drive. Jones was subsequently struck a second time by a Fairfax County police officer responding to the scene. The location is just outside the Mount Vernon Crossroads Shopping Center in the Hybla Valley area of Fairfax County.

Preliminary reports from Fairfax County Police Department authorities indicate that a southbound driver in a black Mercedes C300 sedan is believed to have struck Jones and then fled the scene.

Jesse Katzman, the commander of public affairs for the FCPD, said during an on-site news conference at the crash location that evening that the victim, who appeared to be alone, was found lying in the roadway. Police were dispatched around 8:39 p.m. “When our officer approached the scene, he made contact with a pedestrian who was lying in the roadway.” At the time of the news conference, heavy rain was readily apparent.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue responded and began performing lifesaving measures. Jones was transported to a hospital but was later pronounced deceased.

Through their investigation, detectives were able to obtain a picture of the Mercedes involved in the initial crash.

The FCPD has opened both criminal and administrative investigations into the officer’s involvement. The officer involved in the crash has been identified as a two-year veteran assigned to the Mount Vernon Patrol District. As department policy, the officer has been placed on restricted duty status pending the outcome of the investigation.

Katzman explained that the investigation encompasses both the hit-and-run and critical incident aspects because an officer is involved. He also stated that body-worn

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FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT/FACEBOOK

Jesse Katzman, commander of public affairs for the Fairfax County Police Department, gives an on-site news conference the evening of Sept. 23 near the hit-and-run crash site on Richmond Highway in the Mount Vernon area of Fairfax County.

The Virginia Crash Report from the Traffic Records Electronic Data System (TREDS) shows 99 pedestrian-involved crashes and six fatalities in Fairfax County between Jan. 1 and Sept. 26, 2025.

camera footage and in-car video will be reviewed to gather more information about the incident.

According to FCPD General Order 303 (Criminal Investigations of Department Employees), the Major Crimes Bureau conducts the criminal investigation and presents the findings to the Fairfax County Commonwealth’s Attorney’s Office, led by Steve Descano. Concurrently, Internal Affairs handles the administrative review.

Detectives are searching for the driver of the hit-and-run vehicle.

### Contextual Statistics

Drivers struck and killed 7,148 people walking in the United States in 2024, according to the Governors Highway Safety Association’s latest report, “Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities by State: 2024 Preliminary Data.” Pedestrian deaths are increasing at a rate far faster than overall traffic fatalities. Between 2009 and 2023, pedestrian deaths rose 80%, while all other traffic fatalities

increased 13%. More than three-quarters of pedestrian fatalities occur after dark. Fatal pedestrian crashes at night rose 84% between 2010 and 2023, compared to a 28% increase in daytime fatalities.

Trina Jones of Alexandria appears to be the seventh pedestrian crash death in Fairfax County, according to trends.virginia.gov. Trends reports 99 pedestrian-involved crashes with 114 injuries thus far this year as of Sept. 28 in Fairfax County, and an additional 11 crashes in Fairfax City with 14 injuries and three in Falls Church with eight injuries.

### Other Pedestrian Crash Incidents

❖ Jan. 29, 2025: A fatal pedestrian crash occurred in Woodlawn. Erica Tibbs, 33, of Alexandria, and her 5-year-old child were crossing Richmond Highway from west to east while not in a crosswalk and were struck by the driver of the Chevrolet Suburban shortly before 8:34 p.m. Erica Tibbs died.

❖ Feb. 14, 2025: A fatal pedestrian crash

### Virginia Crash Report

Date Range: 1/1/2025 to 9/26/2025  
Region/PDC: Region: Fairfax  
Jurisdiction: All  
Grouped By: City/County  
Crashes Filtered By: Pedestrian Involved  
Primary Street(s): ALL  
Secondary Street(s): ALL

| City/County         | 2025    |            |          |
|---------------------|---------|------------|----------|
|                     | Crashes | Fatalities | Injuries |
| Alexandria City     | 39      | 2          | 53       |
| Fairfax City        | 11      | 0          | 14       |
| Falls Church City   | 3       | 0          | 8        |
| Fredericksburg City | 10      | 0          | 15       |
| Manassas City       | 0       | 0          | 0        |
| Manassas Park City  | 0       | 0          | 0        |
| Arlington County    | 62      | 0          | 70       |
| Caroline County     | 4       | 0          | 4        |
| Essex County        | 0       | 0          | 0        |
| Fairfax County      | 99      | 6          | 114      |

occurred in Hutchison in the area of Centreville Road and Parcher Avenue just outside the Town of Herndon shortly before 2:55 p.m. The pedestrian, 67-year-old Norman Barazueta, was taken to the hospital and pronounced dead 12 days later, on Feb. 26, police say. Detectives believe Barazueta “stepped into the southbound lanes” of Centreville Road when the southbound driver of a 2024 Chevrolet Trax struck him.

❖ April 2, 2025: A fatal pedestrian crash occurred in the 7700 block of Route 29 near Merrifield. Preliminarily, Fairfax County Police said the driver of a Nissan cargo van was traveling west on Lee Highway when 87-year-old German Gomez of Falls Church stepped out into the driver’s lane.

❖ July 8, 2025: A crash on the Dulles Toll Road near the Herndon/Chantilly exit killed a woman early Tuesday morning when a vehicle struck the pedestrian around 2 a.m.. The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police did not publicly identify her. The driver of the vehicle stayed on the scene.

# Danger Lurks: Near Misses On the Roads

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

By Mercia Hobson  
The Gazette

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.

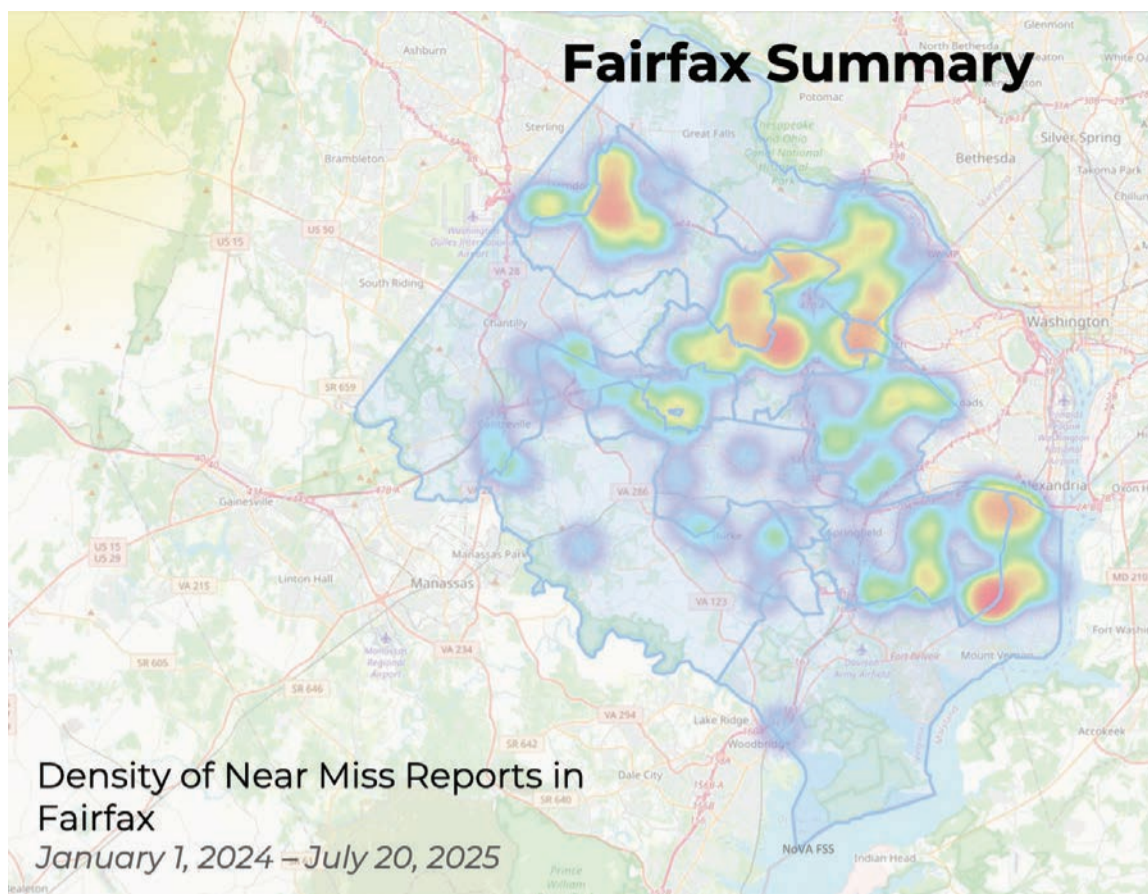
The Hunter Mill District report provides two case studies that highlight several key trends across Fairfax County. The report notes that incidents in this district are “recurring or involve children at a slightly higher rate than the average for Fairfax. They show a higher-than-average rate of drivers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

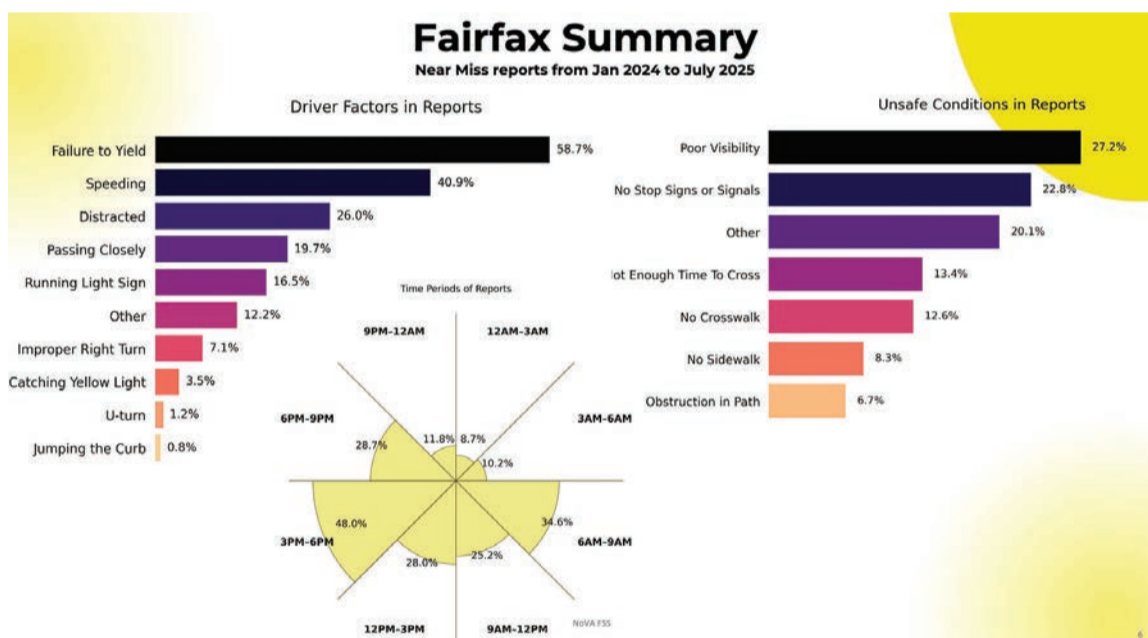
Reston Town Center: Another case study focuses on Reston Town

SEE DANGER LURKS, PAGE 8

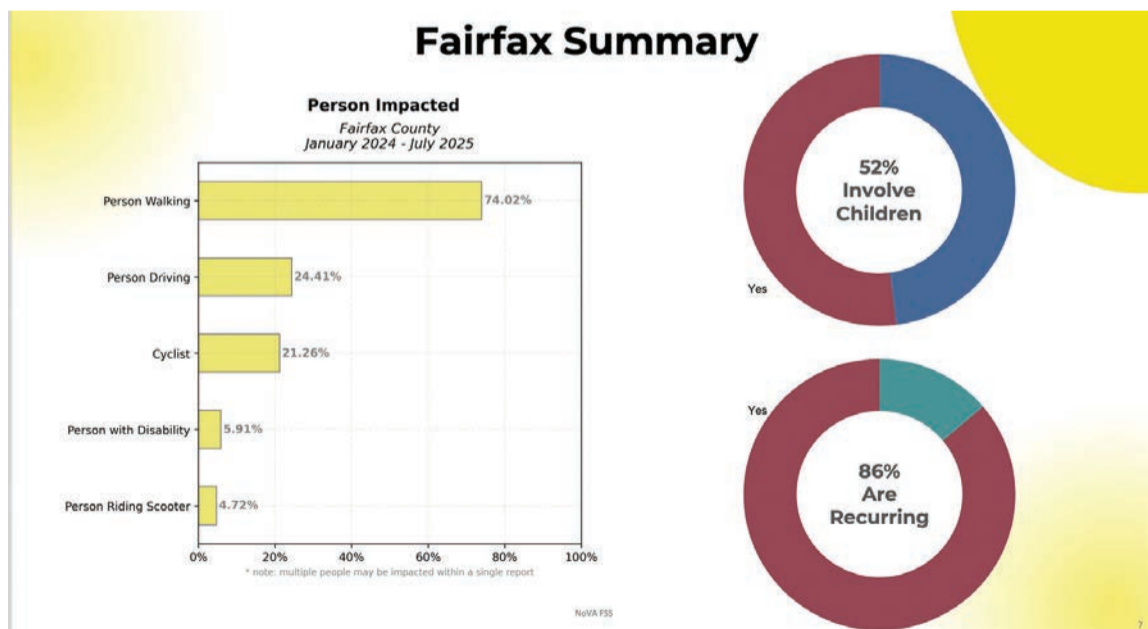


GRAPHICS BY FAIRFAX NEAR MISS SUMMARY REPORT-SEPT 2025

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.



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.

## 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/>.

## Small Window to Apply For Affordable Housing Spots

**T**he 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)

SEE AFFORDABLE HOUSING, PAGE 15

# NOW

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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.

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

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# 'The Outsider'

ACCT shines with timely political satire.

By JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

Is Ned Newley the worst candidate to ever run for office? Despite impressively bad poll numbers, political consultant Arthur Vance thinks Newley is exactly what the public is looking for in "The Outsider." It's a timely and hilarious political comedy opening Oct. 3 at Aldersgate Church Community Theater.

Newley, a brilliant but socially awkward lieutenant governor, is suddenly thrust into the role of governor after a scandal forces his predecessor to resign. He is a policy genius but a public relations disaster — terrified of speaking and painfully uncomfortable in the spotlight. His chief of staff, Dave Riley, enlists the help of a slick political consultant, Arthur Vance, who sees Newley's awkwardness as a potential goldmine. Vance believes voters crave authenticity, even if it's clumsy and unpolished.

Things spiral into absurdity when Louise Peakes, a ditzzy temp secretary with no political experience, accidentally becomes a viral sensation and is pushed into running for office herself. "The Outsider," written by playwright Paul Slade Smith, explores how political success can hinge more on optics and relatability than competence or substance.

"The Outsider is decidedly political but it takes no sides," said Eddie Page, an award-winning director who helms the stellar cast. "There's no intent to undermine or endorse any party or candidate. As we navigate this changing climate, it becomes increasingly clear that individual actions and choices matter. Instead, it embraces a mirror up to recent years of the political climate and invites us to laugh at the absurdity we all recognize."

**"The Outsider is decidedly political but it takes no sides."**

— Director Eddie Page

Marg Soroos is producer along with Charles Dragonette, who does double duty on stage as AC Peterson. Steve Rosenthal is the bumbling but brilliant Ned Newley, with Elizabeth Repolgie as Louise, Sara Joy Lebowitz as Rachel, Maya Reva as Paige, Richard Fiske as Arthur, and Jim Pearson as Dave.

The fast-paced dialogue, physical comedy and strong ensemble cast balance slapstick with moments of genuine insight into the political process.

Rosenthal as Newley captures the character's endearing awkwardness with Fiske taking on a James Carville-esque charisma. Repolgie as Louise steals scenes with her clueless charm.

"Louise is brought into the governor's office as a temp after the previous governor's resignation and departure of his entire support staff," Repolgie said. "What she lacks in



PHOTO BY HOWARD SOROOS

ACCT's production of *The Outsider* opens Friday, Oct. 3. The cast includes (front): Sara Joy Lebowitz (Rachel), Steve Rosenthal (Ned), and Elizabeth Repolgie (Louise). In back are Maya Reva (Paige), Richard Fiske (Arthur), Charles Dragonette (A.C. Peterson), and Jim Pearson (Dave). The *Outsider* runs Oct. 3-19. [www.acctonline.org](http://www.acctonline.org)

intelligence — which is a lot — she makes up for with enthusiasm, unearned confidence, and a genuine desire for everyone around her to feel good about themselves."

Said Fiske about his role as political consultant Vance, "Arthur Vance is larger than life, widely experienced and massively self-confident. He could be disliked for his ego and overbearing personality, but his joy in the process overcomes this. He is a showman and his enthusiasm is contagious."

With "The Outsider" Smith provides a satirical look at how pollsters and pundits shape political candidates. He cleverly skew-

ers the absurdities or modern politics without alienating his audience. It's a comedy that asks serious questions: What do voters really want? Is authenticity just another performance? And who truly runs the show?

Said Soroos, "I would like people to see the show then go away with a smile on their face and know that democracy is worth the time and effort to keep it alive."

"The Outsider" is playing Oct. 3-19 at Aldersgate Church Community Theater, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria, VA 22308. For tickets or more information visit [www.acctonline.org](http://www.acctonline.org).

## ALX Jazz Fest Pop-Up

The next ALX Jazz Fest Pop-Up event is on Sunday, Oct. 5 at the Old Town North Farmers' Market @ Montgomery Park (901 N Royal St.) Admission is free.

Enjoy live jazz by Improviso Jazz and spoken word featuring Can Man Tha Poet.

Experience a hands-on art project with the Mobile Art Lab alongside the market's fresh produce, baked goods, and artisan vendors. More details about the Old Town North Farmers' Market @ Montgomery Park and their weekly offerings can be found on the City's Farmers Market page.

Full details of the ALX Jazz Fest and future Pop Ups can be found on the ALX Jazz Fest page.

The ALX Jazz Fest and the ALX Jazz Fest Pop-Up Series are free events produced by the City of Alexandria's Office of the Arts, a division of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (RPCA). This project is supported in part by the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

## Alexandria Film Festival to Include Screenings at Virginia Tech

The Alexandria Film Festival will screen films at Virginia Tech's Alexandria location in the Potomac Yard neighborhood as part of the 19th Annual Alexandria Film Festival.

"The university's new academic building in the Potomac Yard neighborhood is the perfect hub of festival activities this year," said Jill Ray, chair of the Alexandria Film Festival. "It's metro-accessible, high-tech, and ultra-modern, offering multiple spaces for film screenings including the 300-capacity Boeing Auditorium."

"Hosting the Alexandria Film Festival at Academic Building One reflects our commitment to making this building a hub for innovation, collaboration, and communi-

ty," said Lance Collins, vice president at Virginia Tech.

The 19th annual Alexandria Film Festival will kick off Nov. 2 and continue Nov. 7-9 at venues across the City of Alexandria including Patagonia Old Town, Beatley Library (free programming), the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum, and Virginia Tech (Alexandria campus). The festival event website, full programming will be available soon at [AlexFilmFest.com](http://AlexFilmFest.com).

The Alexandria Film Festival brings short and feature-length films of all genres, filmmaker panels and arts presentations to the City of Alexandria and the greater DC-metro area. The festival highlights the talents of local, national and international film-

makers.

The Alexandria Film Festival is made possible with support from the Alexandria Commission for the Arts, the City of Alexandria, as well as support of individual donors and corporate sponsors including: Adobe, Alexandria Gazette Packet and Connection Newspapers; Alexandria Hyundai; Alexandria Living Magazine; Alexandria Times; Atlas Brew Works; Bad Ass Coffee; Burke & Herbert Bank; Cheesetique; Delia's Mediterranean Grill; Glory Days; Goodwin Living; Hadeed Rug Cleaning; Jim Connolly/Long & Foster Real Estate; Law Office of Deborah Matthews; Old Town Crier; Pond Roofing; Ted's Montana Grill; Virginia Tech; The Zebra; and Zen Business.

### BULLETIN BOARD

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

#### VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer

opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email [info@alnv.org](mailto:info@alnv.org), or visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org).

Join Friends' Board. Those who care about mental health, the Alexandria community, and collaborating with fellow residents to make sure the City's most vulnerable residents have a chance to thrive, then consider joining the Board of Friends of the Alexandria Mental

Health Center. The Friends Board is an all-volunteer group of residents that oversees the administration of one of Alexandria's top mental health charities. Friends has no paid staff, so Board members, working on average 10 hours per month, share the day-to-day work needed to accomplish its goals. Interested candidates should email [FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com).



Elly Doyle Park Service Award Winners.

# Mount Vernon Included in the 2025 Elly Doyle Park Service Award Winners

By MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

In early September, Fairfax County Park Authority awarded the 2025 Elly Doyle Park Service Award Winners to an inspiring group of people that stood out in the parks around the county providing leadership and service. In Mount Vernon, Cynthia Gamble

was recognized for her 30 years as Huntley Meadows Park site manager and the hours she volunteered at Historic Huntley. Other individual winners included Ken Quincy, Aimee Vosper, Marc Kohn, Sara Holtz, Mary Lipsey, Helen Kafka, and Tim Bowers. There were a couple of group awards too. Representative James Walkinshaw (D-11) was on hand to recog-

nize the winners and entered the list into the congressional record. "Volunteering brings us together in a way that we need at this time," he said. Drew Wilder, a reporter at NBC4, was a past Elly Doyle award winner and the emcee at the event. His three-year-old daughter just celebrated her birthday at one of the county parks.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Please be advised that a fireworks display will take place as part of a private evening event at George Washington's Mount Vernon on Sunday,

**October 5**  
**between 7:15pm – 7:45pm (5 minutes)**

The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association thanks you for your tolerance and apologizes for any disruption. To receive Mount Vernon fireworks notifications via email, please write to [events@mountvernon.org](mailto:events@mountvernon.org).

**GEORGE WASHINGTON'S**  
**MOUNT ★ VERNON**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Please be advised that a fireworks display will take place as part of a private evening event at George Washington's Mount Vernon on Thursday,

**October 9**  
**between 7:30pm – 8:00pm (5 minutes)**

The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association thanks you for your tolerance and apologizes for any disruption. To receive Mount Vernon fireworks notifications via email, please write to [events@mountvernon.org](mailto:events@mountvernon.org).

**GEORGE WASHINGTON'S**  
**MOUNT ★ VERNON**

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†System rebates ranging from \$0 to \$2,100 depending on equipment purchased. Rebates subject to change. Expires 11/29/25. \*With approved credit on qualifying equipment. Call Brennan's for complete details.

# Danger Lurks: Near Misses On the Roads

FROM PAGE 4

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 10

## Case B: Sherwood Hall Lane (Midday Lane Intersection)

“This intersection is unsafe for pedestrians, cyclist 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! It’s terrible and happens all the time. Please install a flashing signal for the crosswalk or some kind of barrier to make it impossible for cars on Sherwood Hall to pass at this intersection. I walk here with my children in the stroller everyday and it is extremely stressful for walkers, cyclists and drivers. This is also near Hollin Meadows school and families have a hard time crossing the street safely. Please help!!”



Another crosswalk without any accompanying signals which drivers fail to yield to, leading to near misses. Despite the double yellow lines, drivers also attempt to pass others who do stop at the crosswalk, creating even more dangerous situations for pedestrians.

GRAPHICS BY FAIRFAX NEAR MISS SUMMARY REPORT-SEPT 2025

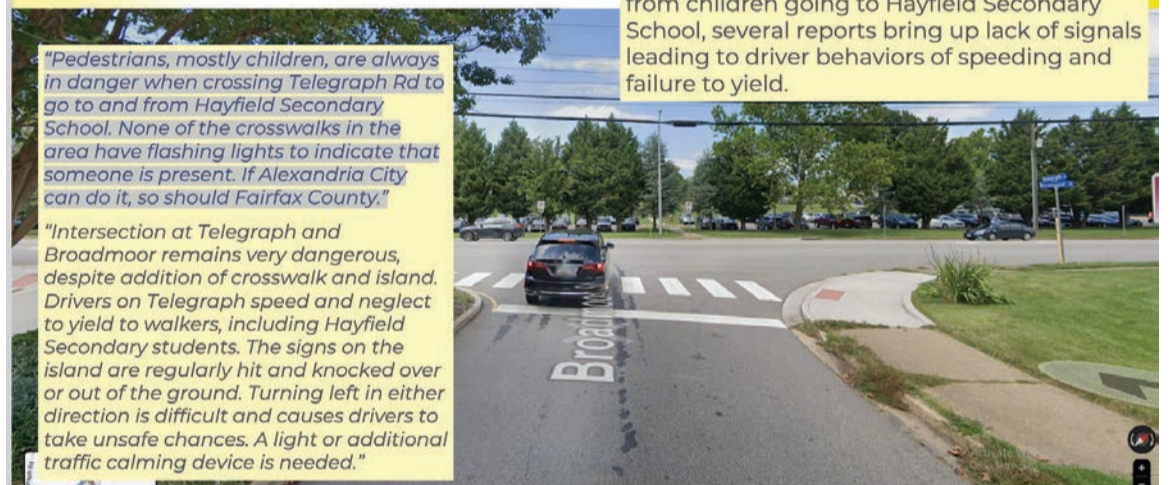
A graphic from the report highlights the Sherwood Hall Lane and Midday Lane intersection in Mount Vernon, where the crosswalk gives pedestrians a false sense of security. Drivers rarely stop, and when a car does, vehicles often swerve to pass, creating a dangerous situation.

## Case A: Telegraph Road

Unsafe intersection with frequent foot traffic from children going to Hayfield Secondary School, 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 have flashing lights to indicate that someone is present. If Alexandria City can do it, so should Fairfax County.”

“Intersection at Telegraph and Broadmoor remains very dangerous, despite addition of crosswalk and island. Drivers on Telegraph speed and neglect to yield to walkers, including Hayfield Secondary students. The signs on the island are regularly hit and knocked over or out of the ground. Turning left in either direction is difficult and causes drivers to take unsafe chances. A light or additional traffic calming device is needed.”



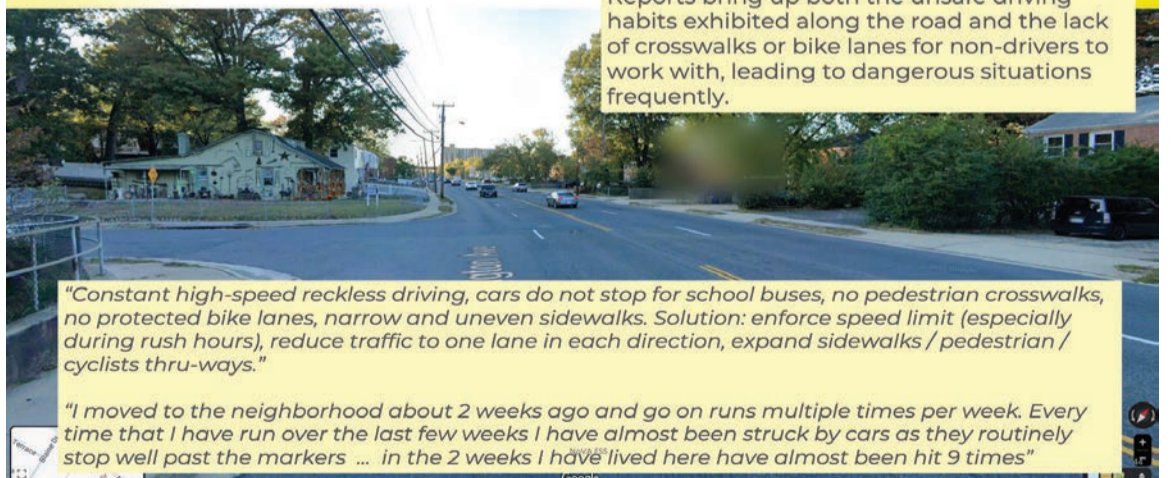
Highlighting a near miss hotspot for children, the report shows that a lack of signals on Telegraph Road near Hayfield Secondary School in the Alexandria section of Fairfax County leads to drivers speeding and failure to yield.

## Case A: The Corridor along Huntington Avenue

Reports bring up both the unsafe driving habits exhibited along the road and the lack of crosswalks or bike lanes for non-drivers to work with, leading to dangerous situations frequently.

“Constant high-speed reckless driving, cars do not stop for school buses, no pedestrian crosswalks, no protected bike lanes, narrow and uneven sidewalks. Solution: enforce speed limit (especially during rush hours), reduce traffic to one lane in each direction, expand sidewalks / pedestrian / cyclists thru-ways.”

“I moved to the neighborhood about 2 weeks ago and go on runs multiple times per week. Every time that I have run over the last few weeks I have almost been struck by cars as they routinely stop well past the markers ... in the 2 weeks I have lived here have almost been hit 9 times”



A graphic from the report shows the corridor along Huntington Avenue in the Mount Vernon area, where a lack of crosswalks and bike lanes, compounded by high-speed reckless driving, leads to dangerous situations.

# Standoff with Feds, Challenges for FCPS

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE GAZETTE

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.

# Danger Lurks: Near Misses On the Roads

FROM PAGE 8

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."

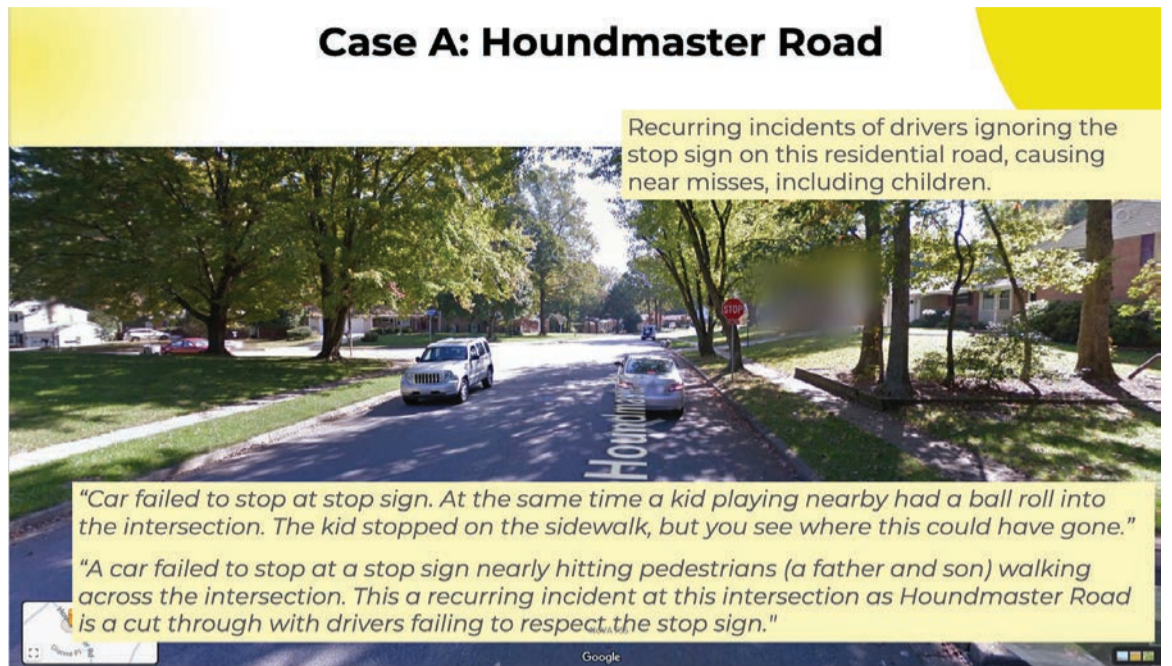
The Franconia district is reported to have an "unsafe intersection with frequent foot traffic from children going to Hayfield Secondary School," and several reports bring up lack of signals leading to driver behaviors of speeding and failure to yield.

"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

## Case A: Houndmaster Road



At Houndmaster Road, located in a residential area of Springfield, the report indicates recurring incidents where drivers ignore the stop sign, causing near misses, including those involving children.

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 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."

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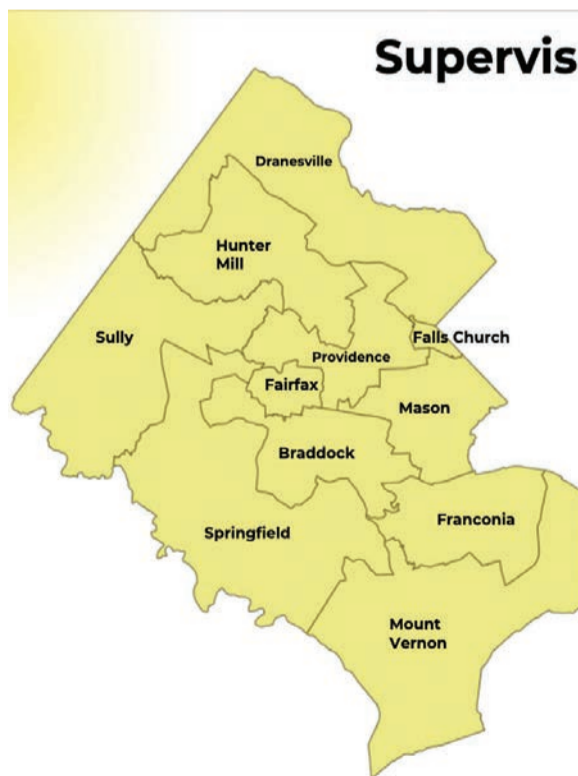
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## Supervisory Districts



| District/City        | Number of Reports |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Hunter Mill          | 51                |
| Providence           | 44                |
| Franconia            | 48                |
| Dranesville          | 23                |
| Mason                | 24                |
| Mount Vernon         | 13                |
| Springfield          | 11                |
| Braddock             | 12                |
| Sully                | 5                 |
| City of Fairfax      | 4                 |
| City of Falls Church | 19                |

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.



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

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

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

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE GAZETTE

Fairfax County is expanding its Capital Bikeshare program to include the Huntington and Innovation Center Metro stations, according to a recent on-line 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. "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://capitalbikeshare.com>.



FAIRFAX COUNTY

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

## FCPD, Sheriff's Office Achieve Accreditation

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE GAZETTE

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 Escalante, the Fairfax County Director of Immigrant Community Affairs, was involved in the MOU and "it is in accord with our Trust Policy."

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Illuminated Acorn by Kevin Carman.



Great Blue Heron III by David Turner.



Li Doo Mooh by Villagers in India's Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, made of a tropical plant, lantana camara and metal.

# American Horticultural Society's Gala at River Farm

FROM PAGE 1

They also offer us avenues for creativity, healing and self-expression. In a world that sometimes can feel overwhelming, gardens have a remarkable ability to surprise and delight us."



Anthropocene by Michael Alfano.



Mama and Baby Frog by Charles Smith.

Board of Directors Chair Scott Plein presented Brian Kemble the 2025 Liberty Hyde Bailey Award for lifetime achievement in horticulture. Kemble, the curator at the Ruth Bancroft Garden and Nursery in Walnut Creek, California, described how American gardening has moved from being "Eurocentric" to adapting to local conditions, like arid gardens in parts of California.

Plein also gave the Meritorious Service Award to Alexandrian Skipp Calvert, calling the awardee "a conservationist and a cheerleader." Plein said that Calvert was one of the "Faithful Five" who served on the AHS Board for two decades and helped save River Farm from being sold and developed in 2021. "His impact is beyond any title," Plein said.

In 2020, the then-AHS Board of Directors announced plans to sell River Farm, generat-

SEE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL, PAGE 15



Multi-colored Totem by Dorothy Gillespie.



Challenge, by Vadim Kharchenko,



The Little Big Band provided music as guests mingled.

# ENTERTAINMENT

## NOW THRU NOV. 2

**Women Artists of the DMV.** At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Artist's Reception: Sunday, September 28, 4 — 6 p.m. Local artist, curator, and advocate for the arts, F. Lenny Campello, has assembled a survey exhibition of women artists spanning the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia that features over 400 artists in 18 different galleries across the region. Women artists of the DMV presenting at The Athenaeum include: Cathy Abramson, Suzi Balamaci, Sara Bardin, Jennifer Barlow, Jennifer Lynn Beaudet, Julia Bloom, Lisa Brotman, Carol Brown Goldberg, Shante Bullock, Anne Cherubim, Amanda Coelho, Andrea Cybyk, Anna U. Davis, Cynthia Farrell Johnson, Sharon Fishel, Cianne Fragione, Marilyn Horrom, M. Jane Johnson, Jessica Kallista, P D Klein, Kara Lin, Anne Marchand, Amy Marx, Ann Meagher-Cook, Carol Newmyer, Tea Okropiridze, Madeleine Sargent, Adi Segal, Susan Shalowitz, Pritha Srinivasan, Jenny Walton, Suzanne Yurdin, and Helen Zughaib.

## MGNV PLANT CLINICS ARE OPEN

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

## YEAR ROUND ON SUNDAYS

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

## ONGOING

**Revolutionary War Exhibit.** At the National Museum of the U.S. Army, Alexandria. The National Museum of the United States Army has opened a special exhibition, Call To Arms: The Soldier and the Revolutionary War. The two-year exhibition commemorates this year's 250th Birthday of the U.S. Army and next year's 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. This 5,000 square-foot exhibition features a rare collection, specially curated by the Museum, that includes Revolutionary War artifacts from the original colonies, England, France and Canada. Among the exhibit's highlights are a pair of General George Washington's pistols, the original flag of the 1st Rhode Island Regiment carried by the Army's first African American Soldiers, and a complete Loyalist uniform—one of the rarest items in the collection. The sword of British General Charles Lord Cornwallis, presented to Washington at the surrender at Yorktown, Virginia, will also be displayed for a limited time.

## OCT. 3 TO NOV. 1

**The "Bump in the Night" art exhibit.** At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. This show explores those unsettling moments when you hear something strange and unexplained in the dark. Prepare for the shadows to take shape and for the mysterious bumps in the night come to life. Opening Reception: Friday, October 3, 7-9 p.m. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

## FRIDAY/OCT. 3

**Leave the Leaves. 10-11:30 a.m.** Online. For many people, fall cleanup means raking and disposing of the leaves that have tumbled from the trees. Join Extension Master Gardener Claudia Gerwin to learn about the many



The 30th Annual Art on the Avenue takes place Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025 in Del Ray.

benefits of leaving the leaves to provide an overwintering habitat for pollinators and other invertebrates. You'll learn how to best manage your leaves to improve the soil, suppress weeds, and retain moisture, and we'll share tips on how to make leaf compost. If you leave the leaves, your landscape will reap the benefits of more pollinators, natural pest control and more abundant wildlife in the spring. FREE. RSVP online at <https://mgnv.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/> to receive the link to participate.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 4

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

## SATURDAY/OCT. 4

**30th Annual Art on the Avenue. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.** In Del Ray on Mount Vernon Avenue between Hume and Bellefonte Avenues, Alexandria. Art on the Avenue strives to reflect the diversity of the Del Ray community through the artists and their work. This year's festival will feature over 350 local and regional artists, live music, international food, children's activities, a pie-baking contest, and more. The event, voted by Virginia Living readers as the best art festival in Northern Virginia, is volunteer-run, with support from the local business community. Art on the Avenue is free and open to all.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 4

**The Listening Project. 1-4 p.m.** At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. The Listening Project is an interactive performance piece that explores multisensory listening created by Anne Willieme, a multidisciplinary artist and leader of Sensverse Studio. The Listening Project invites you to share a story which will then be translated into visual terms by Anne Willieme and into movement by dancer Kate Walker. The program explores a multisensory-media translation from language to visual and movement-based expression. The work also aims to provide the participating audience with the feeling of being deeply heard.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 4

**Vola's Dockside Grill's Fall Oysterfest, Saturday, Oct. 4 from 12-3 p.m.**

Gather on Vola's Airstream patio for unlimited freshly shucked and specialty oysters, a tasty buffet, beer, wine, and cocktails. Live music.

Oysterfest will also feature a Best Shucker contest, inviting both pros and first-timers to show off their oyster-opening skills. Outdoors along the waterfront (with indoor backup in case of rain). Tickets are \$144.18, inclusive of food, drinks, and gratuity, and can be purchased here: [Eventbrite Link](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2025-fall-oysterfest-tickets-755555555555).

## SUNDAY/OCT. 5

**Wild, Wild West. 3 p.m.** At George Washington Masonic National Memorial, Alexandria. Presented by the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic. The program features sweeping cinematic soundscapes and American classics: Elmer Bernstein: The Magnificent Seven  
William Grant Still: American Scenes: The Far West  
Elinor Remick Warren: Along the Western Shore  
John Williams: The Cowboys Overture  
Aaron Copland: Four Dance Episodes from Rodeo (Hoe-Down included!)

Visit the website: [wmpamusic.org](https://www.wmpamusic.org)

## STARTING MONDAY/OCT. 6

**Alexandria Santa Train Tickets.** There are four dates this year for the 19th annual roundtrip train ride with Santa from Alexandria to Manassas. Tickets for the popular Santa Train go on sale Monday, Oct. 6 at Alexandria's Whistle Stop Toy & Hobby Store, located at 1719 Centre Plaza, just off Quaker Lane. The annual holiday tradition, now in its 19th year, features a roundtrip train ride with Santa from the Alexandria train station to Manassas. The dates are Dec. 1, Dec. 8, Dec. 15 and Dec. 18. The fun starts at the Alexandria train station, where those boarding the train begin to gather at 1 p.m. During the train ride, from 1:25-3:30 p.m., Santa visits and takes photos with ticket-holders who also receive stickers and candy canes.

## TUESDAY/OCT. 7

**Kids' First Years (KFY) State of Early Childhood 2025 Event. 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.** At First Baptist Church, 2922 King Street, Alexandria. KFY is a collective impact initiative dedicated to being the unified voice for organizations that collaborate to support early childhood efforts in Alexandria. The event will bring together Alexandria's leaders, businesses, educators, policymakers, and community advocates to focus on one mission: building a thriving early childhood system that fuels the city's economy, strengthens the workforce and supports every family.

## THURSDAY/OCT. 9

**Fall Festival:** Celebrating Community and Affordable Housing. 4 to 8 p.m. At The Garden Alexandria, 5380 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Housing Alexandria, a leading non-profit community developer, will hold its Fall Festival dedicated to celebrating the power of community and raising crucial funds

for affordable housing. Tickets are \$10 for students and \$60 for adults. The festival is a family-friendly event, offering an evening of food, drinks, games, music, and a raffle, as well as a live performance by Alexandria Symphony Orchestra's youth orchestra, Sympatico. Port City Brewery of Alexandria, Virginia and food trucks will be available like Hangry Panda, Minas Tamales, Mac Donut, Lost Boy Cider and Boba Blass. Go to [www.housingalexandria.org](https://www.housingalexandria.org).

## OCT. 10-12

**Capital Art & Craft Festival.** At Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly. The Capital Art & Craft 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](https://www.CACFart.com)

## SATURDAY/OCT. 11

**Fall Fest: Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.** At Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave, Alexandria. Join the Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia for our 2nd annual Fall Festival! We will have an "Ask the Master Gardener" table, kids' activities, a houseplant sale, free saplings, hand-crafted pottery, a food truck, tool sharpening, and more. Don't miss this fun-filled family event! Pick up some holiday gifts for your favorite gardeners or just come to learn more about gardening!

## SATURDAY/OCT. 11

**Garden Maintenance. 9:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m.,** Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 Marcey Rd, Arlington. Extension Master Gardener volunteers will demonstrate the whys and hows of these final food garden tasks. Come learn how to make the most of your own vegetable plot.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 18

**FocusMusic and WFMA present Ali Tod. 7 p.m.** At Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Rd., Alexandria. Tickets \$25 in advance (members \$22.50) / \$30 at door (members \$25), \$15 virtual. Scottish guitarist and singer Ali Tod fuses classical training with percussive fingerstyle guitar, loop-pedal wizardry, and raw, soul-stirring vocals—drawing comparisons to Rodrigo y Gabriela and KT Tunstall. Info and tickets at <https://focusmusic.org/shows#sat-10-18-ali-tod-alexandria-virtual>

## SUNDAY/OCT. 19

**The Carpenter's Cook-off. 12 to 3 p.m.** At The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Carpenter's Shelter is hosting their signature fundraising event, Carpenter's Cook-Off 2025. Top-rated local restaurants, caterers and bakeries will showcase their delicacies, which visitors get to taste and judge. There will be live music from DJ Infinite Sounds, live and silent auctions, raffles and fun for the whole family. Board Alum Jennifer Poersch will receive the Val Hawkins award which recognizes dedicated champions who work to further the mission and vision of Carpenter's Shelter. Buy Tickets: [CarpentersShelter.org/CookOffTickets](https://CarpentersShelter.org/CookOffTickets)

## NOV. 7-30

**"The Mini World: Small Works of Art"** showcases tiny creations by Del Ray Artisans members in a variety of media and styles. Step into this miniature world and discover the joy of life's little things. View at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Join in the Opening Reception on Friday, November 7, 7-9pm. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](https://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

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# American Horticultural Society's Gala

FROM PAGE 12

ing shock waves among supporters who contended that since River Farm is prime waterfront property, developers would pounce on it. Local groups, many elected officials and then Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam mobilized to preserve the property, block development and retain public access. Ultimately the Board re-organized and abandoned the sale plan.

Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck remarked, "I deeply appreciate all the folks who worked to save River Farm."

Plein said that a major related announcement is forthcoming.

Among the notables attending in addition to Storck were Virginia Senators Scott Surovell and Russet Perry and former House of Delegates member Kris Amundsen. Surovell is the Senate Majority Leader.

## Art in the Gardens

Nepenthe Gallery, based in the Hollin Hall Shopping Center, staged fanciful sculptures throughout the gardens, works by Vadim Kharchenko, Kevin Carman, Dorothy Gillespie, David Turner, Charles Smith, Michael Alfano, Staci Katsias, Brandon Reese, and Villagers in India's Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. Some pieces were for sale, with prices ranging from \$9,500 to \$38,000.

"We love any opportunity to partner with AHS at George Washington's historic River Farm, and the artists whose works we are showcasing feel that it is a special place," said gallery owner Carrie Garland. "The project is art at its very best, lifting others up and connecting us all in unexpected ways."

Alexandrian Angela Barbour wore a floral print dress and said, "River Farm's a gem. The fact that they truly saved it in perpetuity is truly exciting."

Lynn Godek, a kindergarten teacher who lives in the Mount Vernon area, nurtures young gardeners, she explained, by having children plant kidney beans and watch them grow. "You only need dirt, water and sun," she quipped.



After the speeches and meal, guests danced to music by K Street Union.



Many guests wore plant-themed attire.

PHOTOS BY  
GLENDA BOOTH  
THE CONNECTION

Many guests wore  
plant-themed attire.

Why was she there? "I believe in the mission of AHS and the importance of maintaining green space and bringing gardening into everyone's life," she said.

Referring to the gala, LaPorte announced, "We passed our fund raising goals."

## About AHS and River Farm

Founded in 1922, AHS is a member-based, national, nonprofit organization which in-



cludes more than 20,000 aspiring, new and experienced gardeners, plant enthusiasts, horticultural professionals and many regional and national partner organizations. AHS sponsors educational programs, awards, publications and trips. River Farm is a 25-acre site overlooking the Potomac River, one of George Washington's original five farms. Visit [ahsgardening.org](http://ahsgardening.org)

# Small Window to Apply for Affordable Housing Spots

FROM PAGE 5

## 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](http://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, [www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)

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.

## 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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and out. Whether it was pricing strategy, neighborhood insights, or identifying the right time to list, his guidance was spot-on every step of the way. Thanks to his expertise and honest advice, we always felt like we were one step ahead. What really impressed us was the team's communication. Any time we had a question or needed an update, someone was there with a quick, clear answer. We never felt as though we were "in the dark." Their attention to detail—from staging and marketing to navigating offers and closing—was flawless. Chris and his team didn't just help us buy/sell a house—they helped us make a smart move, both financially and personally. We look forward to working with them again and highly recommend them to anyone looking for a knowledgeable, responsive, and trustworthy real estate team. Thank you, Chris and team! You're the best." -The Chretien Family



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the task of making the arrangements for those repairs to be made. They really are the "Mt. Vernon Specialists". 10/10 recommend The White Family " -The Ohagan

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