

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

MAY 7, 2026

River Farm Saved Forever

Relentless community action, state and local elected officials and creative approaches culminate in Northern Virginia Conservation Trust easement.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

River Farm, the American Horticultural Society's (AHS) national headquarters on the Potomac River in Mount Vernon, will be saved from development forever, announced officials at a May 1 ribbon cutting.

"It's been done," asserted Scott Plein, AHS's Board of Directors' Chair, announcing a conservation easement to protect the property. "Never, never, never will anyone allow it to be a resort, single-family residences or a business," he told the 50 attendees.

Alan Rowsome, Executive Director of the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT), said, "River Farm's story could easily have been one of missed opportunities and a lost natural and cultural heritage like we unfortunately see in all too many other places across our region. But not here, not this place because local elected officials, committed community members and dedicated organizations worked together against all odds and five faithful board members of

SEE RIVER FARM, PAGE 7



River Farm supporters gathering in front of the historic house.



Sen. Scott Surovell credited many elected officials and supporters with saving River Farm.



American Horticultural Society President Suzanne LaPorte welcomed the conservation easement and thanked supporters.



Delegate Paul Krizek and state Senator David Marsden helped get state funds for River Farm in the Virginia legislature.



The gardens were in bloom and River Farm's flowers decorated tables.



American Horticultural Society Board Chairman Scott Plein welcomed supporters and gave celebratory remarks.



Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck and NVCT head Alan Rowsome greeted supporters.



Officials cut a ribbon at the event: Left to right, Alan Rowsome, Supervisor Dan Storck, Sen. Scott Surovell, Scott Plein, Suzanne LaPorte



Ribbon cutting: Supervisor Dan Storck, Senator Scott Surovell and Scott Plein

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH / MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

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ACM ATLANTIC COAST
MORTGAGE

Today's Libraries, Way Beyond Books

Fix-it clinics coming on May 9.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE GAZETTE

Does that porcelain figurine need her missing arm glued back on? A dull kitchen knife need sharpening? Four Fairfax County libraries, including Sherwood, will have a fix-it clinic on May 9, 1 to 5 p.m. Skilled volunteers will repair fabrics, jewelry, small appliances and more.

County libraries, of course, are loaded with books and other materials for all ages, but today's libraries are much more than books. They lend binoculars. They stage concerts. They host craft projects.

County libraries also have a "Library of Things" from which people can borrow, for example, kits to determine appliances' energy use; framed artwork; board games; soil testing kits; air quality monitors; thermal imaging cameras to spot energy leaks; and nature backpacks for outdoor study.

Many of these items are things people only use occasionally and are pricey. Borrowing can also reduce the accumulation of "stuff."

And county libraries have programs galore. A few examples: Toddler Time, stories and music for little ones; Dungeons and Dragons for teens; plant swaps; costume contests; tech tutoring; adult English-language learning; painting classes and tax help.

And then there's music and dance like lion dance performances to celebrate the lunar new year; military musicians like U.S. Navy Band ensembles; mariachi bands and singers and guitarists.

For fitness, there's chair yoga, Tai Chi and line dancing.

Staff and volunteers provide hands-on technology classes and one-on-one computer tutoring at Sherwood's tech lab.

Using Memory Depot equipment, patrons can learn 3-D printing and how to convert photos, negatives, slides and cassettes to digital formats. Public computers and free internet access are available in all county libraries.

The Access Services Branch helps people who cannot read standard print materials or physically visit a library because of disability, health, illness or frailty. Some residents unable to visit a library are eligible for home deliveries.

The first Saturday of each month,



Here is a person getting sewing repair done at our Fix It Clinic last year. The next Fix It Clinic at Sherwood Library is May 9.



PHOTOS BY FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

A mother and son enjoying a book at Sherwood Library.



A delighted reader discovering new information in a book.



A dad and son deep into "checking things out" at Sherwood Library.

the Friends of Sherwood Regional Library hold a book sale, offering gently-used books and media. All proceeds support the library.

"Community Hubs"

County libraries strive to be what Sherwood Branch Manager Lyn McKinney calls "a community hub." For example, they work with schools to host science nights and book talks. "We have to be open to partners, get to know them and learn how to help each other," she says.

Sherwood opened in 1971. It is a regional library which has more materials and services than a community branch like the Martha Washington Library.

From Bookmobile to Big

The Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL) system is the largest in Virginia and many say, one of the best in the U.S. Consider a few 2025 statistics: the system had 3.4 million in-person visits; 610,481 card holders; a total circulation of 11.7 million and of that 7.8 million were print materials. There are 23 branches.

"All FCPL cardholders have access to millions of books and materials no matter what branch they walk into," says McKinney.

The numbers greatly mask the system's humble beginnings. On its 85th anniversary in 2024, then-Braddock Supervisor, now Congressman, James Walkinshaw recalled that the FCPL began in 1940 as a "Bookmobile," a converted Chevy panel truck that traveled around the largely rural county to lend books. His grandfather, who grew up on a farm in Chantilly, checked out books from the Bookmobile.

What about Books?

"Education is a big part of the library," McKinney stresses. "We have to have things available to discover." One of the system's goals is lifelong learning for people at all stages of life.

The library system has "floating" books and other materials. "They all can move around," says McKinney. "We move thousands a day." If a book is not on a library's shelf, library staff can usually get it in three days from another library.

If the book is not in the county's system, staff can arrange for an inter-library loan from other states and institutions.

Sherwood offers in print eight newspapers, including the Washington Post, New York Times, Wall Street Journal and Washington Times plus 21 magazines including People Weekly, Hola!, Scientific American, Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine and House Beau-

tiful.

On the diverse array of services, McKinney says, "My job is to put it out there."

Ways to help Friends of Sherwood Library, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>

Fairfax Library Foundation, <https://www.fairfaxlibraryfoundation.org/>

Customers Welcome Farmers Market's Return

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Perusing the products, from pickles to pasta, marigolds to marjoram, onions to oysters and carrots to cookies, exuberant shoppers welcomed 26 vendors on April 22 to the first weekly Wednesday Mount Vernon Farmers Market of the season in the Sherwood Regional Library parking lot.

"It's a rite of spring," commented Jim Gearing.

Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck strolled, sampled and said, "It's an amazing community gathering place. We all look forward to connecting and buying fresh fruits and vegetables," as he purchased fresh tabouli from Layla's Lebanese Restaurant.

Little ones marveled at the bright red strawberries glistening in the sun. Green asparagus spears almost a foot long seemed aimed at the sky like rockets ready for takeoff. Leafy "bouquets" of dark green kale and Swiss chard seemed ready to jump off the tables.

Big Boy Biscuits had a bustling business serving bacon, egg and pimento cheese breakfast treats. The House of Empanadas offered "a taste of Peru." Black Stone Honey Bee Farms from Haymarket, Virginia, peddled pure raw wildflower honey and bees wax candles. Linda Vista Farm's radishes, bok choy, sweet potatoes and robust, knee-high tomato plants grown in Montross, Virginia, lured many shoppers.

Some locals have weekly favorites. Hakim Newsome, a firefighter exploring the stalls with five colleagues from the station across the street, loves the dill pickles from Big Brine, a Vienna-based business. Madison Hanley scoops up bread every week from Grace's Pastries because "the food is really good."

Good-bye Winter Woes

Asked how they spent their winter, several vendors recalled January's two-to-three-week ice pack. Valentine Miller, a market staple from Orange, Virginia, said he had to break up the ice with his tractor. "The cows and sheep kept slipping," he lamented.

He raises 300 Angus cows and 150 sheep and this spring he has 200 new lambs.

Karen Arnest said, "I fed my goats, chickens and donkey. It was hard because of the ice." Her family runs an oyster house in Hague, Virginia. They dredge, tong, shuck and jar oysters for sale. With fresh Chesapeake Bay seafood spread across her table, Arnest counseled



The market's sign greets shoppers.



Black Stone Honey Bee Farms sells pure wildflower honey and bees wax candles

customers who have difficulty prying oysters open. "I steam them for 10 minutes and they'll pop open," she advised.

Jeanette Moler from Great Harvest Bread makes 20 different kinds of bread and said she worked in her bakery all winter to sell breads at four year-round markets in Lorton, Vienna, Burke and Herndon.

Jilo Ochoa escaped to Mexico for two months. He needed a rest, he explained because from February to Thanksgiving, he works 16 hours every day on his Warsaw, Virginia, farm. Michael Appianti with Grace's Pastries traveled to Ghana.

Asked how he spent his winter? Wayne Pierson of Three-way Farm, Warsaw, Virginia, answered, "I just piddled around. Did some hunting, deer and rabbits."

Old and New

Sabry Alsharkawi from Broad Run, Virginia, is a market veteran, a regular since 1985, selling 65 different chemical-free herbs and teas. "I'm glad to be back," he said. He spent his winter growing, drying and packaging his products. Happy customers carried away his basil plants now almost two feet high, nurtured in his greenhouse.

Alicia Snow, with Williamsport, Maryland's Deliteful Dairy, is a newcomer. She sold cheese and slow-vat, pasteurized milk produced from her mixed herd of pasture-raised cows. "It's a great opportunity to bring fresh dairy to the area," she said.

Spirits were high and taste buds tingling, as shoppers grooved to David Erickson's smooth rendition of Duke Ellington's "Satin Doll," played on his two-horned trumpet.



Several vendors bring spring flowers which brighten the market and boost spirits.



Strawberries were popular purchases.



The Ochoa family has brought fresh vegetables and flowers to the market for many years.

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at 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

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, or visit www.alnv.org.

STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or donaldrea@aol.com.

ALIVE! offers numerous programs that aid low-income families in Alexandria that rely on volunteers: monthly food distributions, furniture, houseware and emergency food deliveries, and community food drives. Individuals, families and groups are encouraged to participate. Students can earn community service hours by participating. Visit www.alive-inc.org/volunteer.htm or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@alive-inc.org.

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

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 or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

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

Farmer's Market Volunteers Needed. To volunteer for the Farmer's Markets, email Brian Morreale, brianmorreale@gmail.com

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

The Parkinson's Disease Support Group of Alexandria meets the 1st Wednesday of each month. SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 6

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Localizing Mental Health

HopeLink answers the 988 calls.

BY JOSEPH GETCH
CEO, HOPELINK
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

May's Mental Health Awareness Month is another touchstone to help remind our community about the resources available to them and their loved ones here in our hometown. Chief among these is the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

Behind each call, text, and chat is a real person. I know this because I lead HopeLink, a regional mental health nonprofit that operates the 988 service for Northern Virginia. We have been connected to this community as a provider of behavioral health services since 1963. Our crisis workers are trained in active listening, safety assessment, crisis de-escalation, and to collaborate with callers, texters and chaters to reduce distress and, when appropriate, to connect individuals to appropriate local services.

These dedicated crisis workers answered nearly 400,000 calls, chats and texts last year from individuals that were facing a life crisis. HopeLink's workers are the empathetic voice that listens, providing help, hope and comfort.

As one of our workers explained, "I have spoken to hundreds of callers. While no two calls are exactly alike, I find callers asking the same question again and again: 'Will I be okay?' What I can tell them is yes, one day, they will be okay, and this call is one step closer to breathing a sigh of relief. Together, we sit in that uncertainty and that pain, until they are empowered to seek longer-term support and explore what life might look like around the corner. When a caller tells me



A crisis worker at HopeLink.



Joe Getch

that they see a way forward, that's when I know I've made a difference."

Nationally more than 59 million people experience mental illness and nearly 46% of Americans are expected to meet the criteria for a diagnosable mental health condi-

tion in their life, according to Mental Health America. That's why May's Mental Health Awareness Month is important.

While we shine a light on mental health this May; there are ways each of us can help. It's important to know the signs and ways that you can make a difference. This list provides ways to be part of the solution to change and even save lives:

Listen: Listen for signs of distress from loved ones or friends such as talking about wanting to die, ending their life, having no reason to live, being trapped, or being a burden to others.

Ask: Ask the tough question. When somebody you know is in emotional pain, ask them directly: "Are you thinking about killing yourself?"

Connect: Help connect people to resources. For an immediate crisis, encourage them to call or text the

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988. Or visit HopeLineBH.org or your county's local community services board for more resources.

Donate: Support local and national mental health nonprofits that are working to save and change lives. It matters and works.

Advocate: Being a voice with local, state, and federal government ensures that mental health is front and center and that funding for mental health programs exists. Write letters/emails to officials in support of mental health funding and legislation.

Much progress has been made in mental health services, but tough times can exacerbate the need. This May, I hope you will join us and Connection Newspapers to make mental health a priority for you, your loved ones, and the community. Tap into the local resources that are available. Learn more tips on our website at HopeLink-BH.org.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

month at 2 p.m. At the Hollin Hall Senior Center, Room 109, 1500 Shenandoah Road. All Parkinson's patients and caregivers are welcome.

The Caregiver Support Group is facilitated by the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services Division of Aging and Adult Services. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the Adult Day Services Center, 1108 Jefferson St., 4-5:30 p.m. Participants are full- or

part-time caregivers providing care locally or long distance to a family member or friend. Participants share their experiences, provide support for each other and receive resources to assist them with caregiving. The next Caregiver Support Group meeting is June 7. For more information or to register, contact Jennifer Sarisky at 703-746-9999 or email DAAS@alexandriava.gov. FACE Center Support Groups provide parents with a space to share their daily parenting frustrations and triumphs while offering new strategies for helping parents to

cope, build positive parent-child relationships and best support their children's learning.

- ❖ Support Group in English, every Monday, 6-7:30 p.m. at ARHA Main Building, 401 Wythe St.
 - ❖ Support Group in Spanish, every Wednesday, 6-7:30 p.m. at Community Lodgings Brookside Center, 614 Four Mile Road. Registration not necessary. A light dinner and childcare services provided free. Contact Krishna Leyva at 703-619-8055 or krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us for more.
- Divorce Workshop for Women. Second

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

ONGOING
Backflow Preventer (BFP) As-
SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

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A Connection Newspaper



River Farm Saved Forever

FROM PAGE 1

AHS stood their ground against incredible pressure, and an unlikely ragtag team of local heroes built a Save River Farm Committee to organize the resistance.”

Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck recalled the “shock and horror” of threatened development and said that the Board of Supervisors created a protective historic overlay district because “this place is far more than a real estate contract with short-term benefits for the few. We said ‘no’ and that no was ultimately heard.”

Paul Griffith, a neighbor, echoed that view: “It’s something very special. It’s not just another piece of land.”

Virginia Senator Scott Surovell credited many local people and officials who galvanized in the preservation drive, including U.S. Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine, Congressman Don Beyer, former Virginia Governor Ralph Northam and Attorneys General Karl Racine from Washington, D. C. and Mark Herring from Virginia. He said that he and Delegate Paul Krizek convinced the Virginia legislature to

SEE RIVER FARM, PAGE 14



PHOTOS BY CELENA ROMERO
Senator Scott Surovell spoke about efforts to save River Farm.



Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck led the Board of Supervisors' efforts to save River Farm from development.

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The church's philosophy: 'Love unconditionally, include everyone and celebrate life.'



Rev. Kameron Wilds ministers to the "least, lost, lonely and left out."



A sign in front of the mission church.

By GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

There's a certain irony in growing fresh vegetables in a greenhouse next door to a 7-11, where customers typically chomp down highly-processed hotdogs, pizza slices, chicken wings and junk food. Rev. Kameron Wilds, the pastor at Rising Hope Mission Church, chuckled when pointing out this juxtaposition after leading a tour of the church's greenhouse half a block off U.S. 1.

This is the fourth growing season for Wilds, his guests, staff and volunteers who are starting vegetables, herbs and zinnias from seeds in their 10-by-25-foot greenhouse. They will sell the ready-for-planting plants to the public at five locations in May.

Wilds, who studied horticulture at Ferrum College and then "fell in love with the scriptures," approaches growing plants through a religious lens. "God was a gardener," he said. "He created all things. Gardening is a tool to teach a deeper reality."

He sees gardening and growing healthy food as a way to "teach tending and caring."

"Food is communal. Teaching people how to care for plants is a step to caring for your neighbor," he believes, adding, "Love thy neighbor."

He also sees food as health. For some of the people who come to Rising Hope, their meal there is their only daily meal and fresh vegetables can help them "be whole, a



Several varieties of peppers are growing in the greenhouse.

functioning part of the community," says Wilds.

Gardening is healing, he also argues, when people get their hands in the soil, even if it's container gardening on a balcony.

The Rising Hope greenhouse, tucked in a corner behind the church, is nurturing several tomato varieties, sweet and hot peppers, cilantro and parsley. Just outside in raised beds, they will grow several kinds of lettuce and other vegetables.

Partnering with the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture at Woodlawn, the church's

guests and volunteers plant the seeds, regulate the temperature, transfer seedlings to pots, water the plants and harden them outside to ready them for planting. They will use many vegetables in the church's kitchen and teach guests how to grow their own vegetables.

How to Buy Plants

Customers can place orders now online at www.risinghopeumc.org/plants. On a designated day after May 10 to be determined, customers can pick up their purchases at five sites (the first three

are in the Mount Vernon area): Rising Hope, 8220 Russell Road; Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 1301 Collingwood Road; Washington Farm United Methodist Church, 3921 Old Mill Road; Christ Church, 7600 Ox Road, Fairfax Station; and Trinity United Methodist Church, 2911 Cameron Mills Road, Alexandria.

Rising Hope

Rising Hope is a mission church which serves the "least, lost, lonely and left out," typically people unable to support a traditional church. The church has a kitchen, food mar-

ket, emergency referral service, a "hope closet" and other services. On cold nights, unhoused people can sleep in the fellowship hall.

Many of the congregants, whom Wilds calls guests, are or were without housing at some point. The founder and retired former pastor, Kerry Kincannon, started the church ministering out of his car's trunk. This year marks Rising Hope's 30 years of service. The church welcomes donations to support their work.

The church's philosophy: "Love unconditionally, include everyone and celebrate life."

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH/THE GAZETTE

'Please Call the Case'

With no further Supreme Court sessions scheduled until late May, Virginia's redistricting remains in legal limbo.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

Chief Justice Cleo E. Powell of the Supreme Court of Virginia opened the 58-minute special session hearing on April 27 with a clear directive: "All of the justices of the court are sitting. Please call the case." The clerk called the matter that has paralyzed Virginia politics: Don Scott, in his official capacity as Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates, et al. v. Ryan T. McDougle, State Senator, et al.

For nearly an hour, the justices heard oral arguments by constitutional attorneys — including Matthew A. Seligman and John E. Lichtenstein for the speaker, and Thomas R. McCarthy for the Republican challengers. They discussed whether the Democratic-led legislature bypassed constitutional safeguards. The hearing focused on two primary questions that could determine the fate of the 2026 midterms: whether the Virginia General Assembly exceeded its authority by passing a redistricting amendment during a session originally called for budget disputes, and if the constitutional requirement for an "intervening election" refers only to the single day in November or if the process became "void" because early voting had already begun when the amendment was first passed.

As of Tuesday morning, May 5, the Supreme Court of Virginia holds the final say on the state's congressional power balance. The court is currently reviewing the contested April 21 redistricting referendum, which introduced a new map that could fundamentally alter Virginia's U.S. House representation.

Although unofficial data from the Virginia Public Access Project (VPAP) shows the amendment passing with 51.69% of the vote, the results have yet to be officially certified.

The Supreme Court's decision to freeze the map has left candidates and constituents in uncertainty, unable to identify their legal districts or representatives as candidate filing deadlines loom. Simultaneously, the State Board of Elections and local registrars face an administrative pause. They can-

not print ballots or assign precincts until the court resolves which maps are valid.

On April 28, the Supreme Court denied Attorney General Jay Jones's request for an emergency stay. The court's order was brief: "Upon consideration whereof, the Court denies the motion." The court's decision kept in place Judge Jack Hurley Jr.'s ruling from the Tazewell County Circuit Court, leaving the April 21 redistricting referendum results uncertified while the justices deliberate on the validity of the amendment process. The court has effectively hit "pause." Because the new map (House Bill 29) becomes legally operative only after the referendum is certified, the state is currently caught between two conflicting realities: the old 2021 commission-drawn districts and the new 2026 legislature-drawn districts.

'Six-Day Map' and Calendar Gaps

For a brief six-day window, spanning April 22 through the April 27 hearing, the new map in House Bill 29 served as the state's presumptive redistricting plan. Under these boundaries, Democrats could gain four seats based on 2025 election performance.

The Supreme Court's intervention effectively froze this process, suspending the redistricting effort championed by Democratic Gov. Abigail Spanberger.

No additional Virginia Supreme Court sessions are listed for early May. The next formal activity on the calendar is a writ panel on May 27. This creates a scheduling gap as candidate filing deadlines approach. While the court typically issues and posts opinions on Thursdays, it has the authority to issue a special order at any time. Without such an intervention, election officials are looking toward Thursday, May 7, or later as the next potential windows for legal clarity.

Resistance and Rhetoric After the Referendum

After the April 21 referendum, Democrats framed the redistricting as a defensive, pro-democracy counter-move, while Republicans characterized it as an unprecedented constitutional overreach.



A voter casts a ballot at a Fairfax County polling place during the special election for a redistricting constitutional amendment, April 21, 2026. The passage of the referendum 51.69% to 48.31% could pave the way for a new congressional map.

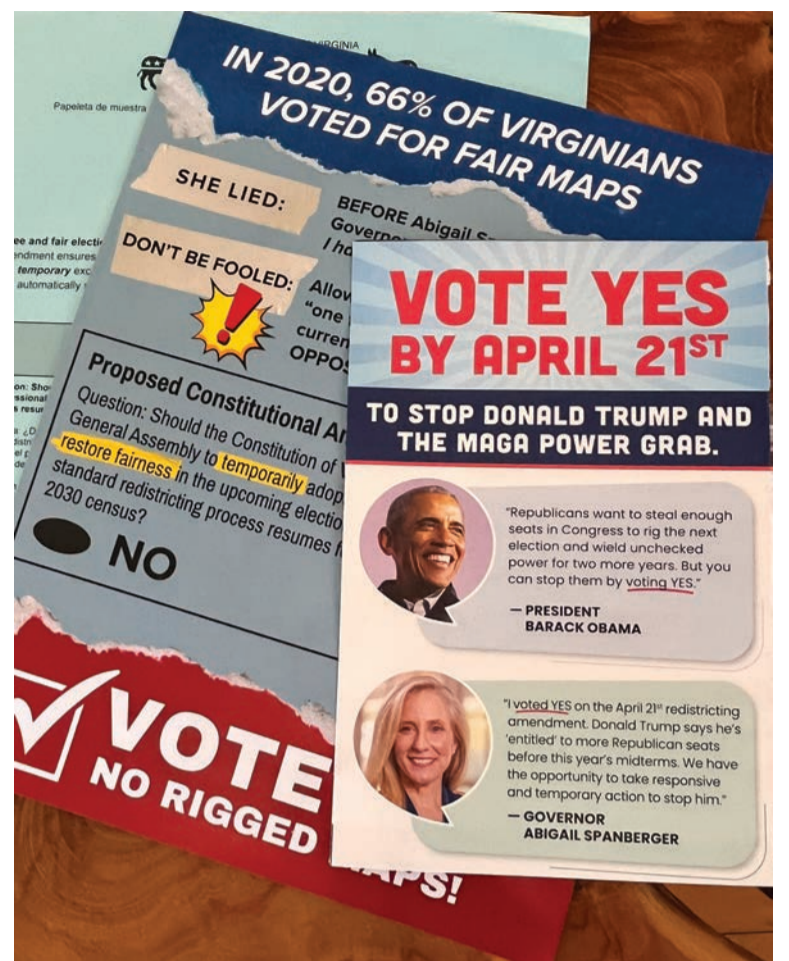
Spanberger said the "Yes" victory was a defensive necessity to counter a national executive branch seeking to expand Republican influence through gerrymandering. "Virginia voters have spoken, and tonight they approved a temporary measure to push back against a President who claims he is 'entitled' to more Republican seats in Congress. Virginians watched other states go along with those demands without voter input — and we refused to let that stand. We responded the right way: at the ballot box."

Senate Majority Leader Scott Surovell (D-Fairfax) described the referendum's "yes" approval as a victory for democracy. "Faced with unprecedented gerrymandering in other states, naked attempts to decide elections before a single vote is cast, Virginians refused to stand idle," Surovell said. "They voted to reclaim the founding principle that maps should reflect communities, not protect incumbents, and that Congress should be chosen by voters, not the other way around."

Jeff Ryer, chairman of the Republican Party of Virginia, signaled that the party's strategy shifted to a constitutional challenge. "The battle now shifts to the courts to determine if the General Assembly has the license to violate the Constitution."

The Republican National Committee (RNC) v. Virginia State Board of Elections successfully "froze" the process. The Supreme Court of Virginia denied the state's request for an emergency stay on April 28, keeping the referendum results uncertified.

Redistricting favoring Republi-



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/ THE GAZETTE

Campaign literature for and against the redistricting constitutional amendment is displayed at a Fairfax County polling place during the special election, April 21, 2026. Handouts from both parties highlight the national political stakes of the local referendum.

cans moved forward in Texas already for five likely seats, while Virginia's new maps could favor Dems in four additional seats. California appears to be a four seat advantage for Dems. Florida redistricting is a likely plus four for the GOP. And so on.

Multitude of Courtroom Standoffs

The legal battle has currently been fought on legal fronts across the state. In the Richmond City Circuit Court, the case RNC v. Virginia State Board of Elections addressed a preliminary injunction regarding the contested results. Simultaneously, in the case known as Tazewell II (Koski v. RNC), Judge Jack Hurley Jr. ruled the special election "void ab initio" — finding the General Assembly violated Article XII, Section 1 of the Virginia Constitution by bypassing the mandatory 90-day public notice period.

In Tazewell I (Scott v. McDougle), Speaker Don Scott is defending the map's procedural history against State Sen. Ryan McDougle. McDougle argues the process was "void ab initio"—claiming the legislature failed to meet the "intervening election" requirement because the amendment was first passed after early voting had already begun. Attorneys for the Commonwealth and Democratic leaders maintained that the legislature followed the "letter of the law," defining "election" strictly as a single day. The justices' questions focused heavily on whether early voting essentially "starts" an

election, a pivotal distinction that could determine if the redistricting amendment is upheld or struck down.

Candidates and Districts in Limbo

The shifting district lines have left representatives in a state of limbo, effectively campaigning in two different versions of Virginia's districts simultaneously. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8th) could see his seat stretched 150 miles south to reach Williamsburg and Newport News. Rep. Suhas Subramanyam (D-10th) would find his district relocated out of eastern Fairfax and anchored heavily in Loudoun and Prince William counties. Rep. James Walkinshaw (D-11th) faces a district expansion that would reach to the West Virginia border, removing him from some areas in Fairfax County.

Supreme Court of Virginia To Decide

The seven-member Supreme Court panel, led by Chief Justice Cleo E. Powell, and includes Justices Chafin, Fulton, Kelsey, Mann, McCullough, and Russell, must decide whether the mid-decade redistricting referendum is a valid exercise of legislative power or a constitutional overreach. As of May 5, 2026, the Commonwealth awaits a final ruling that will determine the boundaries for the upcoming midterm elections.

Primary elections in Virginia are set for Aug. 4, 2026, with early voting beginning June 18.

Potomac Is the Nation's Most Endangered River

Growth of data centers and massive spill of raw sewage are cited as major threats.

BY GLENDA BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

The Potomac River is the nation's most endangered river, announced the advocacy group American Rivers in mid-April.

The organization singled out two threats: the Jan. 19 spill from a ruptured pipe that sent over 240 million gallons of raw sewage into the river and the rapid growth of data centers in the region.

"As the backdrop to our nation's capital, the Potomac should reflect the highest standards of water health and stewardship," said Pat Calvert, American Rivers Virginia Conservation Director. "The Potomac is at an inflection point and cannot continue to sustain the rapid expansion of water-guzzling data centers drawing from its waters."

The six-foot-diameter Potomac interceptor carries 60 million gallons of raw sewage a day 54 miles from Dulles Airport to the Blue Plains Treatment plant in southeast Washington, D.C.

Immediately after the pipeline break in January, E. coli bacteria levels were 10,000 times higher in some places than the Environmental Protection Agency's standards for river recreation. At a March 19 Alexandria meeting, Michael Rolband, Director of Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality, said, "We believe the water is safe for contact but not recommended for swimming." As the sewage flows down the river, "It gets diluted," he said, and state tests show "no significant impacts to fisheries and recreational activities."

In mid-March, authorities lifted recreational advisories for most of the river. Several universities and others are analyzing long-term impacts.

Throughout the ordeal, officials have said that drinking water has not been harmed because Fairfax Water's intake is several miles upstream of the spill site.

On data centers, American Rivers said that the region has over 300 data centers with as many as 1,000 more predicted that could take up nearly 20,000 acres of land. Large data centers can use up to five million gallons of water a day each, equivalent to the use of a town of 10,000 to 50,000 people, reports the Environmental and Energy Study Institute. Most governmental permitting does not require watershed-wide analysis, advanced stormwater treatment or disclosures of water use and dis-

charge, American Rivers stressed.

What's the Fix?

On the spill, American Rivers pinpoints the system's aging infrastructure, noting that many pipes in the national capital region exceed their 50-year design life. The Potomac Interceptor is over 60 years old.

The organization called on Congress to extend the State Revolving Fund, the main source of federal water infrastructure funding, and the Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Grant program, both set to expire on Sept. 30, 2026.

For data centers, the group urged decision-makers to require full public disclosure of water withdrawals, discharges and stormwater management plans and a comprehensive environmental assessment of cumulative watershed-level impacts, including effects on water quality, water availability, ecosystems, fisheries, recreation and downstream treatment costs. They are advocating for stronger stormwater and wastewater discharge standards, facility siting, solid waste management, contaminated site remediation requirements, chemical spill prevention and response and long-term monitoring as part of any future data center permit approvals.

Going to Court

On April 20, the U.S. Department of Justice and Maryland sued DC Water, the pipeline's manager, over the sewage spill. The federal lawsuit alleges that DC Water neglected aging, corroding structural problems that led to the pipe's collapse.

The Maryland suit faults DC Water for allowing 14 different pollutants into the river, including E. coli and mercury.

DC Water issued a statement that same day saying they are "working now to accelerate the rehabilitation of more than 2,700 linear feet of pipeline From the outset, DC Water's highest priority was to safely and quickly contain the overflow and repair the damaged section of the Potomac Interceptor," their press release asserted. "Crews implemented an emergency bypass system that successfully managed the majority of the overflow within five days and fully stopped all discharges to the Potomac River within 21 days. The repairs of the affected segment were completed in 55 days."

The River

The Potomac River drains



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

The Woodrow Wilson Bridge crosses the Potomac River south of Alexandria.



The Potomac River was recently named the nation's "most endangered." It separates Virginia from Maryland and the District of Columbia.

14,670 square miles across four states and Washington, D.C. In 2020, the watershed had a population of 6.89 million. Daily water supply withdrawals average 486 million gallons in the Washington area, according to the Interstate

Commission on the Potomac River Basin. More than 5 million people depend on the river for drinking water.

Dubbed by some as "the nation's river," the Potomac was also designated as the most endangered

in 2012 because of pollution from agriculture and urban runoff.

Information

American Rivers, <https://www.americanrivers.org/>
DC Water, www.dcwater.com

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Women's Pilgrimage Honors Earth

Journey of 32 days, 500 miles promotes unity and balance.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE GAZETTE

Along with protests and marches, it seems pilgrimages have re-surfaced recently to promote interest, capture social media followers, and grow participation in spiritualism and causes.

In February, a group of Buddhist monks on their Walk for Peace, a 120-day, 2,300 mile, walking pilgrimage from Texas to Washington D.C. caught national and local attention. Through tragedy, hardship and poor winter weather conditions, the monks persevered to share their message of peace and mindfulness. In late April, another group of spiritualists reached our area on their 500-mile walk which started in March, from Asheville NC to Washington D.C. "The Great Mother March, A Women's Empowerment Pilgrimage" sought to "reweave the human and earth connection." Their effort culminated in Washington after 32 days; arriving on Earth Day, April 22.

Not thought of as a center of mysticism, both groups did find Lorton a convenient stop on their journeys. The Monks took their lunch break at the Hoa Nghiem Pagoda on Feb. 8; and the Mother's March was hosted by the Workhouse Arts Center for the evening of April 20. The women's pilgrimage had walkers start, join and leave; coming and going as energy and weather dictate for each individual.

While many take rest days, three core pilgrims, ranging in age from 22 to 68, walked, or sometimes skipped, most of the distance since the start, traveling up to 27 miles per day.

The participants gathered from many locations across the country. Friendly and free-spirited, several are life coaches and artists who emphasize creative spirit. The Arts Center was a perfect fit for the travelers, who continued work on their community art canvas project, their typical evening activity.

One pilgrim, Megan Keelher of New Hampshire, describes herself as a life coach, doula, and practitioner of Ayurveda: a traditional



Whitney Freya, organizer/leader of the Great Mother March, with her daughter Riley Ferre.



Fully packed cars provided rides for walkers and transported camping gear.

Indian medicine system emphasizing diet, herbal remedies and lifestyle. She sees art as "sacred; with the use of art to heal, and as a philosophy of finding a better way." At the Arts Center, they also took an opportunity to practice their "flash dance" choreography. About two dozen women participated in the dance at the side of the Tidal Basin in Washington DC, their final destination.

Whitney Freya of Oregon, the organizer and leader of the pilgrimage said, "We don't expect an instant change [from problems faced today]. But it's about a way to meet this needed change, modeling step by step, face to face interactions. We've been manipulated into believing we are our own

enemies. That doesn't do us any good. People we met share mutual respect ... We've been handing out hearts, lightening up the atmosphere."

For more on the group, see www.greatmothermarch.com

Once prominent as described in the histories of ancient civilizations such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, and India, pilgrimages were made by people of several cultures and religions to show religious or spiritual devotion or as a demonstration of respect or dedication. In modern times, we often hear of pilgrimages taken to holy sites, such as Mecca or Jerusalem.

Recently, our area has become a last way-stop for those on journeys to Washington D.C.

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE GAZETTE



The front door of the new museum space.

Franconia Museum
7130 Silver Lake Blvd,
Kingstowne,
VA 22315

Operating hours are currently limited

Supervisor Lusk attended opening day at the museum.



Franconia Museum Finds a New Home in the New Government Center

Museum gets an upgrade in the new district building on Beulah Street.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

When the local officials moved into the new building on Beulah Street, the Franconia Museum went with them and is now showing off the old Franconia in a brand new space.

Moving a room full of fragile and/or dusty artifacts from a life gone by was more complicated and time consuming than they planned though. Although the new museum space officially opened on April 11, they are only open one day a week for a while until further notice.

Nathaniel Lee is one of the curators that has been with the museum for years and was part of the move.

"It's a beautiful new space," he said.

The original museum opened over 20 years ago in a space in the old building that slowly evolved into a real cornerstone of the Franconia community. There were many farm artifacts, Civil War items, parade pictures and the big "Franconia" train station sign that is going to be part of the new museum too.

This time around, the officials at Franconia Museum are working with a museum expert from the Smithsonian to handle, store and display the artifacts in a more professional manner. Since the Smithsonian was closed during the recent government shut down, this employee was not working so he came over and volunteered at the Franconia Museum.

When they cleaned out the old museum space on Franconia Road, they did dig up an old Civil War ammunition pouch that belonged to a local soldier named Carey Lee, a person related to the Nalls family that is affiliated with the museum and nearby Nalls Produce. It had been on an obscure shelf for nearly 20 years.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

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MEETS EVERY SUNDAY

Bird Walks. 8 a.m. At 6401 George Washington Memorial Parkway, Alexandria. Friends of Dyke Marsh organizers lead bird walks every Sunday morning. Meet at 8 a.m. in the south parking lot of the Belle Haven picnic area. Walks are led by experienced birders and everyone is welcome to join.

MEETS EVERY MONDAY

Monday Morning Bird Walk. 7 a.m. Meets at 3701 Lockheed Boulevard Alexandria. The Monday Morning Bird Walk is sponsored by the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park and takes place every Monday at 7 a.m. April-September and 8 a.m. October-March. Following the walk, members of the group gather at the nearby Denny's for breakfast and to compile the morning's bird list. Call (703) 768-2525.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

Wednesday Night Bingo. 7 p.m. At Atlas Brew Works, 2429 Mandeville Lane, Alexandria. The Capital City Showcase, the company that brings you some of the DC area's best events, is hosting an amazing night of everyone's favorite game at Atlas Brew Works Alexandria. Win prizes on every round, and the winner of the final round gets a \$50 Atlas Brew Works gift card for your next visit! There's also \$6 select Atlas drafts! Plus pizza served from the world famous Andy's Pizza! Email at capitalcityshowcase@gmail.com

MGNV PLANT CLINICS ARE OPEN

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

YEAR ROUND ON SUNDAYS

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

AMERICA'S 250TH BIRTHDAY

Starting now through summer 2026, Alexandria will host major events and experiences commemorating America's 250th birthday. Located on the Potomac River just minutes from Washington, D.C. and George Washington's Mount Vernon, Alexandria, Virginia invites families, friends and history-lovers to stay in, explore and commemorate America's 250th birthday in a city older than the United States itself with a dynamic lineup of events and immersive experiences. Learn more and find additional details on these and other events at VisitAlexandria.com/250.

250th Events Itinerary:

- ❖ May-November: A temporary public art installation from artist Sandy Williams IV will commemorate the signing of the Declaration of Independence as part of the City of Alexandria's Time & Place public art series.
- ❖ June 12-14: Alexandria's major signature 250th event, Sails on the Potomac, will host iconic tall ships as a Sail Virginia 2026 Affiliate Harbor and will feature a weekend packed with activities including Alexandria Jazz Fest performances.
- ❖ June: A new exhibit will open at the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum. Called Stories of U.S. Collections Capture our History, the exhibit will bring out objects from the collection that are seldom seen.
- ❖ July 3-4: Enjoy evening Fourth of July fireworks shows at George Washington's Mount Vernon on July 3 and 4, and a daytime fireworks show on July 4.



The Royal Restaurant features Mother's Day Dining on Sunday, May 10, 2026 in Alexandria.

❖ July 11: Take part in the City of Alexandria's 277th/USA 250th Birthday Celebration complete with fireworks, music and more at Oronoco Bay Park along Alexandria's waterfront.

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

From glow parties and jazz on the waterfront to family picnics and fireworks on the Potomac, there is something happening in every corner of our city. Grab your calendar. You are going to want to mark a few dates.

❖ Events are free unless otherwise stated.

Asian American Pacific Islander Month Celebration

Saturday, May 30, 3-7 p.m. | Patrick Henry Recreation Center

Celebrate culture, history, and community through food, live performances, art, youth activities, and storytelling in this vibrant family-friendly event.

48th Annual ALX Jazz Fest
Friday, June 12, 12-6 p.m.; Saturday, June 13, 12-9 p.m.; Sunday, June 14, 12-6 p.m. | Waterfront Park

ALX Jazz Fest celebrates its 48th annual event as part of the Sails on the Potomac series honoring the USA's 250th anniversary, featuring three days of music: Americana Roots (Friday), American Jazz and Poetry (Saturday), and Future Sounds of America (Sunday).

Juneteenth Block Party
Friday, June 19, 4-7 p.m. | Charles Houston Recreation Center

Come and celebrate the people, contributions, traditions and culture of Black Americans who have helped build and shape America. Enjoy food, live music, dance presentations, and recreation programming in celebration of this national holiday.

Alexandria and USA Birthday Celebration
Sunday, July 12 | Oronoco Bay Park
Celebrate Alexandria's 277th birthday and the USA's 250th with live music, food, and a fireworks finale over the Potomac River at 9:30 p.m. A can't-miss summer night.

Kids and Teens

Nerf the Turf

\$19, Ages 7-12

Friday, June 5, 6:30-8:30 p.m. | Patrick Henry

Elementary School

Build teamwork and sportsmanship in this instructor-led foam dart showdown. Bring your gear; we'll provide the ammo.

Dodgeball Fanatics

\$19, Ages 7-12

Friday, May 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m. | Patrick Henry Elementary School

Duck, dip, dive, and dodge in a safe and structured environment designed for skill building and fun.

Parents Night Out

\$25, Ages 5-12

Fridays, May 8 & June 12, 6:30-8:45 p.m. | Mount Vernon Recreation Center

Enjoy an evening out while your kids enjoy games and activities in a safe and energetic setting.

Charles Houston Kiddie Cabaret

\$6, Ages 1-5

Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. | Charles Houston Recreation Center

Dress up, dance to kiddie favorites, enjoy lunch, and celebrate in style with a parent or guardian.

For Adults

Charles Houston Line Dance Social

Ages 18+

Tuesday, May 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m. | Charles Houston Recreation Center

Enjoy an evening of toe-tapping fun. No experience needed. Just bring your enthusiasm.

Live on Top of The Hill Concert Series

Ages 18+

Fridays, June 27 & July 25, 12-3 p.m. | William Ramsay Recreation Center

Relax with live folk, cover, and mariachi music in a welcoming community setting.

Top of The Hill Adult Social

Ages 18+

Friday, July 31, 6:30-9 p.m. | William Ramsay Recreation Center

Connect, unwind, enjoy games and themed nights, and meet new friends in this casual summer gathering.

Explore full details and register at alexandriava.gov/RPCA/Events.

ALEXANDRIA ACES SEEK LOCAL HOSTS

The Alexandria Aces collegiate summer baseball team, the reigning heart of Alexandria's summer sports scene, is officially seeking

local families to host student-athletes for the upcoming 2026 season. Celebrating 18 years of premier competition in the Cal Ripken Sr. Collegiate Baseball League (CRSCBL), the organization is looking for residents to provide housing for players from May 30 through July 25. Requirements for hosting are simple: families provide a private bedroom and access to laundry facilities. In return, families receive all-access season tickets for their household and an invitation to the team's annual Host Family Appreciation Night at Frank Mann Field. How to Apply: Interested families can find full program details and application forms by visiting the "Host Families" section at alexandriaaces.org. For more information, contact Maggie Crane, Host Family Coordinator, at 617-645-5860 or email her at maggiecrane19@gmail.com.

NOW THRU MAY 17

UNSETTLED Exhibit. At Multiple Exposures Gallery, in Studio 7 at the Torpedo Factory, Alexandria. Multiple Exposures Gallery (MEG) is excited to present UNSETTLED, a fine art photography exhibition exploring moments of unease, transition, and decision. Juried by artist and educator Susan Ruddick Bloom, the exhibit features 29 photographs that capture fleeting, pivotal moments, both physical and emotional.

MAY 1-23

The Alexandria City High School Titan Student Art Exhibition. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Experience student creativity firsthand. Gallery hours: Thursdays 12-6pm, Fridays 12-9pm, Saturdays & Sundays 12-6pm. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

MAY 5 TO JUNE 28

"Catching the Light" 2026 Art Exhibition and Sale. At Green Spring Gardens Horticultural Center, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Artists Reception - Sunday, May 17 from 1-3 p.m. Potomac Valley Watercolorists presents "Catching the Light," the 2026 edition of their annual nature-focused Art Exhibition and Sale. Green Spring Gardens "Art in The Garden Program" sponsored by the Friends of Green Spring invites visitors to enjoy this

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local, creative event. This annual fine art show spotlights many of our region's most highly-skilled and well-known water media artists, and features more than 100 original framed works on display and available for purchase. Visit www.potomacvalleywatercolorists.org

WEDNESDAY/MAY 6

History Talk. 12 to 1 p.m. At National Museum of the U.S. Army, 1775 Liberty Drive, Fort Belvoir. In this History Talk, trace the Army's foundational role in American memorialization, from General John J. Pershing's influence and the symbolism of white marble crosses to debates over repatriation and permanent overseas burial. Follow the transition from a military program to a civilian agency, the expansion of memorial efforts after World War II, collaboration with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, and modern-day Memorial Day commemorations worldwide. Visit the website: <https://www.thenmusa.org/events/>

FRIDAY/MAY 8

Fiesta Asia Dances. 7-8:30 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Community based social and line dancing – from Joget to Bhangra, Todo Toto to Dabke - are incredibly popular across Asia. It is a big part of vibrant celebrations and everyday communal life. Whether you are on bustling streets, attending weddings, or celebrating festivals, you are likely to be invited to join in the lively swaying, shaking, stepping, and sashaying. If you love social and line dancing, this event is perfect for you.

MAY 8-10

Nepenthe Gallery Presents Bruce Springsteen Exhibition. At 7918 Fort Hunt Rd. in Alexandria. The exhibit, "Greetings From Alexandria, VA," celebrates the enduring legacy of Bruce Springsteen. Timed to coincide with Springsteen's Washington, D.C. concert at Nationals Park, this three-day event offers fans a rare opportunity to experience and acquire historic images and memorabilia honoring one of rock's most iconic performers. Admission is free, and all photographs and memorabilia on display will be available for purchase.

Exhibition Hours:
Friday: 11 AM – 6 PM
Saturday: 9 AM – 4 PM
Sunday: 9 AM – 4 PM

SATURDAY/MAY 9

Mandoleers. 2 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Join the Mandoleers for a joyful and musically diverse performance by a one-of-a-kind conductor-led mandolin orchestra. The Mandoleers feature guitars, mandolins, mandocellos, and a double bass and are the longest continuously operating mandolin orchestra in the United States. Their repertoire reflects the rich versatility of the mandolin and guitar and ranges from classical and semi-classical works to jazz, folk and contemporary pieces. They embrace traditional and modern styles, offering audiences a diverse and engaging musical experience.

SATURDAY/MAY 9

Del Ray Artisans' Spring Art Market. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. At Mount Vernon Rec Center Fields adjacent to Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features original creations by local artists in a variety of mediums, including ceramics, fiber, jewelry, mixed media, photography, and more. Perfect gifts for your home, Mother's Day, or other occasions! Details at DelRayArtisans.org/event/spring-art-market-2026

SUNDAY/MAY 10

Side-by-Side Concert. 3 p.m. At Schlesinger Concert Hall, 4915 E Campus Drive, Alexandria. The Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic (WashMetPhil) with the Washington Metropolitan Youth Orchestra (WMYO) featuring pianist Stewart Goodyear, is proud



The Nepenthe Gallery presents an exhibition on Bruce Springsteen, "Greetings from Alexandria, VA" on May 8-10, 2026.

to present a Side-by-Side Concert.

Program Highlights:

- ❖ Jessie Montgomery's Hymn for Everyone – played Side-by-Side with WMYO, opens the concert with a radiant spirit of unity and collective voice, blending lyricism and rhythmic vitality in music that feels both deeply personal and broadly communal.
- ❖ George Gershwin's Concerto in F for Piano and Orchestra – performed by guest artist Stewart Goodyear. Proclaimed "a phenomenon" by the Los Angeles Times and "one of the best pianists of his generation", Mr. Goodyear brings his signature brilliance to this iconic work. Gershwin seamlessly blends classical form with jazz idioms, creating music that is lively, expressive, and full of character.
- ❖ Modest Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition – played Side-by-Side with WMYO, our concert concludes with a journey through vivid musical "pictures" inspired by a gallery of artwork. Each movement transports listeners to a different scene, from playful and whimsical to grand and powerful, inviting audiences to imagine themselves walking through an exhibition brought to life by the orchestra.

Visit wmpmusic.org

MOTHER'S DAY DINING ON SUNDAY, MAY 10

Mother's Day is just around the corner, and several North Virginia restaurants are setting the table with a lineup of celebratory brunches and dinners designed to make Mom feel truly special.

The Majestic: This Mother's Day, gather around the table at newly opened The Majestic by Chef Santiago Lopez and celebrate moms who make every neighborhood, every family, and every moment a little more meaningful. Join the restaurant for brunch or dinner – no prix fixe, no fuss. Just a beautiful meal in a place that feels like home, surrounded by the people who matter most. Every mother and

mother figure will enjoy a complimentary mimosa at brunch or a glass of sparkling wine at dinner.

Palette 22: Located in Arlington, Palette 22 offers a colorful, celebratory take on Mother's Day, with special dishes available alongside its signature Bottomless Brunch and dinner experience. Brunch feels lively and generous, with a continuous flow of globally inspired small plates designed for sharing. In the evening, the menu leans into bold, expressive flavors with specials like Watermelon Aguachile, Stuffed Calamari layered with white paella, manchego, and black sofrito, and a deeply comforting Braised Lamb Stew. It's a vibrant, feel-good setting where every detail invites you to slow down, connect, and celebrate Mom in a way that feels personal and memorable. Every mother and mother figure will enjoy a complimentary mimosa at brunch or a glass of sparkling wine at dinner.

Vola's Dockside Grill: Vola's Dockside Grill sets the scene for a laid-back, waterfront Mother's Day with comfort-driven dishes that still feel special. On Mother's Day, guests can enjoy brunch and dinner specials including a rich Crab Cake Benedict, alongside bright Lemon Ricotta Pancakes topped with berry compote and lemon-maple syrup. Come evening, bold yet approachable flavors take over with a Grilled Bone-In Pork Chop paired with roasted sweet potatoes and cherry-apricot chutney, and Pan Seared Rockfish served with parmesan polenta, spring vegetables, and lemon butter. It's easy, craveable dining by the water. Every mother and mother figure will enjoy a complimentary mimosa at brunch or a glass of sparkling wine at dinner.

Royal Restaurant: Royal Restaurant offers a warm, neighborhood setting for Mother's Day, with special brunch and dinner dishes available for the occasion. Brunch brings bold, comforting flavors with Crab Chilaquiles topped with salsa roja, queso fresco,

and a sunny egg, alongside a refined Lobster Benedict featuring South African lobster tail and Old Bay hollandaise. In the evening, the specials continue with a Korean Marinated Skirt Steak, and Pan Seared Rockfish paired with jambalaya rice and andouille sausage. It's a thoughtful, flavor-driven experience perfect for a relaxed celebration. Every mother and mother figure will enjoy a complimentary mimosa at brunch or a glass of sparkling wine at dinner.

Mia's Italian Kitchen: Mia's Italian Kitchen brings a warm, festive spirit to Mother's Day with specials available alongside its signature Bottomless Brunch and dinner. Brunch is lively and abundant, with a steady flow of Italian favorites made for sharing—think passed plates, flowing glasses, and a table that feels full in every sense, perfect for celebrating together. In the evening, the specials lean into bold, comforting flavors with Frutti Di Mare Linguini in a rich lobster-tomato broth with garlic, herbs, and seafood, alongside Grilled Sirloin served with risotto alla milanese and chianti demi-glace. It's a joyful, generous dining experience designed to bring everyone together and make Mom feel truly celebrated. Every mother and mother figure will enjoy a complimentary mimosa at brunch or a glass of sparkling wine at dinner.

Barca Pier & Wine Bar: Barca Pier offers a Mother's Day experience that feels like an escape with all day specials. Items like Seared Duck Breast with harissa brussels sprouts and pomegranate molasses bring depth and warmth, while Surf And Turf pairs za'atar scallops with blackened tenderloin and bright citrus notes. Bacalao Tostada adds a fresh, savory bite with salt cod brandade and herbs. Designed for sharing, sipping, and taking in the waterfront energy, it is the kind of celebration that unfolds naturally. Every mother and mother figure will enjoy a complimentary mimosa at brunch or a glass of sparkling wine at dinner.

Ada's on the River: Ada's on the River sets the tone for an elegant, thoughtfully elevated Mother's Day, with special brunch and dinner dishes available alongside its signature waterfront experience. Brunch feels indulgent yet refined, with highlights like Lobster Benedict with Maine lobster, crème fraîche, and bear-naise, and Wagyu Steak and Eggs featuring ultra-grade wagyu skirt steak, potato pavé, and chimichurri—all best enjoyed against sweeping river views. In the evening, the celebration continues with a menu that balances bold flavor and finesse, from the richly marbled 15 oz Mishima Reserve Wagyu Ribeye with sherry mushrooms and a chorizo-manchego twice baked potato, to Blackened Rockfish with lemongrass coconut curry, asparagus, and fresh herbs. End on a high note with the Grand Marnier Soufflé, a signature finale that makes the entire experience feel truly special. Every mother and mother figure will enjoy a complimentary mimosa at brunch or a glass of sparkling wine at dinner.

Theismann's Restaurant & Bar: This Mother's Day, Theismann's Restaurant & Bar is inviting families to gather, celebrate, and enjoy a meal that's as easygoing as it is satisfying, with special brunch and dinner offerings available. Brunch brings a lively, crowd-pleasing energy with its Bottomless Brunch, perfect for sharing favorites, raising a glass, and settling in for a relaxed celebration. In the evening, classic dishes take the spotlight, from Grilled Filet Mignon with garlic mashed potatoes and red wine demi-glace to Pistachio Crusted Halibut with lemon risotto and asparagus. It's a welcoming, no-fuss way to celebrate Mom—where everyone leaves full, happy, and well taken care of.

TUESDAY/MAY 12

The Chamber ALX's Young Leaders Network. After Hours. 5:30-7:00 p.m. At Dive Del Ray, Alexandria. Join in on May 12th for the first installment of our Young Leaders After Hours! Be among the first to check out Del Ray's brand new seasonal pop-up—Dive Del Ray—bringing a bold dive bar aesthetic and fresh energy to the neighborhood. Sip, snack, and

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 15

Public Scoping and Early Notice of a Proposed Activity with the Potential to Impact Floodplains Environmental Assessment for Fort Belvoir North Area Campus Development at Fort Belvoir United States Army Fort Belvoir, Virginia

Description: Interested parties are hereby notified that the United States Army intends to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) and requests receipt of public scoping comments. This EA will evaluate the Army's proposal to construct and operate new facilities and infrastructure in Fort Belvoir North Area (FBNA) in support of the FBNA Area Development Plan (ADP) (Proposed Action).

Statutory Authority: This notice is being issued to all interested parties in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Department of War NEPA Implementing Procedures. This posting also serves as a notice in accordance with Section 2(a)(4) of Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management, and Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands.

Background: FBNA, formerly the Army Engineer Proving Ground, is in Springfield, VA, located 1.5 miles northwest from Fort Belvoir's Main Post across I-95. FBNA houses the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) headquarters and Army support facilities, including a child development center, central utility plant, and fire station. In support of the ADP, FBNA is continuing development of an Intelligence Community Campus due to its location within the National Capital Region and previous planning and development efforts.

Proposed Action: The Proposed Action involves constructing and operating a series of projects and improvements at FBNA, including facility developments, new parking infrastructure, security improvements, roadway improvements, and utility network improvements.

The Army is evaluating Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative), Alternative 2, and the No Action Alternative. Under the Preferred Alternative, developments on the eastside of the FBNA campus would include the construction of a Joint Integrated Logistics Center (JILC), a Visitor Control Center (VCC), three new parking structures, and two new administrative buildings, as well as associated stormwater management (SWM), transportation, security, and utility improvements. Developments on the westside of the FBNA campus would include construction of expanded Distribution Center parking, truck trailer parking, and two new buildings along with a parking structure south of the Distribution Center as well as associated roadway, utility, and SWM management improvements. Key security improvements include new perimeter fencing, three new Access Control Points, and a new Traffic Control Point (TCP). Key roadway improvements include the construction of roadways south of the Distribution Center, the construction of Spine Road, the extension of Heller Road and the construction of Heller Road Bridge, minor improvements to Barta Road and the addition of a new traffic signal on Barta Road at the entrance to the proposed VCC. Additionally, the Army would potentially purchase a parcel of land between the FBNA boundary and Fullerton Road from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to construct a connection between Fullerton Road and the FBNA campus. Lastly, key utility network improvements include improvements to potable water, wastewater, stormwater, electric (including solar installations), natural gas, and communications.

Under Alternative 2, infrastructure and development projects would be identical to those described under the Preferred Alternative with the exception that the Army would not purchase the VDOT parcel and the connection to Fullerton Road would not be constructed. Instead, Alternative 2 would entail construction and operation of a TCP on the existing I-95 off-ramp spur.

Construction would be phased over the next 20 years and occur in coordination with existing tenants to ensure minimal disruption to ongoing missions and operations. The new facilities would accommodate approximately 5,525 additional personnel. Operations would integrate into existing FBNA activities, focusing on administrative, logistical support, and building maintenance, with most operations occurring indoors.

Tasks to facilitate the Proposed Action would occur within the Federal Emergency Management Agency 100-year floodplain as well as wetlands. No impacts to the long-term function of the 100-year floodplain have been identified, nor is there an increased potential for flooding either on-site or off-site. Proposed work is necessary in this area; therefore, there is no practicable alternative to working in the floodplain.

Public Review: The Army is seeking comments from Federal, State, and local agencies, Tribes, and individuals who may be interested in or affected by the Proposed Action. This input will be used in preparing the Draft EA. Please provide your comments by May 24, 2026. Please reply to:

Michael Tran at michael.h.tran12.civ@army.mil and Clellan Murphy at clellan.r.mcmurry.civ@army.mil. Email responses are preferred, although letter responses may be submitted to Fort Belvoir Public Affairs Office at usarmy.belvoir.id-sustainment.mbx.public-affairs-office@army.mil or submitted to Fort Belvoir Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 269, 9820 Flagler Road, Fort Belvoir VA 22060.

Draft EA and Final EA Review: A Notice of Availability of the Draft EA will be published in the *Washington Post and Mount Vernon Gazette*. The Draft EA is anticipated to be available for public comment in July 2026. The Draft EA will also be made available for public viewing at:

- Fort Belvoir Library at 9800 Belvoir Road, BLDG 200, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060
- Kingstowne Library at 6500 Landsdowne Centre Dr, Alexandria, VA 22315
- Sherwood Library at 2501 Sherwood Hall Ln, Alexandria, VA 22306

After the comment period on the Draft EA ends, substantive comments will be addressed in the Final EA. A public notice announcing the availability of the Final EA will be published in the *Washington Post and Mount Vernon Gazette*.

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NEWS

River Farm

FROM PAGE 7

provide \$2 million to support River Farm.

Delegate Krizek commented, "It's a beautiful day to celebrate a beautiful place. Thank God for community."

Saluting those in the "Save River Farm" campaign, Suzanne LaPorte, AHS President, added, "The whole community came together," and raising a plastic glass, she toasted, "River Farm will be here forever."

Threats and Protections

Archaeologists have documented prehistoric habitation at River Farm. Later, the land was George Washington's northernmost farm of five and it had multiple owners over the years. In 1971, when the owner decided to sell the property, the Soviet Embassy offered to buy it to use as a retreat. Opposition erupted nationally and locally. With a donation from Enid Annenberg Haupt, AHS purchased the property.

In 2020, some AHS Board members announced plans to sell the property, prime Northern Virginia real estate overlooking the river. A Board upheaval, a public uprising and battles ensued. Developers aired proposals to buy and develop the property.

Northern Virginia Conservation Trust holds the conservation easement which among other provisions, prevents subdividing the property, protects the historic character of the buildings, prevents inappropriate development, protects the forests and the shoreline and ensures public access.

"It was not enough just to stop the sale," said NVCT Board member Sarene Marshall. "We had to make sure that natural and open space is preserved forever in time." Alexandrian Kathleen Schloeder remarked, "This is fine real estate that could easily have become a resort or five luxury houses. It's been saved for the public in perpetuity."

Rowsome noted that American Rivers recently listed the Potomac River as the most threatened river in the United States. "Safeguarding this beautiful place is part of a much bigger story and responsibility we collectively have to save the Potomac as the lifeblood of our region," he said.

At 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, River Farm is open and free to the public six days a week and available to rent for events. AHS has events like art shows, a spring garden market and holiday open house in December.

Visit www.ahsgardening.org and www.nvct.org.

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 13

connect with fellow young leaders in one of the hottest new spots around. Don't miss your chance to experience it first.

THURSDAY/MAY 14

The Chamber ALX's 2026 City Council Breakfast. 8-10 a.m. At the Hilton Alexandria Old Town, Alexandria. Take an inside look at Alexandria's future as City Council members unpack the newly adopted City budget, highlight key investments, and share updates on major initiatives already underway. Learn how local priorities are shaping decisions and driving progress across neighborhoods, services, and community development efforts. This is your opportunity to connect with the leaders guiding Alexandria's path.

THURSDAY/MAY 14

2026 City Council Breakfast. 8-10 a.m. At Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King Street, Alexandria. The Chamber ALX presents the 2026 City Council Breakfast. An inside look at Alexandria's future as City Council members unpack the newly adopted City budget, highlight key investments and share updates on major initiatives already underway. Legislators confirmed: Mayor Alyia Gaskins, Vice Mayor Sarah Bagley, Councilman Canek Aguirre, Councilman John Chapman, Councilman Abdel-Rahman Elnoubi, and Councilwoman Jacinta Greene.

SATURDAY/MAY 16

Write Like a Woman Networking Workshop. 1 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Enjoy an afternoon of engaging conversation and writing! Facilitated by poet, author, and Athenaeum Poet in Residence, KaNikki Jakarta, this workshop welcomes amateur to professional women writers ages 18-100. Each workshop centers on uplifting and inspiring through writing and allows participants to enhance their writing styles. Space is limited, please RSVP to greatpublishing@yahoo.com

SUNDAY/MAY 17

The Washington Metro Concert Orchestra. 5 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. The Washington Metro Concert Orchestra is a 6th-9th grade full orchestra ensemble bringing together some of the best middle school musicians in the Alexandria area. Through a variety of music selections, students heighten their technical abilities and learn the collaboration skills of playing in an ensemble

with string and band instruments for the first time. The WMCO performs works by classical masters and reaches into contemporary and educational works by modern day composers from around the world.

SUNDAY/MAY 17

Old Town Festival of Speed & Style. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. In Old Town Alexandria on the 400-600 blocks of King Street, and the 100 blocks of North and South St. Asaph Street and North and South Pitt Street. One of the East Coast's most stylish and celebrated car events, Old Town Festival of Speed & Style presented by Burke & Herbert Bank, returns to Alexandria for its seventh year. The Festival offers a one-of-a-kind opportunity for the public to see rare and exotic sports and supercars stopped in their tracks for up-close viewing and observing.

Schedule:

7:05 am Sponsor Canopy Set-up
8:00 am Vehicle Arrival and Placement
8:45 am Car Judging Begins
10:00 am Opening Ceremony – Event Producer and Emcee, National anthem
10:10 am Live Music | TBD
12:00 pm Style Celebration
12:45 pm Awards Ceremony and Trophy Presentation
1:10 pm Live Music F | TBD
3:15 pm Cars Depart/Sponsor Canopy Tear-down
4:00 pm Streets Reopen

MONDAY/MAY 18

Agenda: Alexandria. 7 p.m. At The Forum, Minnie Howard Campus, 3775 W. Braddock Road, Alexandria. Agenda: Alexandria, the city's premier organization dedicated to examining local issues from a variety of viewpoints, will be focusing on a variety of issues related to immigration in Alexandria.

TUESDAY/MAY 19

American Revolution Lecture. 1-3 p.m. At Hollin Hall Senior Center, Room 218, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. History Professor Richard Bell will discuss how the American Revolution not only liberated the colonies but also served as a catalyst for changing the way the world works. Sponsored by the Mount Vernon Genealogical Society, no registration is necessary for this free in-person meeting.

SUNDAY/MAY 31

Arts & Crafts Fair. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Tavern Square in Old Town Alexandria, 415 King

Street. Presented by Volunteer Alexandria and Made in ALX. Discover a curated selection of jewelry, pottery, soaps, home décor, and unique gifts while supporting local artists at this free event. This family-friendly gathering invites you to shop local and explore beautiful crafts in the heart of Old Town Alexandria at Tavern Square.

SATURDAY/JUNE 6

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

THE BIRCHMERE

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

MAY

Wed. 6: Ottmar Liebert & Luna Negra \$39.50
Thu. 7: Asleep at the Wheel "Riding High Tour" \$49.50
Fri. 8: An Evening with Vanessa Carlton: Veils Tour \$36.00 SOLD OUT!
Sat. 9: BoDeans 40th Anniversary \$39.50 SOLD OUT!
Tue. 12: Madeleine Peyroux w/ The Carlile Family Band \$59.50
Wed. 13: Marc Broussard w/ Sway Wild \$55.00
Thu. 14: The Lone Bellow "What A Time to Be Alive" Tour 2026 w/ Eli Kollman \$49.50
Fri. 15: Jeffrey Osborne \$115.00 SOLD OUT!
Sat. 16: Jeffrey Osborne \$115.00 SOLD OUT!
Sun. 17: WMAL Free Speech Forum -7pm-\$55.00 SOLD OUT!
Fri. 22: Marcus Miller \$69.50
Sat. 23: Marcus Miller \$69.50
Sun. 24: The Manhattans featuring Gerald Alston \$69.50
Tue. 26: Steve Earle – Solo & Acoustic w/ Zandi Holup \$69.50 SOLD OUT!
Fri. 29: jackrabbit. featuring Dermot Mulroney with special guest Charles Esten \$39.50
Sat. 30: An Evening with Lyle Lovett \$125.00 SOLD OUT!
Sun. 31: An Evening with Lyle Lovett \$125.00 SOLD OUT!



Soap du Jour

By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As I'm sure you don't know - and even more sure that you don't care, I prefer using a bar of soap rather than liquid soap/body wash. This point may not be worth making, but as a cancer patient still under treatment, with monthly lab work and quarterly PET scans keeping me on the precipice, I react to things differently than one who was not given - as I was, a "13 month to two-years" prognosis, back in late Feb. 2009. Moreover, having been diagnosed (at the time, it has since changed) with stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer, a killer cancer if there ever was one - and there are many (though lung cancer kills more people than the next four cancers combined); my prospects were not encouraging. Yet, here I sit, pen in hand, 17+ years later alive and reasonably well - all things considered (and you bet I consider all things; it helps to keep my sane); still waiting for the other shoe to drop (expect it really) and viewing my life through a cancer-affected prism.

And through that prism I saw an eight-count package of soap the other day in my local supermarket advertising circular, and since it was my brand, I thought I should buy it, especially since it's not often advertised and rarely available, given the popularity/marketing of liquid soaps - apparently. Seeing this advertisement reminded me of a similar experience I had 17+ years ago during the early, hairless stage of my heavy-duty chemotherapy infusions. I went ahead and instinctively (bulk/value purchases appeal to my consuming nature- then and now) bought the eight-count then without factoring in my mortality (or rather lack thereof - at the time). However, soon-ish after I returned home and incorporated this eight-count of soap into my bathing routine, and realized how long a bar was lasting, I "stopped short" like Mr. Costanza did in his car - on a long ago "Seinfeld" episode, but in my house and I thought/ wondered/worried if I had just wasted my money - considering my prognosis. A variation of the common-sense advisory to not buy green bananas if it's presumed that time is not on the buyer's side.

But survived I have - and eventually "soaped up" this eight count. Nevertheless, the purchase/ experience made me gun shy and up until this recent advertisement, I hadn't noticed this item for sale anywhere and likewise hadn't purchased another eight count. Though I survived, I always thought that previous soap purchase was a bit of reach. Seeing the eight count of soap once again reminded me of my earlier what-I-subsequently-described as a mistake and as such was not keen to repeat my error/waste my money (I have plenty of other shorter-term needs/pleasures I'd rather purchase that carry no such financial implications - to me anyway).

All of which brings me - finally, to the meat of this column's bone - so to speak: a cancer's patient's presumptive/predicted/anticipated mortality and the effect it has on one's thinking/planning. A constant worry for me - then and now, has been and still is: whenever I buy anything, I consider/ calculate - figuratively speaking, if I will live long enough to actually use this product/item. (I still remember cleaning out my uncle's condo in Florida and finding five bottles of mouthwash underneath the bathroom sink.) I'm constantly worrying about whether I might outlive my money. Money which is hardly unlimited. Moreover, it's very difficult to live/plan financially for a definite maybe. This angst is further complicated by the amazingly good fortune I've had to outlive by prognosis. It's been a blessing but when looking ahead, I can't help thinking that my past will catch up to me. A past which hardly guarantees a future.

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

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 6

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

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

Seeking Donations. Computer CORE, which is dedicated to helping low-income adults become computer literate is seeking donations. Visit www.computercore.org/contribute.

Senior and Job Programs. 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Queen of Apostles Church, 4650

Taney Avenue, Alexandria. St. Martin de Porres Center offers senior and job placement programming Monday through Friday at the parish. Email Kathryn Toohey, ktoohey@ccda.net.

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

Public Space Recycling. Alexandria has placed more than 80 bright blue recycling containers next to public trash cans in the commercial districts along Mount Vernon Avenue and King Street, as well as other public spaces, including parks, recreation fields, and other high-traffic pedestrian areas. Visit alexandriava.gov/Recycling.

Composting and Food Waste. Alexandria now has Resource Recovery Stations, located at the City's Farmers' Markets (Old Town, Del Ray) to collect food waste. More than 270 people have participated in the food waste program over the last several months. Participants drop off items weekly, over eight tons of waste has been collected, to be composted to make a natural fertilizer. To learn more

about composting visit alexandriava.gov/YardWaste.

English as a Second Language Class. Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St. Tuesdays and Thursdays, all levels 10 a.m.-12 p.m., intermediate workshop 3-5 p.m. All classes free. Call the information desk, 703-746-1702.

The Talking Book Service at Alexandria Library will now operate Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Patrons may also reach the service at 703-746-1760.

Digital Magazines. Patrons of Alexandria Library will have unlimited access to read digital magazines, which can be viewed on most Internet-enabled devices inside or outside of the library. Accessible through www.rbdigital.com/alexandriava/zinio.

Eligible low income households can now use their SNAP benefits to buy local foods at the Old Town Farmers' Market. SNAP customers are able to use their electronic benefits transfer cards to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables and other eligible food products at the market. The Old Town Farmer's Market is located at 301 King St., and is open on Saturdays, year round from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m.



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8910 Bordeaux St | \$974,500



9352 Mount Vernon Cir | \$1,150,000



4212 Pickering Pl | \$1,049,000



8306 Crown Court Rd | \$1,175,000



9410 Ferry Landing Ct | \$1,300,000



3104 Little Creek Ln | \$906,000



9498 Lynnhall Pl | \$1,664,000



8912 Dogue Dr | \$849,500



8711 Millbrook Pl | \$775,000



4206 Pickering Pl | \$1,261,000



3903 Belle Rive Ter | \$3,700,000



6404 13th St | \$1,245,000



4008 Sulgrave Dr | \$960,000



3608 Center Dr | \$1,550,000



8047 Fairfax Rd | \$1,375,000

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