

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

JULY 2, 2026



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Anass Yahyaoui, Hjarman Cordero, Arely Morales, Patrick Coye and Ru Toyama at the June 30 opening of the Flags for Heroes display at Cedar Knoll Restaurant.

Visitors view the Flags for Heroes display June 30 at Cedar Knoll Restaurant. The project is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Alexandria to support local charities and will remain on view through July 11.

## Courage, Sacrifice, Service

### Flags for Heroes on display at Cedar Knoll.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**H**undreds of American flags were unfurled overlooking the Potomac River to kick off the 9th annual Flags for Heroes display June 30 on the grounds of Cedar Knoll Restaurant.

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Alexandria, the Flags for Heroes project provides community members an opportunity to dedicate a flag to honor a hero in their life. A card attached to each flag bears the name of the hero – a friend, family member, veteran, health-care worker, first responder or other hero -- along with the name of the individual sponsor.

“These flags not only recognize our heroes but also support multiple local charities,” said Rotary Club past president Jim Carmalt. “This includes scholarships for Scouting troops and STEM programs to develop outstanding leaders.”

Area volunteers, Scout troops and members of the nonprofit Cornerstone Craftsman joined the



Rotarian Colin Tridone, left, works with a Scout volunteer and Rotarian Anass Yahyaoui in erecting more than 200 flags as part of the Flags for Heroes display June 27 at Cedar Knoll Restaurant.

Alexandria Rotary Club earlier in the week in positioning the flags at the restaurant's location along the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

More than 200 flags were unfurled to set up the display, which will remain in place through July 11. Donations will also be accepted through that date.

“A QR code is available at Cedar Knoll for anyone interested in sponsoring a flag or wishing to donate directly to our cause,” Car-

malt added. “Donations can also be made through our website.”

This year's Flags for Heroes program has so far raised \$30,000 which will benefit Alexandria Rotary Club community projects and provide direct financial support to more than 40 local charities and nonprofits.

Said Carmalt, “This project is representative of the very model of Rotary – Service Above Self.”

[www.alexandriarotary.org](http://www.alexandriarotary.org)



Rotarians Pete O'Dell and Anass Yahyaoui set up some of the more than 200 flags as part of the Flags for Heroes display June 27 at Cedar Knoll Restaurant.

# corcoran

MCENEARNEY



## Old Town 403 S Fairfax Street

\$2,295,000 | Exceptional historic flounder house. Set discreetly behind a high brick wall, the property reveals itself through an iron gate, opening to an enchanting courtyard.

**Lauren Bishop** : 202.361.5079  
LaurenBishopHomes.com



## Old Town Village 407 S Henry Street

\$2,100,000 | Stunning Charleston-style home with nearly 2,800 SF of updated living space, luxury finishes, gourmet kitchen, three private outdoor spaces, and resort-style amenities.

**Lisa Groover** : 703.919.4426  
LisaGroover.com



## Waynewood 904 Waynewood Boulevard

\$1,450,000 | Nestled on a beautifully landscaped lot, every aspect of this property, from the interiors to the outdoor spaces, has been carefully designed and impeccably maintained.

**Tracy Dunn** : 571.212.3658  
TracyBDunn.com



## Arlington 605 N Frederick Street

\$975,000 | This delightful brick home offers the perfect blend of character and convenience. System upgrades and smart home features abound. Less than a mile to Metro.

**Kari Steinberg** : 703.343.5242  
KariYouHomeDMV.com



## Virginia Village 1212 Portner Road

\$925,000 | Nestled in a highly sought-after location, this 3-bedroom, 2-bath home offers the perfect blend of historic charm, modern versatility and an unbeatable commute.

**Jen Walker Team** : 703.622.1080  
JenWalker.com



## Kingstowne 6140 Manchester Park Circle

\$775,000 | 3-level townhome minutes from Kingstowne with major interior renovation in 2026, including kitchen, bathrooms and brand new flooring.

**Jillian Hogan Homes** : 703.951.7655  
JillianHoganHomes.com



## Mount Zephyr 8509 Richmond Avenue

\$725,000 | Beautifully renovated, this exceptional 4-bedroom, 2-bath residence offers the rare combination of stylish interiors and an extraordinary outdoor setting on nearly one-half acre.

**Lauren Bishop** : 202.361.5079  
LaurenBishopHomes.com



## Duke Gardens 41 S French Street

\$639,500 | This all brick townhouse is perfectly situated on a private circle with no through traffic. Brand new heating and air conditionings systems. Owner licensed agent.

**Dave Hawkins** : 703.403.5799  
corcoranmce.com



## The Preston 181 E Reed Avenue #203

\$549,000 | This beautifully maintained 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo offers a private terrace, a desirable split-bedroom floor plan, providing privacy and flexibility in sought-after Potomac Yard.

**Julia Martin** : 703.850.5543  
corcoranmce.com

*live who you are*

Proudly Serving Virginia, Washington, DC, Maryland, and West Virginia

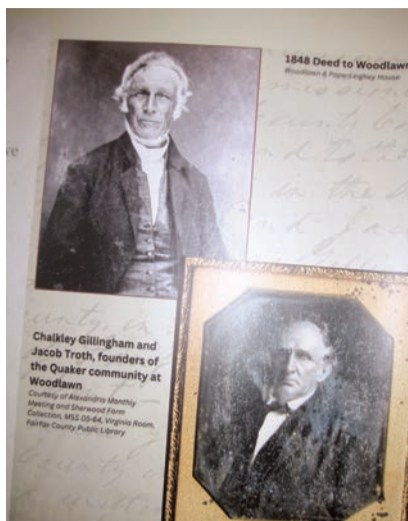
Corcoran McEneaney | 109 S. Pitt Street | Alexandria, VA 22314 | 703.549.9292 | corcoranmce.com

©2026 Corcoran Group LLC. All rights reserved. Corcoran® and the Corcoran Logo are registered service marks owned by Corcoran Group LLC. Corcoran Group LLC fully supports the principles of the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Opportunity Act. Each office is independently owned and operated.

ACM ATLANTIC COAST  
MORTGAGE



On June 20, Martha Claire Catlin discussed the Quakers' innovative 19th century community.



Chalkley Gillingham and Jacob Troth were two leading founders of the "bold experiment."



The Quaker meetinghouse at Woodlawn in the 1890s.

# Woodlawn Exhibit Spotlights a 'Bold Experiment'

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

In a new exhibit that opened on June 27 titled "Friends Gather Here," Woodlawn is showcasing a bold experiment begun in 1846 by two Quaker abolitionists, Chalkley Gillingham and Jacob Troth.

Gillingham and Troth moved from Pennsylvania and New Jersey and bought 2,000 acres at Woodlawn and sought to demonstrate that farming could succeed without slavery. They settled among a free African American community already there, many formerly enslaved by George and Martha Washington, and created an anti-slavery model community grounded in equality, respect and cooperation, "a peaceable way."

On June 20, local historian Martha Claire Catlin, a lifelong Quaker, described the "unique alliance" of the people in this community, "ten years of harmony tested by war." She has probed many historic records, doing what she termed "pick and shovel research," to tell this story, a threat to the social order at a time when Virginia relied on a plantation economy.

## The Exhibit

Through documents, objects and explanatory panels, the exhibit introduces visitors to several people of that community.

Displayed is the deed of sale when Gillingham and Troth bought the land from the Lewis family. George Washington gave the land to his step-granddaughter, Nelly Custis, and nephew, Lawrence Lewis in 1799 as a wedding gift. Initially, the Quaker settlers used the mansion for their meeting house and a school before the still-standing meeting house was built and finished in 1853.

William Holland, freed in 1799, www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



The hand-crafted, embroidered quilt represents Quaker values, here being studied by Shirley Short.



Sheryl Sims quilts art pieces today depicting her Quaker ancestors, this one of her cousins.



Members of the community used scythes like this to harvest grains.

bought 20 acres in 1851 and spearheaded the establishment of Woodlawn Methodist Church, a cemetery and a school. Lewis

Quander bought 163 acres in 1855 which he farmed. Holland and Quander are familiar names today to many, with streets in Mount Ver-

non named for these families.

One founder, Jonathan Roberts, a pacifist, wrote in his 1891 memoir that they were "having a very

great trial." During the Civil War, the Friends' anti-slavery views provoked hostility from some neigh-

SEE WOODLAWN, PAGE 13

# Gum Springs' Jubilant Juneteenth

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

The Zumba music boomed off the stage and Ebony Moss led 15 high-spirited women in an energetic, celebratory workout to jump-start the Gum Springs community's Juneteenth celebration on June 20 in Mount Vernon's Martin Luther King Park.

Over five hours on a gloriously sunny day, festival-goers indulged in catfish, chicken, hotdogs and popcorn and explored the treasures under 30 vendor tents, from dementia support to face painting to jewelry to t-shirts. A Fairfax County police helicopter flew by around 11:15 a.m. eliciting waves and high fives to the crew.

Sylvia Byrd, president of the Gum Springs Youth Athletic Association and a 20-year resident, urged everyone to support each other. "Juneteenth and Community Day bring the community together at a time when everyone is so busy. It's a joyous occasion and wonderful way to celebrate one another," Byrd said, adding that the food truck would arrive soon. It was a day of sharing and giving back.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay attended, and reported in his newsletter that he honored "the life of Mattie L. Palmore, a longtime community leader whose advocacy for families, survivors of domestic violence and residents in need left a lasting mark on Gum Springs and Fairfax County. Through decades of service, she helped strengthen community support systems and ensure that residents had access to the resources and assistance they needed." He also presented a Fatherhood Awareness Month proclamation to Jermaine Mincey, a graduate of one of the county's Dads Parenting Groups.

## Many Services Featured

Paisley was the canine star of the day, one of the Fairfax County police force's five "bomb dogs," explained her handler, police officer Brian Storm. Officers train Paisley, a golden-Labrador-retriever mix, to sniff out explosive odors, substances like TNT, dynamite and black powder. "For her, it's a game," Storm said. She is so good she can detect thousands of odors, he said, like shell casings after a shooting. If a school has a bomb scare, she can sweep schools. Thank you, many passersby said.

Kimberly Dade from Woodbridge's Faith Works sold t-shirts with faith-based designs. Dawn



Thirty vendors had tents and offered products and services at the Gum Springs community's Juneteenth celebration on June 20 in Mount Vernon's Martin Luther King Park.



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

Paisley, an explosive odor detecting dog, and Fairfax County police officer Brian Storm.



Sylvia Byrd presided at the Gum Springs community's Juneteenth celebration on June 20 in Mount Vernon's Martin Luther King Park and made announcements throughout the day.



Kimberly Dade sold her faith-based apparel.



Alexandra Dashiell, a Girl Scout, and her sister, Tatiana from Chester, Virginia, sold candles.



Dawn Jefferson explained the services of the Insight Memory Care Center.

Jefferson with the Insight Memory Care Center, a nonprofit, described their services that help families coping with dementia. They offer support groups and workshops, for example. They estimate that in

Northern Virginia nearly 60,000 people are living with some form of dementia.

ICNA Relief, one of the 45-group Islamic Relief USA in 45 states, helps people with health and refu-

gee services, emergency relief and food security, for example.

Laura (Lollie) Rinehardt, who grew up in Tauxemont, makes the trek from Virginia Beach to promote the Virginia Williams High

School Career Association founded to honor her mother and offer student scholarships. Virginia Williams was the Guidance Director at Mount Vernon High School.

SEE GUM SPRINGS', PAGE 10

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/GAZETTE

Ospreys keep an eye on the water.

## Big Boating Weekend Ahead Brings out Life Preserver Enforcement

Boaters on the Potomac should be ready for an inspection.

By MIKE SALMON  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

A nest full of ospreys watches a police boat pull out for the first day of “Operation Dry Water,” checking life preservers and cracking down on boating under the influence.

These officers from the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources Law Enforcement Division in partnership with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators are monitoring alcohol use and making sure everyone is wearing a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket that’s in good condition that fits every occupant of the boat, including children, the DWR said.

So far this year, there were five deaths and six serious injuries in boating incidents in Virginia and the July 4 holiday is a big boating day on the Potomac River.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



Officer Roger Palmisano with a certified life vest.

When heading out on the water, the first step is to let someone on shore know where you’re going and when you’ll be back, followed by the life jacket count. Before that, consider taking the MV-gb-Gum-SpringsJuneteenth2026 mk.

In the course, they list ages, required equipment, personal watercraft rules, dams, and age require-

ments. All personal watercraft operators 14 and older and all operators of motorboats with a 10 hp or greater engine need to take a boating safety course. “Personal water crafts” are the jet skis, Sea Doo’s, Wave Runners, and other similar crafts, the DWR said.

<https://www.boat-ed.com/virginia/>

A whole new vision of care.

**Belmont Bay**  
Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center

Care, anew.

14906 Richmond Hwy, Woodbridge, VA  
703.491.6167 / BelmontBayRehab.com

[www.connectionnewspapers.com/advertising](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/advertising)

**THE CONNECTION**

Alexandria Gazette Packet Mount Vernon Gazette

Turn to the Connection Newspapers digital and print advertising options to reach customers in your community!

- EMAIL BLASTS
- DIGITAL BILLBOARDS
- FRONT PAGE SHOUTOUT
- SOCIAL MEDIA
- SPONSORED CONTENT

Target the right audience.

Arlington Mount Vernon Gazette CONNECTION Holiday Cheer

For Advertising: Call 703.778.9431 or  
Email [sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com)



Cutting the ribbon for the mural: Lorena Saavedra Smith, Adam Kidder, Supervisor Dan Storck, Cathy Hosek and Liz Hagg.



The muralist, Adam Kidder, designed and painted the 155-foot-long mural over a two-month period on the east side of Route 1 at Mount Vernon's Residences of North Hill.



A resourceful red fox with a paddleball paddle, one section of the 155-foot-long mural.



An enterprising American crow on the mural at Mount Vernon's Residences of North Hill.



A youngster playing pickleball on the 155-foot-long mural.

# Route 1 Is Brightened by a New Mural

By GLENDA C. BOOTH  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

A slab gray concrete retaining wall on the east side of Route 1 at Mount Vernon's Residences of North Hill has been transformed,

bursting with brightly colored local images. A bluebird, goldfinch, cardinal, squirrel, red fox and more almost jump off the wall in a new mural.

On June 24, Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck, artist Adam Kidder and supporters cut a red

ribbon on the new 155-foot-long mural along the paved trail from the highway up a gently sloping hill to North Hill Park.

Kidder chose images reflecting the local area, including food options along the corridor like pupusas and donuts. An opportunistic

black crow even snaps up a donut on a section of the mural. "All have local relevance," he said.

He featured birds that frequent nearby Huntley Meadows Park and a red fox that visits North Hill Park. A local dog, Lincoln, that came by with his owner while the artist

worked, seems to almost smile at onlookers. Images of pickleball and basketball reflect the sports that people in the community play there, and in one panel, an enterprising fox carries a pickleball paddle in its mouth.

SEE ROUTE 1, PAGE 15



A male American goldfinch, on the mural at Mount Vernon's Residences of North Hill.



Coffee and a donut, an example of food choices on the U.S. 1 corridor.



A male Northern cardinal, Virginia's state bird, a section of the 155-foot-long mural at Mount Vernon's Residences of North Hill.

# NEWS

## Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber July 4th 2.50K Fun Run

**Celebrating America's 250th Anniversary.**

**Community event to feature Thomas Jefferson impersonator, reading of the Declaration of Independence, and VA250 Commemorative Souvenirs**

The Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce will host the 2.50K Fun Run Celebrating America on Saturday, July 4, 2026, at Kingstowne Towne Center. The family-friendly event will begin at 8 a.m. and is open to runners and walkers of all ages.

Presented by Visit Fairfax, the event commemorates both Independence Day and the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence while bringing together residents, families, local businesses, and community leaders for a patriotic celebration.

In addition to the 2.50K run and walk, participants

will enjoy a special appearance by a Thomas Jefferson impersonator, a public reading of the Declaration of Independence, and complimentary VA250 commemorative souvenirs.

"This event is an opportunity to celebrate our nation's history while bringing the community together in a fun and active way," said Holly Dougherty, President of the Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce.

The event will take place in the plaza near Giant at Kingstowne Towne Center and is designed to be accessible for families, individuals, and groups looking to start their Independence Day festivities with a community-focused celebration.

### Event Details

2.50K Fun Run Celebrating America

**Date:** Saturday, July 4, 2026

**Time:** 8 a.m. – 9 a.m.

**Location:** Kingstowne Towne Center at the plaza near Giant

5980 Kingstowne Towne Center

Alexandria, VA 22315

Registration information at

[www.mountvernon.springfield.com/events](http://www.mountvernon.springfield.com/events)

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Please be advised that there will be 15-minute firework displays taking place as part of the Independence Fireworks public evening event at George Washington's Mount Vernon on

**Friday, July 3, and Saturday, July 4, between 9:10 p.m. and 9:50 p.m.**

Additionally, a 5-minute daytime firework display will take place on **Saturday, July 4, between 1:00 p.m. and 1:10 p.m.** as part of our annual An American Celebration public event.

The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association thanks you for your tolerance and apologizes for any disruption.

To receive Mount Vernon fireworks notifications via e-mail, write to [Events@MountVernon.org](mailto:Events@MountVernon.org)

**GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOUNT ★ VERNON**

Sign up for

**FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION to all of our papers**



[www.connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe)

**Where Comfort & Family Values Meet!**

**\$74** (Reg \$84)

Don't Forget Your Safety & Maintenance INSPECTION Per System

**0% APR FOR 60 MONTHS\***

with equal payments. Minimum purchase of \$7,500.

**CARRIER REBATES**

UP TO **\$2,200†**



Turn to the experts



SCAN CODE FOR MORE INFO



**SALES | SERVICE | INSTALLATION**

- 24 Hour Emergency Service
- Free Estimate on System Replacement
- Senior & Military Discounts
- 100% Satisfaction Guarantee
- Planned Maintenance Agreements
- FREE Second Opinion on System Failure
- We Service All Brands
- Up Front Pricing

**Call Today! 703-491-2771 | [www.brennansHVAC.com](http://www.brennansHVAC.com) | [info@brennanshvac.com](mailto:info@brennanshvac.com)**



†System rebates ranging from \$0 to \$2,200 depending on equipment purchased. Rebates subject to change. Expires 05/31/2026. \*With approved credit on qualifying equipment. Call Brennan's for complete details.

# \$207B Virginia Budget with Landmark Data Center Tax

How a new tech industry tax shields local homeowners from school and transit hikes across Northern Virginia.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE GAZETTE

Virginia's \$207 billion, two-year state budget automatically became law Monday after the General Assembly accepted all 14 of Gov. Abigail Spanberger's proposed amendments, locking in a final spending plan ahead of a Tuesday 11:59 p.m. deadline to avert a government shutdown.

Because lawmakers voted to adopt the governor's exact package of structural changes, the budget bypassed the need for a final executive signature. The tallies concluded a legislative process, with votes on the amendments ranging up to 23-16 in the Senate and 71-22 in the House of Delegates.

"Today, by finalizing our budget, Virginia is charting a path toward a stronger, more secure, and more affordable future for every family who calls our Commonwealth home," Spanberger said in a statement. "This budget reflects our shared commitment to strengthening Virginia schools, expanding economic opportunity, and addressing the affordability crisis created by reckless policies out of Washington — all while contending with President Trump's disastrous cuts to healthcare."

She added that with "historic investments in education, four percent raises for our teachers, and landmark funding to help families manage the rising cost of childcare, we are



PHOTO VIA FACEBOOK/  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Virginia Gov. Abigail Spanberger at an economic expansion event in Halifax County, Va., Monday, June 29. That same day, the commonwealth's \$207 billion biennium budget was enacted into law, featuring a first-of-its-kind statewide energy consumption tax on data centers projected to generate \$600 million in annual revenue.

making real strides to uplift every student, listen to parents, support educators, and prepare communities for long-term success."

The bipartisan votes concluded a months-long standoff within the General Assembly's Democratic majority over how to regulate the state's booming tech sector. Some lawmakers sought to eliminate existing tax breaks to force data centers to contribute more to state revenue; others expressed concern that aggressive taxation could drive the industry out of Virginia.

Lawmakers compromised by preserving the industry incentives while introducing

SEE \$207B VIRGINIA BUDGET, PAGE 10

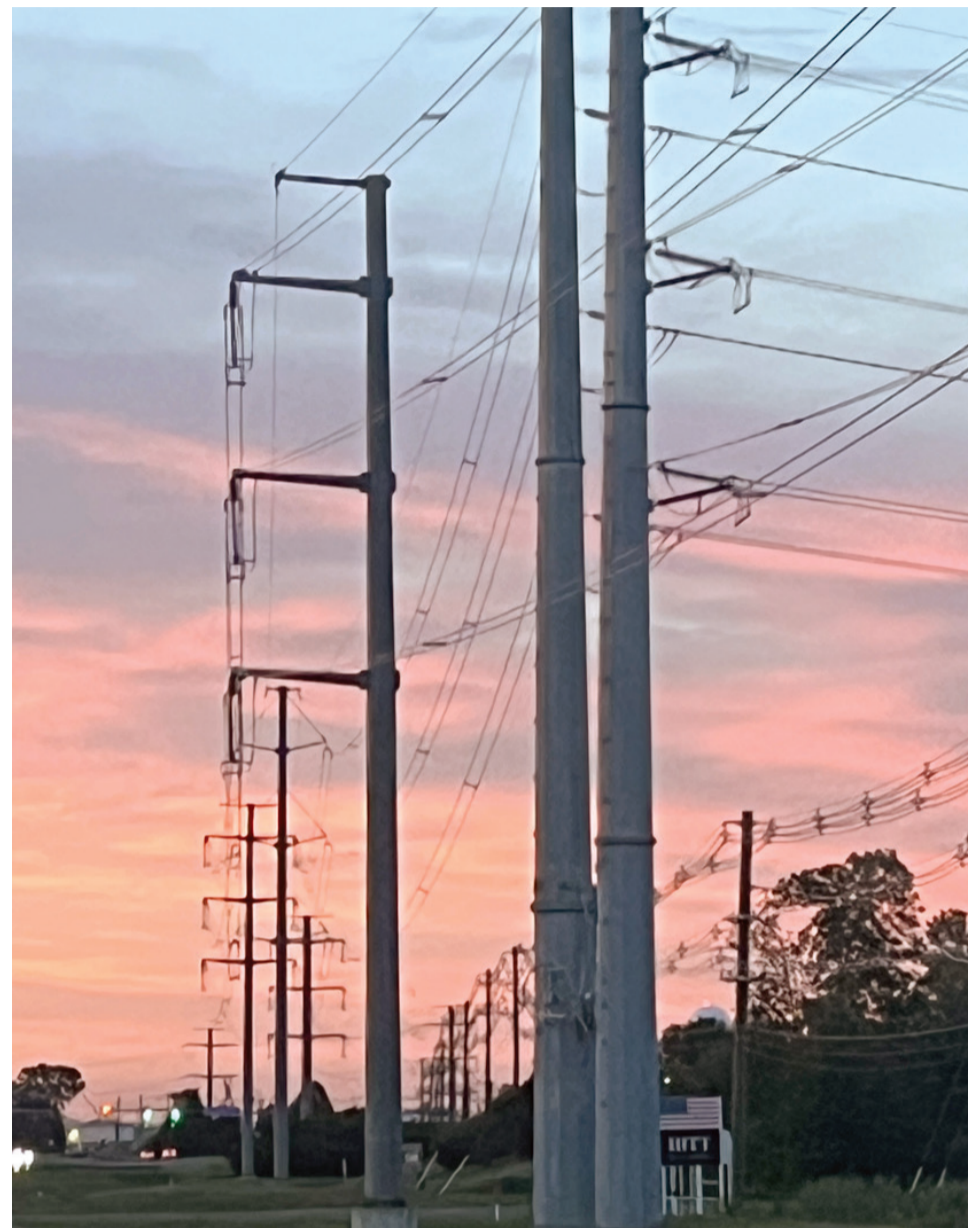


PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE GAZETTE

High-voltage transmission lines stand outside a data center in Sterling, Va., Thursday, June 18, 2026. Under Virginia's newly enacted budget, a data center energy tax will leverage tech infrastructure to fund statewide teacher raises and transit, partially shielding Northern Virginia homeowners from local tax hikes.

## Hyper-Local Infrastructure Protection Package

6 ways new budget impacts Northern Virginia.

The finalized state budget package includes six key budget provisions specifically designed to protect Northern Virginia's local infrastructure and shield suburban residents from rising regional expenses. Under the funding framework, three targeted provisions shift major utility infrastructure costs and regulatory enforcement actions onto tech industry data centers. The remaining three measures secure immediate funding mechanisms to stabilize

regional transit systems, support local public school budgets, and deliver direct household utility relief across Fairfax, Arlington and Alexandria.

### High-Demand Ratepayer Grid Insulation

House Bill 1393 protections require the State Corporation Commission (SCC) to separate utility infrastructure costs, forcing data centers drawing 25 megawatts or more to foot the bill for their grid expansions rather than letting transmission fee costs spike residential bills. Senate Majority Leader Scott Surovell, D-34, said during the April reconvened session that there were "efforts afoot in the General Assembly ... to ensure that data centers are paying their fair share, as I think everyone

broadly agrees is necessary."

### Environmental Sound Assessments and Local DEQ Noise Regulations

Environmental Sound Assessments and Local DEQ Noise Regulations command the Department of Environmental Quality, known as the DEQ, to establish strict acoustic baseline rules for cooling systems, providing a regulatory framework for residential subdivisions adjacent to commercial zoning (via HB 153 / SB 553). The provision mandates standardized noise tracking. Surovell highlighted during a February committee hearing why these

protections were fast-tracked: "The noise issues are some of the things we hear the most from people that live next to data centers."

### Data Center Water Scarcity Mitigation and Closed-Loop Mandates

Data Center Water Scarcity Mitigation and Closed-Loop Mandates direct the DEQ to establish strict groundwater protection rules, requiring future data center developments to use closed-loop air

cooling or 100 percent recycled stormwater rather than depleting local municipal water reserves. The provision establishes a formal review timeline to designate "cooling water scarcity areas" across the state, a measure heavily pushed by inner-Northern Virginia representatives to prevent industrial water consumption from compromising localized utility infrastructure.

### WMATA Operating Lifeline

The final budget package secures \$153 million to fully fund Virginia's share of the WMATA regional operating subsidy, preventing service cuts or fare hikes across

"The noise issues are some of the things we hear the most from people that live next to data centers."

— Sen. Scott Surovell

SEE HYPER-LOCAL, PAGE 10

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



PHOTOS BY ALLISON SILBERBERG

Retired Navy Capt. Eugene "Red" McDaniel, seated, poses for a photo with Scout troop members and leaders June 20 at American Legion Post 24 in Old Town. McDaniel, considered one of the most brutally tortured POWs during the Vietnam War, was a featured speaker during an open house celebrating the nation's 250th birthday.

# 'Scars and Stripes'

Post 24 hosts POW hero "Red" McDaniel.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

Retired Navy Capt. Eugene "Red" McDaniel was a featured speaker at an open house hosted June 20 by American Legion Post 24 to celebrate the nation's 250th birthday.

McDaniel, considered by Time Magazine as one of the most brutally tortured POWs of the Vietnam War, was held in captivity for more

than six years at the notorious Hỏa Lò Prison, known as the Hanoi Hilton.

He had been shot down in May of 1967 while flying his 81st mission in an A-6A Intruder aircraft. He was considered MIA until 1970, when it was confirmed that he was a prisoner of war. He was released in 1973.

Audience members included Scout troops as well as veterans and local residents who heard sto-

ries of McDaniel's captivity and survival, which he credited to his unwavering Christian faith. McDaniel, now 94 years old, is the author of "Scars and Stripes," which chronicles his life growing up as the son of a sharecropper in North Carolina to his storied military career.

Named a Living Legend of Alexandria in 2019, McDaniel was accompanied by his son, retired Navy Capt. Michael McDaniel.



Retired Navy Capt. Eugene "Red" McDaniel, left, speaks during an open house June 20 at American Legion Post 24 in Old Town. McDaniel, considered one of the most brutally tortured POWs during the Vietnam War, was accompanied by his son, retired Navy Capt. Michael McDaniel.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Please be advised that there will be a 5-minute fireworks display taking place as part of a private evening event at George Washington's Mount Vernon on

**Saturday, July 11**  
**between 9:15 p.m. and 9:55 p.m.**

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**

Past issues of

**THE**  
**CONNECTION**  
NEWSPAPERS

**back to 2008**  
**are available at**

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF>

Easing Your Transition  
from Hospital to Home.



**Alexandria**  
Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center

AlexandriaHC.com • 571.257.1896  
900 Virginia Ave, Alexandria, VA 22302

**Key highlights of the proposed FY2027/2028 budget include:**

- Makes Virginia more affordable, more secure, and more prepared for the future.
- Maintains a fiscally responsible, structurally balanced budget in both years while preserving strong reserves.
- Delivers nearly \$2 billion in new education funding — the largest investment in public education in Virginia history.
- Invests \$577 million in childcare and early childhood education to help working families and strengthen Virginia's workforce.
- Provides 4% raises for teachers and school support staff and 3.5% raises for state employees in each year of the biennium.
- Continues Virginia's path to a \$15 minimum wage, increasing wages to \$13.75 in 2027 and \$15 in 2028, while investing \$47.7 million to raise wages for state employees, constitutional officers, and home healthcare workers.
- Funds implementation of Paid Sick Leave and Paid Family and Medical Leave, delivering long-overdue protections for Virginia workers.
- Invests \$92 million in affordable housing, homelessness prevention, and eviction prevention programs.
- Includes \$150 million to lower health insurance premiums and nearly \$1 billion to protect Virginians from federal funding cuts and economic uncertainty.
- Invests \$20 million to eradicate sickle cell disease.
- Establishes a Data Center Energy Consumption Fee expected to generate up to \$1.2 billion over the biennium, helping protect ratepayers and ensure the industry contributes its fair share.
- Makes major investments in public safety, including Virginia State Police, violence prevention initiatives, victim services, and first responders.
- Establishes a regulated adult-use cannabis market that prioritizes public safety, consumer protection, and accountability.

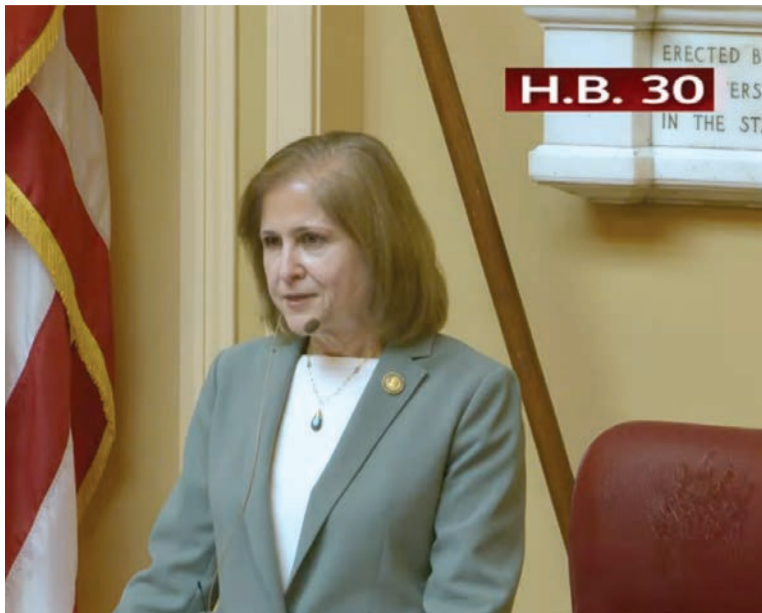


PHOTO VIA SENATE OF VIRGINIA

Virginia Lt. Gov. Ghazala Hashmi presides over the Senate chamber as the General Assembly reconvenes in Richmond, Va., Monday, June 29. Senators met to consider and approve Governor Spanberger's budget amendments, cementing a \$207 billion biennium package featuring a historic tech industry data center tax.

HANDOUT VIA VIRGINIA HOUSE DEMOCRATS

A graphic from the Virginia House Democratic Caucus outlines key highlights of the newly enacted 2026-2028 biennium state budget Monday, June 29, 2026.

# \$207B Virginia Budget with Landmark Data Center Tax

FROM PAGE 8

a new energy consumption tax of 1.1 cents per kilowatt-hour on data centers. The tax is projected to generate up to \$600 million annually, totaling \$1.2 billion over the two-year budget cycle, to fund core state services.

"This institutes a statewide energy consumption tax on data cen-

ters to ensure this industry pays its fair share and does not drive up costs for Virginia families," Spanberger said prior to the vote.

While the new data center tax revenue will be largely generated by tech facilities concentrated in Loudoun and Prince William counties, the final budget redirects a portion of those funds to

help jurisdictions absorb the costs of regional growth. The revenue is slated in part to help close transit deficits in Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, while addressing budget shortfalls for Fairfax County Public Schools and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Beyond local transit and schools,

the final spending plan funds broader statewide initiatives, including residential utility bill credits and a new \$2 million annual grant program to provide life-saving cancer screenings for Virginia firefighters.

While the bulk of that new revenue serves the wider state general fund, top regional lawmakers

emphasized the significance of the technological compromise.

"I think we went through a lot to get here, but at the end of the day, data centers are going to contribute about \$1.2 billion over the biennium to help fund our government," said Senate Majority Leader Scott Surovell, D-Fairfax, who represents a portion of Fairfax County.

# Hyper-Local Infrastructure Protection Package

FROM PAGE 8

the Orange, Silver, Blue, and Yellow lines. Championed by House Finance Chair Del. Vivian Watts, this funding matches the target recommended by the SJ 28 Joint Subcommittee on Public Transit to protect daily core commuters. Rather than establishing a permanent new tax stream, the legislative compromise prevents a looming fiscal challenge through an ongoing

targeted state appropriations, existing regional transportation allocations, and temporary legislative waivers on WMATA's statutory 3% operating growth cap.

**Local Sales Tax Authority for School Construction**

Expanded Local Sales Tax Authority for School Construction grants jurisdictions the authority

to place a voter referendum on the ballot for a 1 percent retail sales tax dedicated exclusively to school modernization, bypassing traditional property tax hikes. The provision incorporates Senate Bill 66, championed by Northern Virginia Senators Jeremy McPike, D-Prince William; Jennifer Boysko, D-Fairfax; and Barbara Favola, D-Arlington. Co-sponsor Favola noted during the legislative session that

with the average age of Virginia school buildings hitting 50 years, homeowners can no longer bear infrastructure burdens alone.

**Utility Meter Ratepayer Carbon Rebates**

The Utility Meter Ratepayer Carbon Rebates provision mandates nearly half of all state carbon auction funds to be distributed directly back onto residential and

small-business electric bills to mitigate regional capacity costs. The mechanism allocates 45 percent of Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative proceeds back to consumers.

House Appropriations Committee Chair Luke Torian, D-Prince William, spoke about the compromise following the final budget votes. "When the two bodies get together and have meaningful conversations, we can make some very good decisions."

# Gum Springs' Jubilant Juneteenth

FROM PAGE 4

Girl Scout Troop 53021, based at Hollin Meadows Elementary School, sold handmade candles. Alexandra Dashiell explained that her troop members volunteer at the Gum Springs Retirement Center at bingo nights and tea parties.

They help mentor students at Hybla Valley Elementary School.

The Mount Vernon Democratic Committee and the NAACP's Fairfax County chapter recruited and urged people to vote.

In addition to the Fairfax County Police Department, multiple county agencies described their services, including family ser-

vices, emergency management and community response.

**Gum Springs**

Gum Springs is Fairfax County's oldest African-American community, founded in 1833 by West Ford, a freed, formerly enslaved man who had worked on George Washington's plantation.

The name Gum Springs comes from the sweet gum trees near the spring where George Washington watered his horses going to and from his Mount Vernon plantation, said Ronald Chase, President of the Gum Springs Historical Society.



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

Art expressing the legacy and joy of Juneteenth was all around.

# Broad Relief for Virginia Families Coming July 1

From rent, paychecks, and medical bills to boosted school funding, here's how the new budget could impact everyday costs.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE GAZETTE

A wide-ranging slate of new state programs to fill gaps in housing, workforce, healthcare, and education for Virginia families took effect July 1.

From rent, paychecks, and medical bills to increased school funding, the new state budget addresses everyday costs and residents' pocketbooks through four key areas of newly enacted provisions — reforms that are vital to the Northern Virginia communities of Fairfax County, Arlington County, and the City of Alexandria.

"Today, by finalizing our budget, Virginia is charting a path toward a stronger, more secure, and more affordable future for every family who calls our Commonwealth home," said Gov. Abigail Spanberger in a statement issued June 29, highlighting how the finalized budget targets kitchen-table costs. "We are investing more than \$100 million to make housing more affordable, lower energy costs, and make sure every Virginian can build a stable future without being crushed by rising costs."

The implementation follows the General Assembly's final adoption of the governor's fiscal amendments on June 29, enacting the commonwealth's comprehensive \$207 billion spending plan for the 2026–2028 biennium. Introduced during the 2026 legislative session by Del. Luke E. Torian (D-Prince William), chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, the measures — packaged as House Bill 30 — directly address cost-of-living strains.

Speaking from the House Appropriations Committee room in Richmond four months earlier on Feb. 22, Torian underscored the underlying philosophy of the legislative package. "This budget is not just about filling gaps," Torian said. "At its core, this budget is about affordability — and about whether Virginia is doing everything it can

to help families not just survive, but build stable, secure lives."

## 1. Expanded Renter Protections and Housing Preservation

The Extended Eviction Grace Period (HB 15 / SB 48), championed by Sen. Aaron Rouse (D-Virginia Beach) and Del. Phil Hernandez (D-Norfolk), applies to all Virginia tenants. The Virginia Legislative Information System (LIS) notes this update "provides tenants with a longer period to rectify nonpayment before a landlord can initiate eviction proceedings." The grace period expands to 14 days from five days.

The Virginia Eviction Reduction Program Expansion (HB 527 / SB 628) is backed by Del. Adele McClure (D-Arlington) and Sen. Mamie Locke (D-Hampton). Locke noted that the Eviction Reduction Program establishes a permanent, data-driven framework, stating during its passage that the measure ensures Virginia is "moving away from a reactionary posture on housing instability and toward a sustainable, proven prevention infrastructure."

The Local Housing Authority Empowerments legislation (SB 4 / HB 867) was introduced by Del. Elizabeth Bennett-Parker (D-Alexandria) and Del. Rae Cousins (D-Richmond). According to the Virginia Housing Alliance, these updates focus on preserving buildings and expanding zoning options to scale up affordable inventory, rather than administering individual cash benefits.

## 2. Stronger Wage Protections and Labor Measures

The Pay Transparency & Salary History Ban (HB 636 / SB 215) was introduced by former Del. Michelle Maldonado (D-Manassas) and Sen. Jennifer B. Boysko (D-Fairfax). Gov. Abigail Spanberger said the law "will ensure that employees are offered the pay they deserve while promoting greater transparency in the application process."

The Minimum Wage Path (HB 1 / SB 1), patroned by Del. Jeion Ward (D-Hampton)



SCREEN CAPTURE VIA ZILLOW

A rental listing shows the Crystal Flats apartment building on Saturday, June 27. New tenant protection and eviction laws passed during the 2026 Virginia General Assembly session take effect July 1.

and Sen. L. Louise Lucas (D-Portsmouth), codifies the current \$12.77 baseline and schedules incremental increases, hitting \$13.75 on Jan. 1, 2027, and \$15.00 by Jan. 1, 2028.

The Wage Theft Safeguards (HB 238), introduced by Del. Dolores McQuinn (D-Richmond), ensures workers are protected. The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) investigates claims for all workers, making it a crime for an employer to threaten to report a worker to immigration authorities or withhold earned pay.

## 3. Healthcare Affordability and Consumer Mandates

The Pharmacy Benefit Manager Crackdown (HB 625 / SB 161) and Prior Authorization Limits (HB 736) are led by Del. Rozia Henson (D-Prince William), Sen. Russet Perry (D-Loudoun), and former Del. Michelle Maldonado (D-Manassas). Enrolled individuals in commercial or employer-sponsored plans automatically receive these baseline

benefits. Gov. Abigail Spanberger said, "These bills are a significant step forward to make sure that when your family needs care, you can get it."

4. Boosted K-12 Public Education Funding  
Local School Division Support and English Language Learner (ELL) initiatives receive funding through the state budget (HB 30). Public school divisions are legally mandated to provide a free K-12 public education to every child residing within their district boundaries, regardless of immigration status.

School divisions are prohibited from inquiring about immigration status during enrollment, thereby ensuring immediate legal rights to ELL instruction, in accordance with policy guidance from the National Immigration Law Center and the Oyez Project. This impact is felt statewide, including in Alexandria City Public Schools, a system where the division reports that students come from 118 countries and 37.5% to 38% of the student body requires English Learner support.

## MEET THOMAS JEFFERSON AND CELEBRATE THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

A COMMUNITY FUN  
RUN FOR ALL AGES

SATURDAY, JULY 4TH  
8:00 - 9:00 AM

KINGSTOWNE TOWNE CENTER  
THE PLAZA NEAR GIANT  
KINGSTOWNE, VA 22315

FAIRFAX COUNTY  
VA 250

4TH  
OF JULY

2.50K Fun Run

CELEBRATING AMERICA 250<sup>TH</sup>

REGISTER AT [MOUNTVERNONSPRINGFIELD.COM/EVENTS](http://MOUNTVERNONSPRINGFIELD.COM/EVENTS)



## PUBLIC NOTICE

Please be advised that there will be a 5-minute fireworks display taking place as part of a private evening event at George Washington's Mount Vernon on

Monday, July 13  
between 9:15 p.m. and 9:55 p.m.

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

# ENTERTAINMENT

## 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

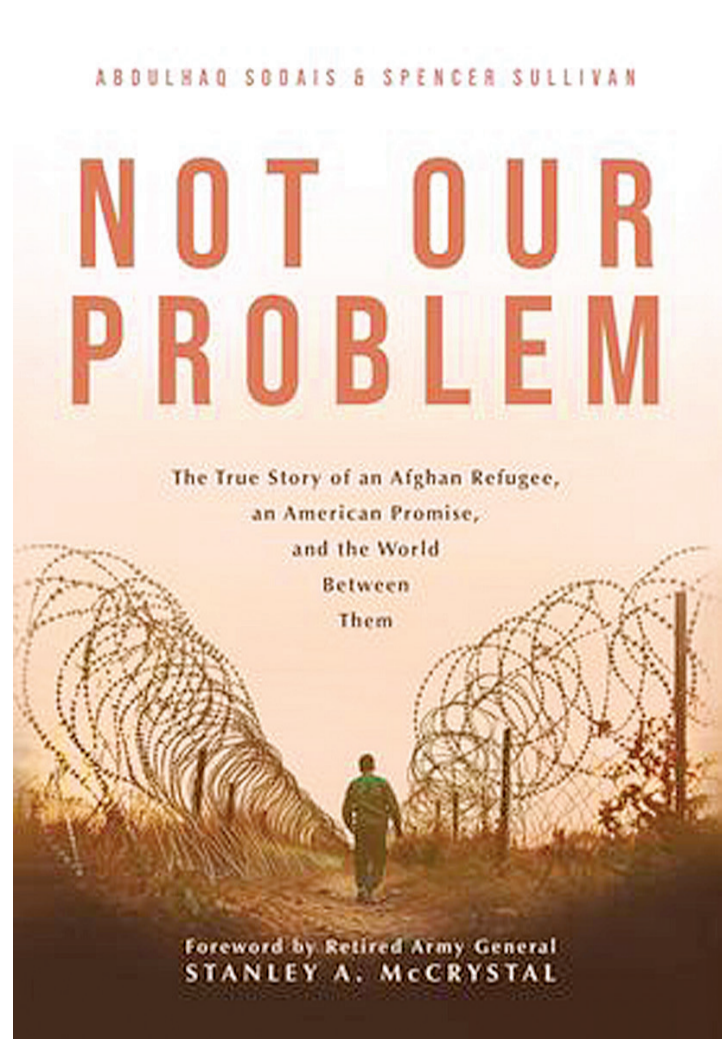
**Farmer's Market. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.** At Casa Chirilagua Community Center, 4109 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Experience fresh foods, native plants, artisan crafts, music and community at Four Mile Run Farmers & Artisans Market in the heart of Arlandria outside the Casa Chirilagua Community Center, every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



Author Spencer Sullivan will speak on Monday, July 27, 2026 at Kingstowne Regional Library.

## 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.
- 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.

Live on Top of The Hill Concert Series

Ages 18+

Friday, 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](http://alexandriava.gov/RPCA/Events).

## NOW THRU JULY 26

**Story Cloths and the Book: Work by New Image Artists.** At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Artists' Reception: Sunday, June 14, 4 - 6 p.m. In Story Cloths and the Book, New Image Artists explore their relationship with reading, writing, meaning and process by pairing narrative textiles and mixed media with unique artist's books. A story cloth is a textile that contains a narrative that is community oriented, personal or historical in nature. The history of narrative textiles predates the invention of the printing press and books as we think of them today. The broad range of subjects interpreted in this exhibition includes an author of a classic mystery series, individual identity, family histories, the joy of summer

and memories of well-loved books.

## JUNE 25 TO SEPT. 17

**Summer Concerts at Carlyle Crossing. 6-8 p.m.** At Carlyle Crossing, 2455 Mandeville Lane, Alexandria. Beginning June 11 and continuing through Sept. 17, the free outdoor series will bring an eclectic lineup of local and regional musicians to the plaza on select Thursday evenings, creating a lively gathering place for residents, visitors, and the surrounding community.

Concert dates:

July 9 - Patty Reese (Award Winning Americana & Roots Rock)

July 23 - Tobago Bay Calypso Band (Caribbean, Soca Steel Drums)

August 6 - Eric Scott (Modern Soul, Funk & Groove)

August 20 - Seneca Creek (Bluegrass)

September 3 - Femi and the Foundation (Funk, Rock, Hip-Hop, R&B)

September 17 - Sol Roots (Funk, Blues, Soul & Rock)

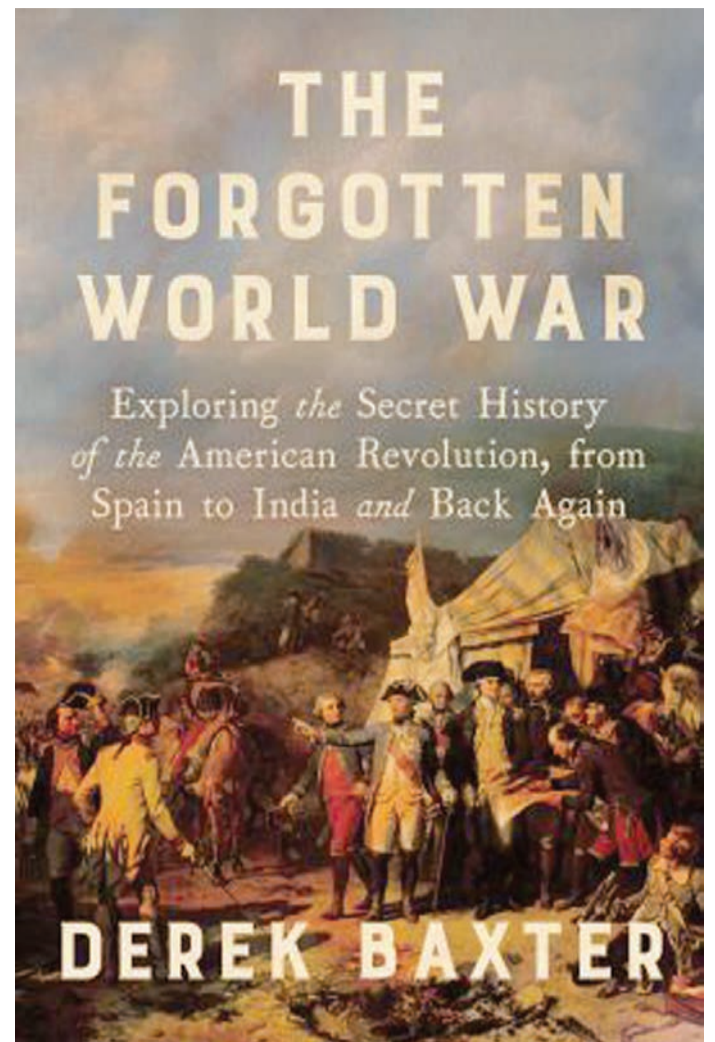
## WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN PHILHARMONIC ASSOCIATION

The Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association (WMPA) is proud to present its 36th annual Lyceum Chamber Music Series. Each concert is held on Sunday at 3 p.m. at the Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, in Old Town Alexandria. Tickets are not required (suggested donation of \$25). View the full schedule at [wmpamusic.org/lyceum](http://wmpamusic.org/lyceum).

Main Street Players, Sunday, July 5, 3 p.m.

Main Street Chamber Players features Laura Kobayashi on violin, Stephanie Knutsen on viola, Kenneth Law on cello, Barbara Fitzgerald on double bass, and Kent McWilliams on piano. Program includes Piano Quartet in A Minor by Josef Suk, Morpheus for Viola & Piano by Rebecca Clarke, and Quintet for Violin, Viola, Cello, Contrabass, & Piano by Ellen Taaffe Zwilich.

Music to Celebrate America @ 250, Sunday, July



Author Derek Baxter will speak on Monday, July 6, 2026 at Kingstowne Regional Library in Alexandria.

12, 3 p.m. Music to Celebrate America @ 250 features Crystal Lee on flute, Brittany Pemberton on clarinet, and Elizabeth Hill on piano. Program includes works by Price, Muczynski, and Peterson.

Keith Wright & Sam Runolfson Concert, Sunday, July 19, 3 p.m. This performance features Keith Wright on flute and Sam Runolfson on cello. Program to be announced.

Maxim Pakhomov Piano Concert, Sunday, July 26, 3 p.m. Join us and listen to the amazing Maxim Pakhomov perform on piano. Program includes Sonata No. 31 in A-flat Major by Ludwig van Beethoven, Scherzo (Op. 54) by Frederic Chopin, Annees De Pelerinage, Sonetto 104 del Petracca, and Etude Transcendental in F Minor by Ferenc Liszt, and Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4 by Heitor Villa-Lobos.

## MONDAY/JULY 6

**Author Derek Baxter. 7 to 8:30 p.m.** At Kingstowne Regional Library, 7130 Silver Lake Blvd., Alexandria. Join writer Derek Baxter for a discussion about his book *The Forgotten World War: Exploring the Secret History of the American Revolution, from Spain to India and Back Again*.

## JULY 11-12

**Del Ray Artisans' Summer Art Market 2026. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.** At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. An indoor event featuring original creations by local artists in a variety of mediums, including ceramics, glass, jewelry, mixed media, photography, and more. Shop original work from local artists at Del Ray Artisans gallery at 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Perfect for gifts or treat yourself! Different artists each market day, so visit both days! Details at [DelRayArtisans.org/summer-art-market-2026](http://DelRayArtisans.org/summer-art-market-2026)

## SATURDAY/JULY 11

**Celebrate America at 250. 6 p.m.** ASO; downbeat at 8:30 p.m. At Oronoco Bay Park, 100 [www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)

# ENTERTAINMENT

Madison Street, Alexandria. Followed by fireworks and featuring the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra; Victoria Gau, conductor, Danielle Talamantes, soprano.

## SATURDAY/JULY 11

### Write Like A Woman Networking Workshop.

**1-3 p.m.** At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Founder and Facilitator, KaNikki Jakarta, welcomes you to year 10 of the Write Like a Woman Networking Workshop. This popular workshop invites amateur and professional women writers of all genres ages 18 – 100. Each workshop centers on uplifting and inspiring through writing and allows participants to enhance their writing styles through writing prompts and encouragement. Space is limited, please RSVP to [greatpublishing@yahoo.com](mailto:greatpublishing@yahoo.com)

## SATURDAY/JULY 11

**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.

## SATURDAY/JULY 18

### "Alexandria's Patriots Remembered." 10 a.m.

At the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 323 South Fairfax Street, Old Town Alexandria. Alexandria Historical Society Presents "Alexandria's Patriots Remembered: A Revolutionary Walk Through the Old Presbyterian Meeting House." Presented as part of the Alexandria Historical Society's History Behind the Scenes series and Alexandria's 250th celebration, this tour will explore one of the city's most significant founding era landmarks: the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, its 18th-century burial ground, and the men and women whose lives connected the congregation directly to the American Revolution and the early republic. Tickets are \$25 for non-members and \$20 for Alexandria Historical Society members. Additional information and tickets are available at [https://www.alexandriahistoricalandsociety.org/events/opmh\\_tour](https://www.alexandriahistoricalandsociety.org/events/opmh_tour).

## THURSDAY/JULY 23

**Coffee & Connections 8:30 to 9:30 am.** At United Way Worldwide, 701 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Sponsored by The Chamber



Enjoy Fourth of July fireworks on July 3-4, 2026 at George Washington's Mount Vernon.

ALX's Professional Women's Network. Kick off your morning with the Professional Women's Network at the July event—featuring coffee, conversation, and valuable connections with professionals from across the region. Omoiye O. Kinney, Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer of United Way Worldwide, will share insights from her leadership journey in global marketing and communications.

## MONDAY/JULY 27

**Author Spencer Sullivan. 7 to 8:30 p.m.** At Kingstowne Regional Library, 7130 Silver Lake Blvd., Alexandria. Not Our Problem, a war memoir and refugee story revealed in alternating voices, follows an Afghan refugee and an American soldier across borders and continents, tracing the long

distance between a promise and its keeping—interrogating a world in crisis while celebrating how friendship can outlast the war that created it.

## THE BIRCHMERE

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

## JULY

Mon. 6: Jason Newsted & The Chophouse Band \$35.00  
Tue. 7: Sun Kil Moon w/ Lisa Cerbone \$29.50  
Thu. 9: Peter White \$49.50  
Fri. 10: Newmyer Flyer Presents: THE SIMON

& GARFUNKEL SONGBOOK Featuring Tom Lofgren, Kipyn Martin, Heather Lloyd, Mark Lofgren, Tom Fridrich, Ronnie Newmyer \$39.50

Sat. 11: An Evening with Shovels & Rope \$45.00  
Sun. 12: Taj Mahal & the Phantom Blues Band \$79.50 **SOLD OUT!**  
Thu. 16: Lyfe Jennings \$75.00  
Fri. 17: Magical Mystery Doors Presents: Beatles/Zepplin/Doors \$39.50  
Sat. 18: The Second City "The Best of The Second City" \$55.00  
Sun. 19: An Evening of Conversation with Stewart Copeland \$49.50 **SOLD OUT!**  
Fri. 24: The Australian Bee Gees – A Tribute to The Bee Gees \$45.00  
Sat. 25: Marion Meadows & Alex Bugnon \$55.00  
Mon. 27: Hindley Street Country Club \$49.50  
Fri. 31: Pat McGann \$45.00

## Woodlawn Exhibit Spotlights a 'Bold Experiment'

FROM PAGE 3  
bors.

Confederate soldiers raided Roberts's home and he joined the Union Army but said he would not carry a weapon. He founded the Accotink Home Guard, 200 men to protect against the raiders.

Visitors can study the certificate of merit Gillingham received for growing the greatest variety of pears. In exquisite cursive handwriting are records like a wedding book and a membership book. Keziah Warrington's workbook shows how he practiced his penmanship, math and vocabulary. A scythe displayed was used to harvest grain.

A stunning hand-embroidered "signature" quilt reflects Quaker values of community and equality. There are several quilted art pieces by local artist Sheryl Sims who has traced her ancestry to Quakers.

As the nation celebrates its 250th anniversary, the exhibit reminds people of modern-day Quakers' six core testimonies: simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality and stewardship (SPICES). Woodlawn's Quakers "wove these values into their family bonds and the very soil of this community," visitors learn.

The exhibit will close on Dec. 30, 2026.

### The Meetinghouse, and More

Not part of the exhibit but worth studying is the Woodlawn Quaker Meetinghouse, a wood-frame, one-floor, rectangular building begun in 1851 and expanded several times. During the Civil War, Union soldiers occupied the meetinghouse.

The Virginia Landmarks Register notes, "Built as a single cell in 1851-53 and doubled in 1869, the modest Woodlawn Quaker Meetinghouse retains its historic character,



The Quaker meetinghouse at Woodlawn today.

featuring original windows, siding, trim, floor plan, interior partitions and traditionally crafted benches. An associated burial ground containing the graves of the settlement's founders is found to the east." The building is also listed on the National Regis-

ter of Historic Places.

Today, it is surrounded on three sides by Fort Belvoir.

Information: <http://www.woodlawn-popeleighey.org/> and <https://woodlawnfriends.org/home/history/>

PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

## Transform Your Bathroom and Change Your Life.

**FREE TOILET + \$1,500 OFF\***

For your FREE information kit and our Senior Discounts, Call Today Toll-Free

**1-877-591-9950**



\*Free toilet with purchase and installation of a walk-in tub or walk-in shower only. Offer available while supplies last. No cash value. Must present offer at time of purchase. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Market restrictions may apply. Offer available in select markets only. CSLB 1082165 NSCB 0082999 0083445 13VH11096000



**SAVE \$350** when you transform your patio into an outdoor oasis.



Call 1-844-746-2332 now to **SAVE \$350 TODAY!**

- Instant shade at the touch of a button.
- Enjoy more quality time with family and friends.
- Up to 10-Year Limited Warranty.

# CLASSIFIED

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

TO ADVERTISE IN THIS PAPER, CALL BY MONDAY 11:00 AM 703-778-9411

### NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY FOR THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORT BELVOIR NORTH AREA CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT FORT BELVOIR, VIRGINIA

The U.S. Army hereby gives Notice of the Availability (NOA) for the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed construction of new facilities and infrastructure at the Fort Belvoir North Area (FBNA) in Fairfax County, Virginia. The purpose of this project is to improve and modernize FBNA's campus. Primary developments include the construction of a Joint Integrated Logistics Center, a Visitor Control Center (VCC), four administrative buildings, three new parking structures, truck trailer parking, and expanded Distribution Center parking. Security improvements would include new perimeter fencing and construction of new access and traffic control points. Roadway improvements would include the construction of new interior roadways, extension of Heller Road, construction of Heller Road Bridge over Accotink Creek, minor improvements to Barta Road, and the addition of a new traffic signal on Barta Road. In addition, the Army would potentially purchase a parcel of land between the FBNA boundary and Fullerton Road from the Virginia Department of Transportation to construct a two-way road connecting Fullerton Road and the FBNA campus. These improvements would be accompanied by utility network improvements to potable water, wastewater, stormwater, electric (including solar installations), natural gas, and telecommunications.

The Draft EA has been prepared in accordance with the regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 42 United States Code [U.S.C.] §§ 4321 et seq.) and the Department of War's NEPA implementing procedures (2026). The Draft EA is available to view in printed form at the Fort Belvoir Library, and at the Kingstowne and Sherwood branches of the Fairfax County Public Library system.

Comments or questions on the Draft EA may be submitted by email to [michael.h.tran12.civ@army.mil](mailto:michael.h.tran12.civ@army.mil) and [clellan.r.mcmurry.civ@army.mil](mailto: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](mailto: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. Comments must be received no later than 30 days after publication of this NOA. The publication date of this NOA is July 1, 2026, and the comment period closes on July 31, 2026.

GENERAC

## #1 standby generator worldwide.

Get whole-home power, automatically.

Call 844-947-1479 to schedule your free quote today!

\*Terms & conditions apply

## Sign up for

**FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION to all of our papers**



[www.connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe)

## Mount Vernon Gazette

[www.MountVernonGazette.com](http://www.MountVernonGazette.com)

Twitter @MtVernonGazette

An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by **Local Media Connection LLC**

**1606 King Street Alexandria, Virginia 22314**

Free digital edition delivered to your email box. Go to [connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe](http://connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe)

**NEWS DEPARTMENT:**  
[gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Mary Kimm**  
Editor and Publisher  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Jeanne Theismann**  
[jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com)  
@TheismannMedia

**Mercia Hobson**  
Staff Reporter  
[mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Mike Salmon**  
Contributing Writer  
[miksalmon6922@gmail.com](mailto:miksalmon6922@gmail.com)

**Glenda Booth**  
Contributing Writers

**ADVERTISING:**  
For advertising information  
[sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com)  
703-778-9431

**Debbie Funk**  
Display Advertising/National Sales  
703-778-9444  
[debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com)

**David Griffin**  
Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
[dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Classified & Employment Advertising**  
703-778-9431

**Publisher**  
Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
[jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Editor & Publisher**  
Mary Kimm  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
@MaryKimm

**Production Manager:**  
Geovani Flores

**CIRCULATION**  
**Circulation Manager:**  
Ann Oliver  
[circulation@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:circulation@connectionnewspapers.com)

A Connection Newspaper



WHAT BURNED

WHAT THEY CLAIMED

Their lies come out of your wallet. Insurance fraud costs everyone in Virginia \$1,000 per year. Learn how to spot it and report it at [TheCostOfFraud.com](http://TheCostOfFraud.com).



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH/MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE



Supervisor Dan Storck stressed the importance of public art.



Teddy Garbe found the trail perfect for skateboarding.



An Eastern bluebird greets visitors as they start up the trail along the mural.



The mural enlivens the Residences at North Hill and U.S.

## A Bloody Business



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I was reminded a few weeks ago about something in my life which I hardly need reminding about: my thyroid cancer diagnosis and my chronic kidney disease, both stage IV; two for the price of one (one of which would be plenty, two is overkill, literally). The reminder came when one of the levels in my monthly lab work was higher than (A) It needed to be and (B) higher than it has ever been. Not exactly cause for celebration (certainly not ringing a bell at any infusion centers announcing a cured patient). However, after 17+ years of this, I'm fairly well-prepared in how one reacts to such cancer-related abnormalities. However, this time, the measure generated an email from my nephrologist's dialysis coordinator acknowledging this recent elevated level. He asked me if I was experiencing any symptoms (and he listed them: fatigue, poor sleeping, disinterest in food, hiccups, et cetera) relating to my kidney disease. The complicating factor is treatment of my thyroid cancer exacerbates my kidney disease and managing my kidney disease is at cross purposes with how I treat/live with my thyroid cancer disease. The classic "damned if you do ... " scenario.

Fortunately, none of the disease-related symptoms had manifest themselves. Moreover, my levels declined enough in my special-ordered two-week later lab order (instead of the usual four) so I was sort of "off the clock," as my friend Sean would say. As a result, all the interested parties retreated from their presumptive brinks. I was advised to hydrate more and to schedule my next lab in its customary four-week slot. And so, the medical professionals will be closely monitoring my lab work to evaluate if this higher-than-normal level was an outlier or the long-awaited, probably anticipated beginning of the slide (I can't say "end"). Nevertheless, diagnosis to date, my cancer life (diagnosed late Feb. 2009) has mostly been lived on easy street, with a few unexpected turns and a couple of potholes along the way. If I was to complain I'd be an expletive deleted (although that catheter that was inserted in the hospital when I was admitted with a collapsed lung in 2015 was kind of a problem).

Still, this kind of mental anguish is what "dropping the other shoe" is all about. On the one hand, I think about my cancer situation/predicament all the time with intermittent interruptions. On the other hand, I think about my cancer situation/predicament during those intermittent interruptions. As you can read, it matters not which hand or which compartmentalized part of my brain is working, it's all working on cancer stuff. And ignoring it all is the method to my madness unless and until I get a jolt - like lab results. It is these lab results which are on the frontline of my coexistence with cancer. When something happens/dare I say, portends, it will likely be the lab work that does its indicating. And right now, and in early June when I'm back "labing" every four weeks, I will be in a heightened state of anxiety. But since there's only so much I can do to impact these future results, I have to tell myself to "act naturally" (as Buck Owens and Ringo Starr sing) and not overreact.

There's no real reason to do so now anyway. There's no advantage in being miserable and uptight in advance of my next lab work. If those results are disappointing, shall I say, then my life will become more complicated. As such, there's no reason to complicate it now. Bad news travels fast enough. I don't need to hurry it along. And anticipating it likewise serves no purpose. It will be bad enough when it's fact. Until then I can live with the fiction.

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

# Route 1 Is Brightened by a New Mural

FROM PAGE 6

Over a two-month period, Kidder painted the mural on the bare wall. Sprinkled throughout are images of people, but they are not real people, by design. Kidder said that when creating it, when a passerby said one of the men resembled actor Morgan Freeman, he modified it.

"We can never have enough art," Storck told the 25-person gathering. "Art makes life worth living and we know that public art matters." Storck and Kidder thanked the many people and organizations involved, including the Mount Vernon District Arts and Culture Council, Arts Fairfax and the Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation.

Liz Hagg came out of retirement to celebrate and explain that this was the fourth public art project of Paint It, Fairfax, a program she once managed. Paint It, Fairfax is aimed at building vitality in Fairfax County's commercial revitalization districts through

"creative placemaking efforts," notes their website. "The best murals can nurture the distinctive qualities of a community or place and can serve to celebrate community members or local establishments, while also being inviting to visitors," it says.

Cathy Hosek with the Mount Vernon Arts and Culture Council told the group, "We are celebrating more than a mural, but also the community. It reflects a neighborly spirit."

Kidder, who teaches art at Lake Braddock High School, said that "I didn't just make it. I got to know local personalities and their schedules."

He shared a few questions he was asked as he painted, like "Why is there paint on your hands?" "Did you do this all by yourself?" A teenager queried, "Who is paying for this?" On a rough day, one youngster on a scooter brought him a bottle of water.

When one young observer called one of the wildlife images a lemur, Kidder said that

that is one of the beauties of art. "We all have an interpretation."

The Residences at North Hill, 7201 Richmond Highway, in the Hybla Valley area, were built on the land of a former mobile home park, Storck said. Former Mount Vernon Supervisor, the late Gerry Hyland, brought the community together, Storck offered, and developed the complex as one-third market rate townhouses, one-third affordable workforce housing and one-third public park.

The park's large, leafy trees loomed on top of the hill in the background.

While these arts-minded visitors slowed down and contemplated the mural, Route 1's unceasing stream of traffic zoomed by the seemingly endless strip malls, fast food joints, gas stations and parking lots. U.S. 1 stretches 2,370 miles from Key West, Florida, north to Fort Kent, Maine, at the Canadian border.

### 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)

#### FREE INDEPENDENCE DAY LYFT RIDES

WRAP, a local nonprofit organization, announced that free safe Lyft rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during this weekend's Independence Day celebrations. Offered by the nonprofit Washington Re-

gional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the 2026 Independence Day SoberRide program will be in operation beginning at 4:00 p.m. Saturday, July 4th (Independence Day) and operates until 4:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 5th as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this high-risk holiday. During this 12-hour period, area residents ages 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may

download the Lyft app to their phones then enter the SoberRide code in the app's 'Payment' tab (under the 'Add Lyft Pass' option) to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's 2026 Independence Day SoberRide® promo code will be posted at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 4th on [www.SoberRide.com](http://www.SoberRide.com).



**CHRIS WHITE**  
 FAMILY REAL ESTATE  
 OF LONG & FOSTER



*79 homes SOLD in 2026 so far!*



4006 Renault Pl | \$949,000



9400 Ludgate Dr | \$1,495,000



8540 Mount Zephyr Dr | \$675,000



3801 Washington Woods Dr | \$1,500,000



9426 Mount Vernon Cir | \$1,510,000



3602 South Pl #2 | \$1,450,000



3612 Center Dr | \$1,565,000



6403 14th St | \$860,000



8339 Wagon Wheel Rd | \$850,000



8910 Bordeaux St | \$1,025,000



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

**LONG & FOSTER**  
 REAL ESTATE

Alexandria/Old Town Historic  
 110 N. Royal St. 3rd Floor  
 Alexandria, VA 22314

703.283.9028

www.chrisandpeggywhite.com  
 chris.white@longandfoster.com

BEST OF  
**WASHINGTONIAN**  
 TOP PRODUCING AGENT 2015 - 2025