

CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station ♦ Lorton ♦ Clifton

‘Spirit Rock’ Marks Rite of Passage

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Best friends, Sabina Kurbanova, Zoe Games, Daniella Oliver, Mikael Abraham and Gabija Koreck, mark their last day of attending school together at White Oak Elementary.

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Fairfax County's Heat Plan Shifts into High Gear

The heat spell in early July had air conditioners humming everywhere.

By Mike Salmon
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

If the first week in July is a sign of things to come, area agencies might need to shift gears in the cooling department to avoid potential fatalities that come with temperatures in the triple digits.

On Sunday, July 5, Fairfax County activated the Fairfax County Heat Plan, designating several county facilities such as libraries, community centers, REC centers, human services offices and homeless shelters as cooling centers. Those cooling centers are equipped with supplies for community members, including water, sunscreen, insect repellent, shower wipes and free Fairfax Connector bus coupons.

During this time, County leadership decided to open a 24/7 cooling center at the Jim Scott Community Center during the most recent extreme heat wave. It was open 24/7 starting on July 2 at 8 p.m. through July 5 at 8 a.m. and staffed continuously by county employees. The center served 85 community members over that period. Free transportation was available to anyone who needed a ride to the center or a ride from the center once it closed on Sunday morning. On Sunday, regional libraries and rec centers were open as cooling centers during their operating hours.

The National Weather Service listed the Daily Climate Normals (1991-2020) Washington Area, DC statistics on the Max Temperature Normal graph, which shows temperatures in July are all double digit numbers for the month, with 90 degrees as the high. This summer, the first week in July was full of triple digit temperatures which they list as an "extreme heat," situation. On their July 4 map, high temperatures for the area reached 101 and on the peak heat index in Leesburg was 113 degrees while Fredericksburg was 114 degrees. Fairfax County was also in the Severe Drought category although thunderstorms came on July 4 and 5 to bring some relief. But those rain events made little dent in the drought.

In the nationwide picture, Alaska posted their very first heat warning to residents.

County Cool

Fairfax County has three cooling programs available for residents. The Cooling Assistance Program

provides financial assistance with electric bills, security deposits to keep the electricity on, air conditioning repairs, fans for the house, and window air conditioners. To be eligible, at least one household member must be: 60 or older; 5 or younger; or disabled according to Social Security, Medicaid or 100% Veteran's Administration, the county said.

The Senior Cool Program helps low-income older citizens and the AC Rescue Program provide small air conditioning equipment when needed. To be eligible, at least one household member must be: 60 or older; 5 or younger; or disabled according to Social Security, Medicaid or 100% Veteran's Administration.

Trees Down in Burke

In the wake of the heat wave in early July, Braddock District Supervisor Rachna Sizemore Heizer (D) addressed all the heat preparations at a town hall meeting the following week and attendees included a representative from Chairman McKay's and Delegate Laura Jane Cohen. While the residents were concerned about the number of trees down from this microburst storm June 22, they also posed a question: What happens next time a storm comes like this? Safety was the initial message but there were few answers for the long term. Supervisor Heizer looked ahead to future storms "as things are changing weatherwise and climate wise," she said. For more, see <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/burke-microburst-incident>

Measuring Heat Islands in Northern Virginia

On Measurement Day, July 16, 2026, more than 30 teams of citizen scientists will measure temperature and humidity variations along 30 routes in Fairfax and Arlington counties, and City of Alexandria as part of the "Urban Heat Island Mapping Project."

Extreme heat is the leading cause of weather-related mortality in the United States. In an urban environment, temperatures can vary drastically between adjacent neighborhoods due to dark, heat-absorbing surfaces and a lack of tree canopy.

"This will be the most granular measurement of heat ever attempted throughout Northern Virginia," said Chris Topoleski, executive director of Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions. "We know

Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday
				
High: 94 °F	Low: 74 °F	High: 101 °F	Low: 79 °F	High: 100 °F
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Hot	Partly Cloudy	Hot

Extreme heat returning this week, July 14-16, 2026.



The Jim Scott Cooling Center was in use for that early July heat spell.

that neighborhoods with few trees and a lot of asphalt can be dangerously hot in summer. Once we're done, we'll know how hot these neighborhoods are."

The Urban Heat Island Mapping Project is a collaboration between the Faith Alliance and George Mason University's Virginia Climate Center. The Climate Center forecasts Thursday, July 16, will be one of the hottest days of the year.

"Heat risk is on the rise and Virginians are already feeling the impacts," said James Kinter, director of GMU's Virginia Climate Center and Center for Ocean Land Atmosphere Studies. "High temperatures and humidity can lead to heat stress, heat stroke, and even death."

Each volunteer team will consist of at least two people in a vehicle with a rooftop sensor. A special phone app will transmit data to GMU. Measurements will be taken along routes previously selected by the Virginia Climate Center at three times throughout the day: Morning (6-8 a.m.), Afternoon (2-4 p.m.), and Evening (6-8 p.m.).

Fairfax County Activates Heat Plan for July 4; Opens 24-Hour Cooling Center

By Fairfax County Emergency Information on July 2, 2026



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

The heat hit the area hard over the July 4 weekend.

The Climate Center will later render the data into high-resolution heat maps that will indicate which neighborhoods need intervention to reduce dangerous summer temperatures.

In phase two, the completed research will be shared by Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions with

local elected officials and staff to inform policy decisions such as tree canopy expansion and other initiatives.

The American Red Cross-National Capital Chapter is supporting the Project by offering its regional headquarters in Fairfax County as a staging site.

White Oak Elementary ‘Rocks’ Their Spirit

Graduating 6th graders start new tradition.

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Summer comes heralding the start of school vacation. It’s not only the end of the school session, but the start of pool season, biking adventures, and later bedtimes. But for many students across the county, this year’s end of session will be much more. For those marking the end of elementary, middle, or high school, the last days of school also mark significant milestones in their life journey. So it is for the sixth graders of White Oak Elementary School in Springfield. And this year, thanks to the efforts of parents, staff, and community contributors, they have a new way to mark that milestone — a “spirit rock.”

Standing by the rock on their last day of school on June 17, Principal Josh Douds spoke to the students about their role in establishing the new tradition for their elementary school graduation. Each White Oak sixth grader had written their name on the rock the day before. Douds reminded them of what the rock represents. “Some of you have been here for seven years. Next year you travel. Now a symbol of what you have done here remains at White Oak. Your names will be painted over next year, but will always be here. As rocks are formed layer by layer, so will your names be a legacy at the base layer, where your names will stay together.”

Douds’ words about staying together on the rock struck a chord with friends Mikael Abraham and Gabija Kouck. Because students at White Oak travel to two different locations for their middle school years, Lake Braddock and Robinson. Next year the friends will be separated and travel different roads, to different schools. Abraham shared that it “... would be tough. We’ve been best friends all year; since fifth grade.”

The girls’ reaction reflects one of the reasons Doud and parent organizers May Kang and Libby Smith wanted to support the project and create a tangible reminder of students’ White Oak time. So students could “have a sense of belonging, and leave a mark.”

A spirit rock project is a heavy effort, literally; in this case, three and a half tons of effort. Organizer

Kang said, “This event would not have been possible without the generosity of our community and our local businesses.” The stone itself was donated by Luck Stone Quarry, of Chantilly. The quarry has been in operation at their location since 1928, providing rock, chips, and dust for county and state roads. Transportation of that tonnage required the professional handling of Aaron’s Towing, of Gainesville, and a tow truck larger than one typically used for cars. A random axle rollback, with a crane attachment for precision unloading and setting, did the job. How did a Gainesville company come to deliver a Chantilly rock to a Springfield school? Principal Doud had involved the two companies with a spirit rock project during his tenure at a Centreville school. Both Luck Stone and Aaron’s Towing management remembered and wanted to help again. The local Burke Nursery & Garden Center will assist with identifying plants to beautify the area around the rock. Over the summer, Capital Murals, which specializes in school murals, will create custom art around the rock’s side edges. For the mural and other items not donated, the school’s parent group held several fund raisers, including bake sales; a fundraising day with local restaurant Five Guys; a Coin Wars game; and their annual basketball contest between 6th graders and the teaching staff.

Their new spirit rock creates a tradition already practiced at other schools in the area. The rock is a typical igneous rock in the granite family. It might otherwise have been destined for crushing into small pieces to be included in an asphalt or concrete mixture, perhaps to become an indistinguishable part of a highway. Now it will command notice as the embodiment of the school’s spirit. White Oak always rocked the spirit:



Aaron’s Towing placing the 3.5 ton rock at the school after transport from the quarry.



Principal Josh Douds speaks to graduating 6th graders about their White Oak Elementary legacy represented by the spirit rock



Look and you might see the name of a future United States president, professional soccer star, engineer, lineman, scientist, or fire fighter, or ...

“Once an Eagle, always an Eagle.” Now they have a spirit rock too.



Best friends, Sabina Kurbanova, Zoe Games, Daniella Oliver, Mikael Abraham, and Gabija Koreck, mark their last day of attending school together.



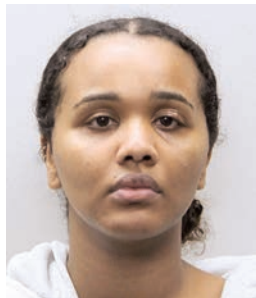
The school’s new rock, blasted from the Luck Stone Quarry, might otherwise have been destined for the crusher.

NEWS

Fairfax Woman Charged in Vehicular Death

On the morning of Christmas Eve 2025, Fairfax County police responded to a report of an unresponsive male lying in the grass median of Fairfax County Parkway. There, at 9:43 a.m., near Old Plains Road in the Fair Oaks area, they found the body of Jimmy Patterson, 50, of no fixed address.

He was declared dead at the scene, and detectives believed he was a pedestrian who'd been struck by a vehicle traveling on the parkway. According to police, detectives from the Crash Reconstruction



Edris

Unit investigated the cause of the tragedy and, while doing so, "determined Shaza Edris, 20, of Fairfax was [allegedly] actively using her cell phone when she struck the pedestrian" on Dec. 23, 2025.

Six months later, on June 25 of this year, Edris turned herself in and was charged with felony hit and run involving death and using a handheld personal communications device while driving. She was released on \$5,000 bond and has an Aug. 31 court date.

— BONNIE HOBBS

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 via email calendar@connectionnewspapers.com.

FAIRFAX COUNTY OFFERS FREE TREES

Community-based organizations in Fairfax

County can apply to receive free trees for planting on private properties, through a program by Fairfax County's Urban and Community Forestry Division (UCFD) of the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services.

The program, offered in partnership with Casey Trees, is designed to help commu-

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9

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Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Jurisdiction	Fed Struc Id	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
PATRICK	13252	610N	HELMS ROAD/610	BRANCH DAN RIVER	6/24/2026
PITTSYLVANIA	13732	817	MOUNTAIN ROAD	TURKEYCOCK CREEK	6/9/2026
SMYTH	17509	800N	ST CLAIR CREEK ROAD	ST CLAIR CREEK	6/8/2026
PATRICK	13413	825	PALMETTO SCH ROAD 825	RUSSEL CREEK	6/1/2026

The list above is not a comprehensive list of all structures with weight restrictions in the Commonwealth but shows only structures that have new or changed weight restrictions within the last 30 days. The list contains only basic structure identification and location information and the date the new or changed weight restriction and signage became effective.

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit vdot.virginia.gov and navigate to Travel and traffic/For freight operators/Truck restrictions. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov or the Load Rating Program Manager, Manjil Devkota at 804-786-4064.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT's Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730 or corina.herrera@vdot.virginia.gov.

Vehicle Fire in Lorton

Fire, burn injuries, related to stabbing, according to police.



The vehicle fire extinguished by fire and rescue had fully engulfed the vehicle and burned portions of a large tree.,



Investigators worked the scene well into the day of the early morning incident.

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PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Police cordon off the scene of a vehicle fire at Laurel Hill Park.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Park goes at Lorton's Laurel Hill noted a police presence, crime tape, and slightly acrid smell of smoke in the air, as they entered the park on July 9. Beyond the police cruisers and tape stood the burned out hulk of a Toyota SUV, nestled under the stately Red Chestnut tree on the lawn of the historic Barrett House.

The incident has been preliminarily connected to a stabbing on Gunston Road in Lorton on the same morning.

The Fairfax County Police Department stated that "officers responded to a stabbing report at 2:04 a.m., in the 10400 block of Gunston Road." They found a female victim with multiple stab wounds who said

she was injured by a male acquaintance. She was transported to a local hospital in non-life-threatening condition.

About an hour later, officers responded to a vehicle fire at Laurel Hill Park's Central Green address, "where the vehicle was determined to be connected to the stabbing investigation. Fairfax County Fire and Rescue also responded and extinguished the fire. As officers searched the surrounding area, they located the suspect with severe burn injuries. He was transported to a local hospital by Fire and Rescue in life-threatening condition."

Police were present throughout the day at the park, as police and fire investigators worked the scene. Detectives from the Major Crime Bureau continue to investigate the incident, and the fire investigation is on-going.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Fairfax City's Blenheim Blvd. Project Begins

Fairfax City is reconstructing Blenheim Boulevard between Layton Hall Drive and Ridge Avenue. This major multimodal-improvements project will include sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, a two-way cycle track on the north side, and upgraded bus stops and shelters. The number of travel lanes won't change, but some additional turn lanes will be added.

Work was set to start on July 12 and continue until Nov. 6. From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., excavation, concrete work, milling, paving and temporary pavement markings will take place on Blenheim Boulevard between the entrance to Daniels Run Elementary and Colony Road.

There'll be single-lane closures in both directions, with flagging operations maintaining alternating traffic through the work zone. Drivers should expect delays and are encouraged to use alternate routes. All work is weather dependent and subject to change.

Help Britepaths Give School Supplies to Students, Teachers

It may still be summer, but school will begin again shortly – as will the need for school supplies. But not everyone can afford them, so Fairfax-based nonprofit Britepaths is stepping in to help. In just a few weeks, it'll equip up to 500 students and 100 teachers with the supplies they need most for a successful start to the school year.

Via its Back to School program, Britepaths's local client families will receive new backpacks filled with these items, and teachers will be given classroom kits and other resources for the year ahead. In addition, families will receive hygiene and household supplies

that are often too expensive for them and not covered by their SNAP benefits.

But it's a big task, so Britepaths is hoping the community will chip in to help. To donate toward these efforts, go to <https://e.givesmart.com/events/Oyh/>.

'Summer Nights' Band Concert, July 23

The Main Street Community Band will wrap up its summer concert series with the vibrant sounds of "Summer Nights." This free concert is set for Thursday, July 23, at 7:30 p.m., at the Sherwood Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd. in Fairfax. Cool off for an evening and enjoy a journey across genres and generations with a playlist that captures the magic of twilight, warm evening breezes and late-night block parties.

From the electrifying grooves of "Grease" and the whimsical rhythms of "Pelican Dance" to the driving rhythms of Duke Ellington's "Caravan" and Paul Simon's "You Can Call Me Al," this event should be great fun for the whole family.

Children's Concert and Ice Cream, July 30

The City of Fairfax Band is gearing up for one of its favorite traditions of the year – the Children's Concert. This free, family-friendly event features music that both children and adults will love, from "Bluey" to "The Mandalorian" and a variety of entertaining songs in between.

It'll be held Thursday, July 30, at 7:30 p.m., at the Sherwood Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd. in Fairfax. Attendees will be able to meet members of the City of Fairfax Police and Fire departments, connect with City Council and School Board members, enjoy ice cream, and experience an evening of music and fun for all ages.

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Springfield Little League advanced July 8. Behind the plate, this player steps into it.



Team building was a big part of their success. Springfield Little League advanced July 8.

West Springfield Little League Hits it Out of the Park



The umpire was right there for the slide into home.



High fives all around as Springfield Little League advanced July 8.

All-Star team moves on to tournament games.

BY MIKE SALMON
SPRINGFIELD CONNECTION

On the baseball field, the little league all-stars from West Springfield pulled it together this month for the win and are heading to the big little league tournament this week, and possibly on to the championship on July 21.

"They're a group of really hard-nosed kids that seized on their opportunities," said all-star manager Kyle Murdock. "We're going to give it our best," he said.

To get to this point wasn't easy

but everything came together on July 8 when the 10-11-12-year-olds team beat the Fort Hunt Little League 10-3 at Wrigley Field in Springfield. With that win, they are riding a four-game winning streak as they head to Lynchburg, to take on Virginia Beach Little League, York County Little League and Bennett's Creek Little League.

It's not just the game though, said Murdock. The players learn a lot about teamwork and overcoming diversity. "I think they'll look back on their teammates," he said. He also credited the support they got from the little league in Springfield and the many volunteers that stepped up each game.

The team and coaches at the field in Springfield.





The Mount Vernon District Has Got Your Back (to School)

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK
MOUNT VERNON
DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

Backpacks, big smiles and back-to-school fun are just around the corner! Join us on Saturday, Aug. 1, from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the Lorton Community Center for our 4th Annual Back to School Community Day. Alongside School Board Member Mateo Dunne, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services, LAZERA Ministries, ICNA Relief, Fairfax County Public Library, the Lorton Community Action Center and many other community partners, we'll help families get ready for a successful school year with a FREE day full of activities and lots of excitement.

Enjoy free school supplies, health screenings provided by ICNA Relief, food, yard games, face painting, a touch-a-truck experience, dozens of exhibitors and engaging activities for the whole family. The event will also kick off with an Arts in the Parks children's concert featuring Rocknoceros at 10 a.m. It's the perfect way to connect with neighbors, discover local services and get excited for the new school year.

School supplies are available for Fairfax County residents only and will be distributed on a first come, first served basis. Parents without children present may receive one backpack, while parents with children present may receive one backpack per child. Parking will be available across the street at the

Lorton Little League fields, with a free shuttle to the event. Fairfax County Police officers will also be on site to assist pedestrians crossing the road. We look forward to seeing you there!

Can't attend this great event? Fairfax County Public Schools has resources available online for the first day of school on Aug. 24.

2026-2027 School Year Calendar (<https://www.fcps.edu/system/files/forms/2026-05/2026-2027-standard-school-year-calendar.pdf>)

School Registration (<https://www.fcps.edu/registration>)

Information about Mount Vernon District School Board Member Mateo Dunne (<https://www.fcps.edu/staff/mateo-dunne>)

School Supply Lists (<https://www.fcps.edu/supply-lists>)

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

nity organizations in Fairfax County – such as volunteer groups, civic associations and faith-based organizations – obtain high-quality, professionally grown trees suitable for planting. Purchasing top-quality trees can be a challenge for these organizations.

This opportunity focuses on increasing tree cover in economically disadvantaged communities, which typically do not benefit from moderate to high tree cover.

How to Apply: Fairfax County Tree Distribution to Community Organizations | Public Works and Environmental Services
UCFD will prioritize applications for tree-planting sites within or adjacent to Fairfax County-designated highly vulnerable communities, as defined by

the county's One Fairfax policy and its associated Vulnerability Index. While planting in highly vulnerable communities will be prioritized, all community organizations are encouraged to apply for tree delivery, regardless of where tree planting is proposed.

The costs of the trees and delivery are covered by the county's Tree Preservation and Planting Fund and will be offered at no cost to participating organizations.

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED

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

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

SUPPORT GROUPS

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, www.havenofnova.org or havenofnova@verizon.net.

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

Popes Head Road Safety Improvements Fairfax County

Hybrid Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, July 28, 2026, 7 p.m.

VDOT Northern Virginia District Building
4975 Alliance Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

<https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/PopesHead>

Find out about planned safety improvements along approximately one-fifth of a mile of Popes Head Road (Route 654) between Quiet Brook Road (Route 7447) and Revercomb Court. The project includes reconstructing Popes Head Road to straighten the existing S-curve, along with upgrades to drainage and stormwater management systems.

The meeting will be held as a **hybrid meeting**. You may attend in person or attend the meeting virtually; information on participating in the meeting virtually is available at <https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/PopesHead>. The project team will make a presentation beginning at 7 p.m. and answer questions after the presentation.

Review project information and meeting details on the webpage above or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-259-2387 or TTY/TDD 711 to make an appointment with appropriate personnel.

Give your comments during the meeting, or by **August 12, 2026**, via the comment form on the project website, by mail to Mr. Mohammad Khalid, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or by email to meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "Popes Head Road Safety Improvements" in the subject line.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775 or TTY/TDD 711.

Past issues of

**THE
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back to 2008
are available at

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF>

Springfield Teen Violinist Performs At Valley Forge America250

Solomon Merriweather, 14, of Springfield, Va. performed in dedication ceremonies for a new storytelling firepit at Valley Forge National Historic Park's Muhlenberg's Brigade on Friday, July 3, 2026 as part of the National Park's America250 celebrations.

The 9th grader at West Springfield High School was part of an ensemble of students attending the prestigious Philadelphia International Music Festival (PIMF) featuring members of The Philadelphia Orchestra.

"It's really a cool thing to do," the young violinist said, "to play in this place that was such a big part of America's history, on America's 250th birthday."

Solomon is also a member of the Capitol Symphonic Youth Orchestra.

Two ensembles of eight string and wind instrumentalists ages 13 to 19 opened the festivities with selections of chamber music. The



Solomon Merriweather, 14, of Springfield, Va.



works included arrangements of patriotic tunes as well as some melodies that the American Colonists and even the court of King

George would have heard.

The music echoed around wooden huts that replicate what Continental Army soldiers would have

lived in during the winter encampment of 1777-1778, when General George Washington and Prussian military officer Friedrich Baron

von Steuben transformed a weary militia into a disciplined fighting force to change the direction of the Revolutionary War.

Fairfax City Warmly Welcomes Minuteman Press

Providing print, design and marketing services.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Husband and wife, Srikanth Mallepally and Srivani Ramapuram, recently opened Minuteman Press in Old Town Fairfax City, much to the delight of City officials and fellow small-business owners, alike. That's because it brings the resources of a national brand with the personal service of a locally owned and operated company.

As a full-service print, design and marketing shop, it serves businesses, nonprofits, schools and government agencies throughout Northern Virginia. It handles everything from business cards and brochures to branded apparel and graphic design. Minuteman Press is at 3975 University Drive, Suite



Back row, from left are Srikanth Mallepally and Srivani Ramapuram with son Sanjay, 9, and daughter Sahasri, 11.

140, and joining Mallepally and Ramapuram for its ribbon cutting were their two young children.

"As you can see, this is a family-owned business," said Tara Borwey, with Fairfax City Economic Development. "And one thing that makes our community so special is

that we have so many individual, owned-and-operated businesses here, where your children can see what you do for a living and realize what's possible through entrepreneurship."

"In a City this small, people do know each other," said Fair-



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Celebrating after cutting the ribbon are (from left) Tara Borwey, Russ McIntosh, Catherine Read, Tina Disch, Srivani Ramapuram and Srikanth Mallepally with son Sanjay and daughter Sahasri, Billy Bates and Abera Bezuneh.

fax Mayor Catherine Read. "They recognize each other on the street – it's a true community. And to welcome a family-owned, small business here in the downtown – right across from the library – there's easy access for people who want to come and do business with

you.

"And nothing speaks to a politician like, 'We do full-sized color banners and yard signs.' So you're bringing a much-needed service to our

SEE FAIRFAX CITY, PAGE 15

Beloved Movie Characters Come to Life on Stage

City of Fairfax
Theatre Co.
presents
'Frozen.'

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

For sheer joy and entertainment, it's hard to beat Disney's immensely popular movie, "Frozen" – unless you're the City of Fairfax Theatre Co. (CFTC) bringing it to life on stage. And that's exactly what's about to happen.

In the midst of a hot and humid summer, local audiences are in for a cool treat with this snowy musical running July 24-Aug. 1. With a cast and crew of nearly 100, all performances are at Katherine Johnson Middle School, 3801 Jermantown Road in Fairfax. (Enter through Door 10).

"Full of magic, humor and a stunning musical score, 'Frozen' is a powerful tale of sisterhood, acceptance and finding the real meaning of true love," said Producer Becky Gould-Levine. "It's a spectacular summer show, and we're incredibly proud of what everyone involved has created."

The story unfolds in the kingdom of Arendelle. Princesses Anna and Elsa have grown up sheltered inside their castle, isolated from the world and increasingly distant from each other. When Elsa's crowned queen, the magical powers she's desperately tried to conceal from her sister take control of her, so she flees to the mountains.

As a ferocious winter descends on Arendelle, Anna embarks on an epic journey to find Elsa and bring her home – with help from hard-working ice-harvester Kristoff, his loyal reindeer Sven, and a cheerful snowman named Olaf.

The curtain rises Friday, July 24, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, July 25, at 2 and 7 p.m.; Sunday, July 26, at 3 p.m.; Thursday-Friday, July 30-31, at 7 p.m.; and Saturday, Aug. 1, at 2 and 7 p.m.

A special, sensory-friendly show for a smaller audience is set for Wednesday, July 29, at 7 p.m. It's designed to create a comfortable experience for individuals with autism, sensory sensitivities or other disabilities by modifying sound and lighting, etc. Their families will receive ticket priority.

Tickets are \$31.60, adults; and \$16.30, children; at <https://www.fairfaxcitytheatre.org/current-season/frozen>.

"This is such a fun musical with

big dance numbers, funny scenes, heartfelt songs and lots of special effects," said Director Amanda Herman Snellings. "It's one of CFTC's most ambitious endeavors, but we're all having a great time doing it."

"Almost 200 people from throughout Fairfax County and surrounding areas auditioned, and casting was incredibly difficult because of the high level of talent here. And I'm always in awe that these are all volunteers with other responsibilities, such as jobs and parenting duties."

The cast ranges in age from 4-1/2 to senior citizens and includes several teachers. For example, Chantilly High theater director Andy Shaw helped design the set and will portray Sven the reindeer. There are also couples, sisters, parent-child duos and even a family of four acting together. "That's why CFTC is so different from other theater companies," said Snellings. "Here, families can enjoy acting and making theater magic together."

Scenes take place in the town of Arendelle, the mountains, Elsa's ice palace and Wandering Oaken's Trading Post & Sauna. "It was important to me to bring back the big, exciting, family musical we could all have joy preparing and performing," explained Snellings. "It's also the first year 'Frozen's' Broadway show has been available to license, so I did it last summer because I knew it would be perfect for CFTC."

"'Frozen' presents a real message of how true love isn't necessarily what you think it's going to be all the time. And the journey Elsa and Anna take back to each other is relatable to anyone who's had a sister. I also can't wait to see how many kids come to the show in costume. I hope they'll be wowed by all our special magic."

"And I love how willing everyone in the show is to help with the set, painting, costumes, props, lighting, hair and makeup. Community theater is all about the joy of putting on a production together, and we're looking forward to sharing that with the audience."

Portraying Anna is Amelia Jacquat. "She has a huge heart, even when the logic doesn't make sense," said Jacquat. "She's energetic, full of light and love, and always looking on the bright side. Anna's fueled by the love she has for her sister, and it's fun to see her adventures and the friends she makes along the way to find Elsa."

Loving her role, Jacquat said, "I have an older sister, too, and felt connected to this part. Anna's so



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHAD TRUJILLO

From left are Draconia Craig as Elsa and Amelia Jacquat as Anna in CFTC's "Frozen."

goofy, and I find happiness and laughter in every moment acting with this cast. Elsa tells Anna, 'The magic one is you,' and that makes me emotional, thinking about love and about sharing it with the people around you."

Her favorite song is "For the First Time in Forever," sung by the entire cast. "It shows Anna and Elsa in the moments when they're alone before the coronation, and it's the first time the audience sees them as adult princesses. And then the whole company enters the castle gates and sings and dances together."

After seeing this production, said Jacquat, "Audiences will be left with a feeling of warmth and community. One of the lines in it is, 'Let's fill this world with light and love,' and this show does exactly that."

Draconia Craig plays Elsa. "She's a deeply resilient woman who holds a stoic composure while expressing a sacrificial type of love for her sister," said Craig. "She has love and light within her but shields it inside to protect the ones she loves from the powers within that she can't control."

Craig's also pleased to have this part. "When I saw the movie, I saw similarities between myself and Elsa," she said. "I love sharing the depth of the human experience with as many people as possible. If I've experienced sadness, grief and isolation in my life – as many others have – and can connect with them, I can help people feel less isolated and sad, themselves, to be



Posing in character are (from left) William Choi (Kristoff), Brandon Schenk (Olaf) and Amelia Jacquat (Anna).

understood as humans."

Craig particularly likes the song, "Colder by the Minute," because "It's a great representation of many of the principals in the cast and ensemble. And it's hauntingly powerful and reaches the depths

of hope, resilience and fighting for love and what happens when it's taken away. It also conveys that happiness and love can come back even stronger after the sad experiences of life."

SEE BELOVED MOVIE, PAGE 15

ENTERTAINMENT

FAIRFAX COUNTY

FARMERS MARKETS RETURN

Operated by the Fairfax County Park Authority, these popular markets connect residents with local farmers and food producers at 10 convenient locations. Shop seasonal fruits and vegetables, meats, dairy, baked goods and artisanal products, while enjoying a vibrant, open-air market experience.

WEDNESDAYS

McCutcheon/Mount Vernon: April 22-Nov. 25, 8 a.m. - noon. Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane
Oakmont: May 6-Oct. 28, 8 a.m.-noon. Oakmont Recreation Center, 3200 Jermantown Road
Wakefield: May 6-Oct. 28, 2-6 p.m. Wakefield Park, 8100 Braddock Road

THURSDAYS

Annandale: May 7-Oct. 29, 8 a.m. - noon. Mason District Park, 6621 Columbia Pike
Herndon: May 7-Oct. 29, 8 a.m. - noon. Old Town Herndon, 700 Block of Lynn Street by the Red Caboose

FRIDAYS

McLean: May 1-Oct. 30, 8 a.m.-noon. Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road
Kingstowne: May 1-Oct. 23, 3-7 p.m. In the Giant parking lot, 5870 Kingstowne Towne Center

SATURDAYS

Burke: Apr. 18-Nov. 21, 8 a.m.-noon. VRE parking Lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway
Reston: Apr. 25-Nov. 21, 8 a.m.-noon. Lake Anne Village Center, 1609-A Washington Plaza

SUNDAYS

Lorton: May 3-Nov. 22, 8 a.m.-noon. VRE parking lot, 8990 Lorton Station Blvd.

SUMMER CONCERT & ENTERTAINMENT SERIES

Reston Community Center (RCC) transforms Reston's plazas and parks into community gathering places with its acclaimed Summer Concert & Entertainment Series, running from just before Memorial Day through September. All are invited to enjoy free live music and family-friendly entertainment set in some of Reston's most beloved outdoor spaces as we head into the heart of summer.

Wednesdays: Midweek Music on the Lake
Sunset Concerts | Schedule

Lake Anne Plaza

Wednesdays, June 24 – August 26

7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Fan favorites return to Lake Anne Plaza for Sunset Concerts on Wednesday evenings, from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. so audiences can enjoy slightly cooler temperatures and golden hour views by the lake.

Thursdays: Fresh Finds at Halley Rise
Take a Break Concert Series | Schedule

Halley Rise (2025 Fulton Place, Reston)

Thursdays, June 25 – August 27

7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

In its third year, Take a Break Concert Series spotlights fresh talent in one of Reston's newest neighborhoods. This laid-back, open space offers plenty of room to dance or play and a new 7:30 p.m. start time lets the heat ease off a bit.

Summerbration Fab Fridays | Schedule

Reston Station

Fridays, May 29 – September 25

7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Then head to Reston Station for the always packed Summerbration Fab Fridays, now starting at 7:30 p.m. so you can stop by Happy Hour with Darden first. These high energy cover bands turn the plaza into a dance party with favorite hits all night long.

Saturdays: Playtime in the Park
Family Fun Entertainment Series | Schedule

Reston Town Square Park

Saturdays, July 4 – August 22

10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Saturday mornings bring the Family Fun Entertainment Series to Reston Town Square Park, a summer highlight with puppetry, magic, music, juggling and more! Kids can dance, giggle and get the wiggles out, with plenty of fun for adults too.

Sundays: Classics Under the Sky

Sunday Art in the Park with Shenandoah Conservatory | Schedule

Reston Town Square Park

Sundays, June 21 – August 30

12 ♦ BURKE / FAIRFAX / FAIRFAX STATION / CLIFTON / LORTON / SPRINGFIELD ♦ JULY 16 - AUGUST 5, 2026



The Vienna Youth Players are staging “Guys and Dolls” from July 18-26, 2026 at the Vienna Community Center.



Applications for the 2026 McLean Artfest are due July 31, 2026.

7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Spend Sunday evening at Sunday Art in the Park with Shenandoah Conservatory in Reston Town Square Park, where rising classical musicians offer concert quality performances that are friendly, fun and accessible to all ages.

JUNE 18-AUGUST 27

Summer Concert Series. 7-8 p.m. At National Museum of the Marine Corps, 1775 Semper Fidelis Way, Triangle. The Marine Corps Heritage Foundation invites the public to enjoy the 2026 Summer Concert Series at the National Museum of the Marine Corps. From June through August, audiences can experience six free, family-friendly evenings featuring premier U.S. military ensembles representing the Marine Corps, Navy, Army, and Air Force. Concerts are held on the Museum's entry plaza. Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or picnic blankets. Admission and parking are free and open to the public. The Museum, Tun Tavern, and Museum Store will remain open until 6:45 p.m. on concert evenings. Visit the website: <https://www.marineheritage.org/>

Concert Schedule:

- ♦ July 30, 7 p.m. – U.S. Air Force Band Airmen of Note
- ♦ August 20, 7 p.m. – U.S. Navy Concert Band
- ♦ August 27, 7 p.m. – “The President's Own” U.S. Marine Band

SUMMER ON THE GREEN SERIES

Music lovers of all ages are encouraged to grab a lawn chair or picnic blanket and head to the Vienna Town Green for free summer concerts at 6:30 p.m. beginning in June. The Vienna Town Green is located at 144 Maple Ave., E, Vienna. The Summer on the Green series features a wide range of musical genres, including rock, blues, country, reggae, jazz, and children's music performed by local and regional musical acts.

2026 Schedule

July 24: Fat Chance – Rock

July 31: US Army Blues Swamp Romp - Jazz and Folk of Louisiana

Aug. 7: The Maiden Band - Classic Rock 70s to present

Aug. 14: US Navy Band Commodores - Jazz
For more information, visit www.viennava.gov/summeronthegreen.

FREE CONCERTS IN THE PARK

At Burke Lake Park, Burke. 7 p.m. every Wednesday night from June 24 to Aug. 19 at Burke Lake Park for an incredible line-up of bands, food trucks, 2 Silos beer, and Ice Cream. The atmosphere is informal, so bring a picnic blanket, lawn chairs, and relax with friends and family.

SCHEDULE

July 15 – SoHo Down. Food Trucks: Kaziville (hot dogs), Cousins Maine Lobster Paisanos and Bruster's of Alexandria

July 22 – JunkFood Band. Food Trucks: Roaming Coyote, Paisanos and Ello Gelato

July 29 – The Skip Castro Band. Food Trucks: Kaziville (hot dogs), Ned's New England Deck and Bruster's of Alexandria

Aug. 5. The English Channel. Food Trucks: BABU-JI, Cousins Maine Lobster and Ello Gelato

Aug. 12 – The Randy Thompson Band. Food Trucks: BABU-JI, Roaming Coyote and Bruster's of Alexandria

Aug. 19 – The Soul Shakers. Food Trucks: Kaziville (hot dogs), Ned's New England Deck and Bruster's of Alexandria

JULY 1-31

Summer of the Arts. At City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Fairfax Street, Fairfax. Pathway Homes' 13th Annual Summer of the Arts Exhibit showcases the creativity of its clients who are living with a variety of mental illnesses and co-occurring disorders. From July 1-31, artwork submitted by formerly homeless individuals recovering from serious mental illnesses will be displayed at the City of Fairfax Library. Art and creativity are an integral part of recovery for Pathway Homes' residents. Pathway is a mental health non-profit. Artist Reception: July 28, 5:30-7:00 p.m. (free).

JULY 1 TO AUG. 2

“America at 250” Art Exhibit. At McLean Art Gallery, a new topical exhibition from the McLean Art Society celebrating our country's milestone birthday. Featured are 180 new works from 45 local artists, including paintings in oil, acrylic, pastel, watercolor and mixed media; drawings; photography; sculpture and works in wood, glass, ceramics and jewelry. Opening Reception on Friday, July 3 from 5-7 p.m. The Gallery is located in the Chesterbrook Shopping Center, 6224B Old Dominion Drive, McLean (near Starbucks) with plenty of free parking. Get your free tickets at 250.eventbrite.com

SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Thursdays June 18 to July 30, 7 p.m. At McLean Central Park Amphitheatre. The MCC famous, free concerts are back at the McLean Central Park Amphitheatre! Grab your family and friends and enjoy live music every Thursday evening from June 18 to July 30 at 7 p.m.

Thursday, July 16, 7 p.m.

Go-Go legend!

EU (Experience Unlimited)

Thursday, July 23, 7 p.m.

“Stylin’, Living it up in the city!”

Uptown

Thursday, July 30, 7 p.m.

“Beastie Boys meet Sesame Street,”

Koo Koo

SOUNDS OF SUMMER: LOCAL CONCERTS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY

Create your own summer soundtrack with the Summer Entertainment Series. Attend free, live concerts taking place at locations all around Fairfax through August. Award-winning entertainers take the stage in this series that is set to enrich the community and promote togetherness in Fairfax County. This season consists of 124 performances at 20 venues. Mark your calendar for some incredible performances including:

Wednesday, July 15, 7:00 p.m.: SoHo Down, Burke Lake Park

Saturday, July 18, 7:30 p.m.: No BS! Brass Band, Workhouse Arts Center

Friday, July 24, 7:30 p.m.: City of Falls Church Concert Band, Mason District Park

Saturday, July 25, 7:30 p.m.: Lover: The Unofficial Eras Tour, Arrowbrook Centre Park

Saturday, Aug. 8, 7:30 p.m.: Roberta Lea and the First Take Band, Arrowbrook Centre Park

Wednesday, Aug. 12, 7 p.m.: Junkyard Band, Franconia District Park

Thursday, Aug. 13, 7 p.m.: Brookhouse, Frying Pan Farm Park

Friday, Aug. 14, 7:30 p.m.: Pat McGee, Mason District Park

Thursday, Aug. 20, 7:30 p.m.: Alexandria A Cappella Collective, Nottoway Park

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

ENTERTAINMENT

"1776" BY MCLEAN

COMMUNITY PLAYERS

Celebrate America's 250th birthday with McLean Community Players' Tony Award-winning musical "1776," a witty, inspiring and surprisingly human portrait of the passionate debates, rivalries and courage behind the founding of a nation. Weekends of July 17-August 2; Fri-Sat., 7:30 p.m.; Matinees Sun., 2 p.m. At McLean Community Center's Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. \$25/\$20 Seniors/\$18 McLean district residents

JULY 17-20

Cirque Italia Water Circus Show. At Fair Oaks Mall, 11750 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. Join this intrepid cast of acrobats, jugglers, aerialists, dancers, and clowns—a daring team of explorers who sail between worlds, diving deep beneath the waves and soaring high into the clouds. Cirque Italia's Water Circus is filled with nautical wonder, fabulous fountains, and theatrical spectacle that will dazzle and delight the young and the young at heart.

Showtimes:

July 17 – Friday: 7:30 p.m.

July 18 – Saturday: 1:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

July 19 – Sunday: 1:30 p.m. & 4:30 p.m.

July 20 – Monday: 7:30 p.m.

Visit <https://cirqueitalia.com/>

JULY 18-26

"Guys and Dolls." 7 p.m. At the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., SE, Vienna. Broadway comes to Vienna with the Vienna Youth Players' production of "Guys and Dolls." The curtain opens on Saturday, July 18, at 7 p.m. at the Vienna Community Center, setting the stage for a series of high-energy musical comedy performances. Featuring a talented local cast and crew of performers ages 10 to 18, "Guys and Dolls" brings 1950s New York City to life as an entertaining mix of lovable gamblers and determined missionaries take big bets on love and luck. Evening performances are scheduled for 7 p.m. on July 18, 23, 24, 25, and special Sunday matinee performances will take place at 2 p.m. on July 19 and 26. Tickets are \$18 each. Visit www.viennava.gov/theatre.

SATURDAY/JULY 18

Historic House Tours. 10:30-12:15 p.m. At Sunrise at Silas Burke House, 9619 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Burke Historical Society will lead free tours of the historic house at Sunrise at Silas Burke House. Reservations not required.

SUNDAY/JULY 19

Monthly Model Trains Showcase. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Join Fairfax Station Railroad Museum for its cherished Monthly Model Trains Showcase, a delightful gathering for model train enthusiasts and families alike! Every 3rd Sunday, from February through November, they invite hobbyists and curious visitors to explore the fascinating world of model trains, featuring either N or T scale exhibits. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and younger, free; ages 5-12, \$4; ages 13 and older, \$6; First Responders, Teachers and Military, active and retired, \$5; Seniors 65+, \$5. <http://www.fairfax-station-railroad-museum.org>, <http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR>, 703-425-9225.

SUNDAY/JULY 19

Cold War Conversation. 7 p.m. At The Cold War Museum. The next Cold War Conversation Presentation Series Lecture, Constant Shotgun: A Cold War Memoir, will take place at 7 p.m. on Sunday July 19. During decades of Cold War tension between the United States and the Soviet Union, American and Soviet air crews regularly interacted with one another in an unsung, unusual, and - until now - unknown program called Constant Shotgun. In this lecture, retired Air Force Colonel Glenn R. Whicker recalls sitting side-by-side with the Soviets through unbelievable and life-threatening stunts, tender heart-to-



Uptown presents "Stylin', Living it up in the city!" on Thursday, July 23, 2026 in McLean.



A Summer Concert Series takes place at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle starting June 18 to Aug. 27.

hearts, and behind-the-scenes moments from some of the most important turning points of the Cold War. Hear excerpts from his memoir on his time aboard Soviet transports, including the world's largest aircraft, the Antonov 225. Glenn traveled through Siberia, Cuba, Newfoundland and Alaska as he and other escort pilots worked towards ensuring safety in America's skies.

SUNDAY/JULY 19

Film Club. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Cinema Arts Theatre, 9650-14 Main Street, Fairfax. Film Club debuts new independent and foreign films that have screened at Cannes, Sundance, etc. The titles are secret until you arrive. Tickets available at the Box Office for \$19. Film Club occurs monthly on August 16, September 20, October 4, and October 18. Website: <https://www.cinemaartstheatre.com/film-club-2026/>

SENIOR MOVIE DAY

At Reston Town Center Movie Theater. 10 a.m. Reston Association presents Senior Movie Day, sponsored by Friends of Reston. Join us on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Coffee, donuts and OJ are provided, and door prizes are distributed prior to the movie. Free. Ages 55+
July 22: After the Hunt

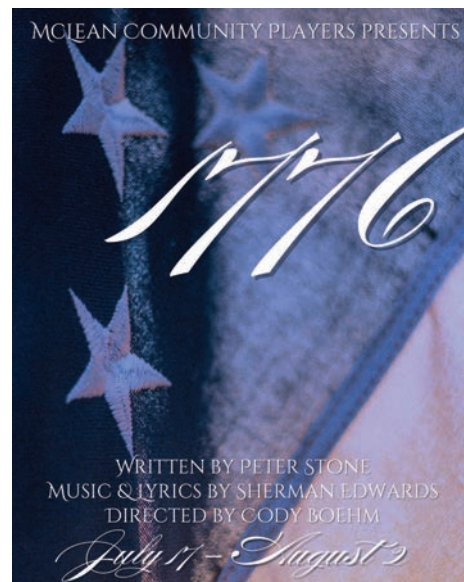
Aug. 26: A Little Prayer (rated R)

SATURDAY/JULY 25

Summer Slugfest. 12-3 p.m. At E.C. Lawrence Park, 5000 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Ellanor C. Lawrence Park Friends is proud to present the inaugural Summer Slugfest, a charity softball game uniting alumni from two legendary local youth sports organizations for an afternoon of friendly competition, community spirit, and charitable impact. The six-inning game features alumni players (ages 21 and over) from the Chantilly Youth Association (CYA) and the Southwestern Youth Association (SYA) competing for the 2026 Slugfest Cup. The free public event will feature: ♦ An alumni softball game between former CYA and SYA players ♦ Food trucks featuring gourmet hot dogs and cool summer treats ♦ Giveaways, merchandise, and a 50/50 raffle ♦ Family fun and community engagement ♦ Live on-field broadcast from CYA's The Sideline podcast.

SUNDAY/JULY 26

Wine with a Cause. 1-5 p.m. At the Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Lorton. Join in Wine for a Cause, a relaxed winery fundraiser benefiting Simple Changes Therapeutic Riding Center. Enjoy fine wine, delectable cheeses and charcuterie, and live music. Win-



McLean Community Players present "1776" from July 17 to Aug. 2, 2026 at the McLean Community Center's Alden Theater.

ery tours of civil war artifacts and wine production are available for guests who would like to add a guided experience to their visit. Visit the website: <https://simplechanges.org/events/wine-for-a-cause/>

SUNDAY/JULY 26

Burke Historical Society Meeting. 3-4:30 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Johanna Bockman, Associate Professor of Sociology and Global Affairs at GMU, will discuss gentrification and its impact on inequalities and democratic participation in the District of Columbia, from the 1940s to the present.

SUNDAY/AUG. 2

The Hot Lanes Perform. 7 p.m. At Fort Hunt Park, Pavilion A, Alexandria; (Free, Outdoors). The group is honored to be back for the Fort Hunt Park series and its continued relationship with the National Park Service. Bring a chair or grab a picnic table early - a cool drink helps as well!

ARTISTS INVITED TO APPLY

FOR 2026 MCLEAN ARTFEST

The McLean Community Center (MCC) and McLean Project for the Arts (MPA) is now accepting applications from artists for McLean Artfest 2026, marking the first year the festival will be produced by both MCC and MPA. The juried outdoor fine arts festival will be held Sunday, Oct. 4, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in McLean Central Park.

Artists working in all fine art and fine craft media are encouraged to apply. Selected artists will have the opportunity to exhibit and sell their work in one of Northern Virginia's premier outdoor arts festivals, connecting with collectors, art enthusiasts and families from throughout the Washington metropolitan area. The application deadline is Friday, July 31. Artists interested in participating can apply at www.mcleancenter.org/mc-lean-artfest and should contact Jen Lillis at jlillis@mpaart.org for additional application information.

TUESDAY/AUG. 18

Trivia Nights in Tun Tavern. 6-9 p.m. At National Museum of the Marine Corps, 1775 Semper Fidelis Way, Triangle. Think you have what it takes to claim the top spot? Assemble your strongest team of up to six and join us for Trivia Nights at Tun Tavern at the National Museum of the Marine Corps! Compete in pop culture, geography, and general knowledge trivia, with a fun bonus round to keep things interesting. Event is free and open to the public. Visit the website: <https://www.marineheritage.org/eventscalendar>

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WHERE
THEY FELL

WHAT
THEY CLAIMED



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Announcements

Community Bazaar Shop, Eat & Support!

**Saturday, July 18
11 a.m.-3 p.m.**

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Fairfax, VA 22030

Great bargains, delicious Korean food, and scholarship fundraising. Everyone welcome!

Employment

DNA Analyst (Lorton, VA) (Partial Telecommuting Ok) (Multpos). Perform DNA analysis on databases'g samples, human identification samples, forensic custom casework, and high throughput casework. Domestic travel up to 10%. Salary: \$102,086. Req. MS in Forensic Biology, Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Genetics, Forensic Science or related 2 yrs work exp. Send CV/letter to Bode Cellmark Forensics, Inc., Attn: H. Kane, ref#CM2026, HR@bodetech.com. EOE

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NEWS DEPARTMENT
fairfax@connectionnewspapers.com

Mary Kimm
Editor and Publisher
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Bonnie Hobbs
Community Reporter
703-778-9415
bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com

Mercia Hobson
Staff Reporter
mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com

Mike Salmon
Contributing Writer
miksalmon6922@gmail.com

ADVERTISING
For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk
Display Advertising/National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment
Advertising
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Publisher
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

In Memoriam
Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic

Production Manager
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
Circulation Manager
Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

Beloved Movie Characters Come to Life on Stage

FROM PAGE 11

Whether adults or children, said Craig, this musical will let attendees enjoy “the innocence and happiness they had as children. CFTC’s motto is, ‘We put the community in community theater,’ and this production proves it.”

Playing Olaf is Brandon Schenk. “He’s a magical, talking snowman who’s a creation of Elsa’s and Anna’s imaginations,” said Schenk. “So he’s a little bit of each of them – part nice and part naughty. He enjoys warm hugs and bright sunlight and loves the summer. Technically, since he was just created, he’s only one day old when the audience first sees him, so he has an innocence, sweetness and sensitivity about him.”

“I love playing Olaf – it’s a dream come true,” continued Schenk. “I saw the movie the weekend it came out – when we had Snowmageddon here. And acting with the people portraying Kristoff, Anna and Elsa is like acting with my family.”

His favorite song is “I Can’t Lose You,” a

duet sung by Jacquat and Craig as Anna and Elsa, respectively. “It’s the culmination of their love for each other, and I’m the manifestation of them,” said Schenk. “Besides these actresses’ craft and skill, their chemistry onstage is incredible.”

Overall, he said, “We have a huge cast and this is truly a family show – by and for families. We have a large children’s ensemble, everyone’s having a good time, and this show is cute, to boot. It’s a layered, multifaceted experience for every audience member, whatever their age.”

Kristoff is portrayed by William Choi. “He’s a rugged, hardworking person,” said Choi. “He shows love in a way completely opposite from Anna. He expresses it by doing stuff for his friends. He’s initially grumpy and doesn’t trust people much. He only trusts his reindeer Sven and, growing up, the ‘hidden folk’ who live in the forest.”

“Kristoff harvests ice for a living and is in Arendelle to sell it. And his personality is

similar – hard and cold. He doesn’t like interacting with people; and because he grew up in a forest, he’s emotionally awkward. But it’s a coverup for his heart of gold.”

Choi said it’s “refreshing” to play Kristoff because “I usually play characters having a similar vibe to me – bubbly, upbeat and ecstatic. So I like portraying the journey he has from having walls to them all crumbling down and showing who he really is.”

The iconic “Let it Go” is Choi’s favorite number because “Everyone already knows it, but it’s still a powerhouse song with an amazing outburst of energy. And there aren’t enough words to describe how spectacularly Draconia performs it. In it, she IS Elsa.”

Choi said audiences will enjoy seeing a familiar story with the variables of live theater. “They’ll also be drawn to our new songs and character moments,” he said. “Everyone in the cast is so talented and is working hard to not only create a show, but an experience all ages will love.”

Fairfax City Warmly Welcomes Minuteman Press

FROM PAGE 10

City. And we appreciate that you chose the City because you could have chosen lots of other places, and you chose us.

“I’ll always be grateful to the small businesses who feel like they’re supported here. Because we want you to feel like we’re in partnership – the City and your family business – and that we’re making it easy for you to do business with the wider community of the City and the region. Having a press like this when you need something right away – and you need somebody to help you figure out how to design and lay it out so it works – that’s priceless. So, welcome, Minuteman Press.”

Next, Tina Disch, executive director of the Old Town Fairfax Business Assn., said, “One of the things I like about ribbon cuttings is hearing the stories from the families and seeing the children and the community coming out. You guys have already been out in the community so much, attending meetings and getting to know the other business owners, I feel like you’ve been here forever – like part of the fabric of Old Town Fairfax.”

“So many people rely on the Internet to get a lot of their things, but there’s nothing better than being able to walk into a business and say, ‘I need your help. What do you think about this? Is this paper better than this one? How big should the banner be?’ Having that personal attention is something that’s so valuable.”

“So I hope that everybody gets that and doesn’t just click a button [on an Internet site] to order 50 business cards, when you can come here, support a local business and [the owners’ family] and get to know other people in Old Town and help support each other.”

Turning toward the owners, Disch then said, “We welcome you guys. We’re so happy you’re here and we can’t wait to see you thrive.”

Also addressing the family was Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce Chairman

Abera Bezuneh. “Like you, I invested in Fairfax City; I own a business right on Main Street,” he said. “I thank you for joining the Chamber of Commerce, and you did a wonderful job on our Chamber booklets within our timeframe, so we’ll be referring you to others for business.”

Next, City Councilmember Billy Bates also welcomed Minuteman Press to Fairfax and to its Old Town area, calling it “the historic and cultural heart of the City. I wish you many successes.”

Borwey added how important it is for doing business to work with printing companies and said Fairfax would now be able to get its own printing needs accomplished within the City, instead of having to go “outside” its boundaries to do so. “You really made yourself part of the community, the second you arrived,” she said. “I feel like you’re family already.”

Owner Srivani Ramapuram said this moment was really important to her. “My goal is simple,” she said. “I want to be the place where we can have the quality and the creativity where every project – no matter whether it’s small or large – we’ll handle it with care, innovation and pride. We want to make sure every customer feels valued and supported.”

“We want to be collaborative with schools, organizations, families, etc., to help with what they do every day. Thank you to my family for supporting and encouraging me in every step, and thank you Russ [McIntosh, a graphic designer] for joining the team. Customers and partners, thank you for trusting us to get your projects out there and for giving us an opportunity to be successful.”

After the ceremony, Mallepally gave some specifics about the services Minuteman Press offers. “We provide small-business printing needs,” he said. “We help publicize schools’ athletic teams’ events, and we make business cards, posters, banners, event

programs, restaurant menus, signage and business ads.” The company also customizes shirts, caps, mugs, gift items, etc., and offers marketing ideas, as well.

“We came here to fulfill a need because my wife said there was nothing like this in Fairfax,” said Mallepally. “For example, she noticed that the schools’ printing costs seemed high and wanted to [give them another choice]. She has a strong business background and realized that quality printing could be done in a low-cost, efficient way. She’s also proud that this is a woman-owned business.”

He also said they both like Fairfax City because “it’s cultural-oriented and people are connected with each other. It has a small-town atmosphere, and we can walk around wherever we want.” He said their business is doing well, with word spreading mainly via social media, the Chamber of Commerce, and word of mouth from satisfied customers.

“We’ve received an amazing and overwhelming welcome from City officials and residents,” said Mallepally. “We try to make our prices as reasonable as possible, and people can even get same-day service for many things.”

“We did the fliers for the City’s chocolate festival, plus some for the Old Town Fairfax Business Assn. and the Parks and Rec Department,” added Ramapuram. “Putting color and words on paper and fabric – and people enjoying what we’ve created – is a joy to me. I have experience in this field, and quality is my priority.”

“People can trust us with their projects. We handle each one with care, integrity and pride. And we want to make sure every customer feels valued and supported.”

For more information, to place an order, or to make an appointment to discuss ideas for a project, call 703-249-4141 or email va226@minutemanpress.com.

Who You Calling “Sir?”



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not that I’m anywhere near the age I used to be; nevertheless, I’ve been hearing a lot of “sirs” spoken in my direction lately. And what makes these utterances even more disturbing is that, generally speaking (no pun intended), the “utterers” all appear to be older than I am. Granted, I am the age that millions of my fellow baby-boomers are who survived their generational challenges: “sex, drugs and rock ‘n roll”- and Vietnam so we aren’t exactly hard to find and fairly recognizable at that. ‘That’ being said, with all the familiarity, I would expect that everyone sort of knows one when that see one and figures their age as older than they are. Ergo the “Sir.” And since I was born in 1954, I am most definitely a boomer and older than lots of people with whom I interact. But that’s what I am, not how I feel/what I perceive. Moreover, I feel this ‘sir’ isn’t me; it’s somebody else.

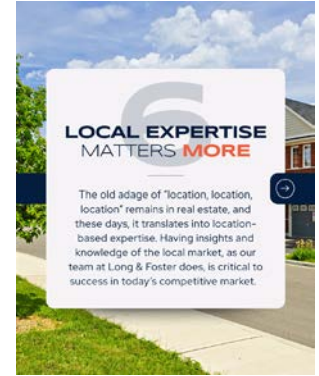
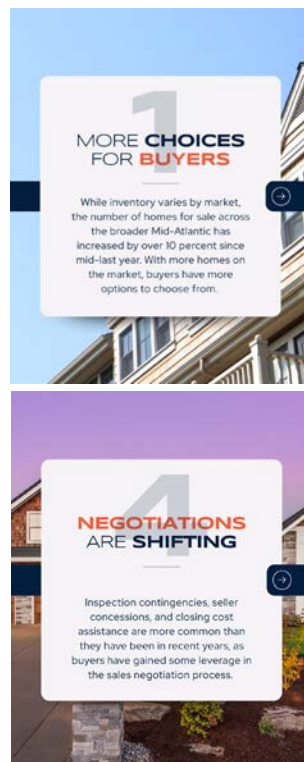
Besides, being addressed as a ‘sir’ seems misguided. ‘Sir’ is my late father. A man who was 35 years old when I was born, a World War II veteran (though he never left the states and spent most of his enlistment in Washington, DC), a child during the Depression, son of an immigrant, a successful businessman, (“Barry’s Jewelers” in Boston) and of course the father of two boys; me and my late brother, Richard. I’m none of those. ‘Those’ which are deserving of respect and courtesy and dare a say, “Sir” when there’s any doubt.

I’m not even a parent (never was one is what I meant) even though I’ve welcomed dogs, cats and rabbits into our house as surrogate children, I’ve never been to war. I may have endured a recession or two, but I’ve certainly never experienced anything like The Great Depression (any depression I experienced was in my head). Nor did I have a job at 10-years-old like my father did. He was selling concessions at the old Braves Field in Boston where the current Atlanta Braves and former Milwaukee Braves trace their lineage - and their team records. Instead, I played Little League baseball at age 10 and didn’t get my first job until the summer after ninth grade when I began working at Baskin ‘N Robbins as a rising 10th grader. Compared to my fathers life before age 21. No comparison. Sure, he graduated high school, but nothing more. I graduated from college but didn’t start my own business as he eventually did. In addition, he started a family; I got a puppy and a kitten (Tillie and Gus, my first real pets) in Sept. of ‘75. Started writing a column (even then, junior year of college actually). In summary, I don’t believe any of what I’ve accomplished warrants a “Sir.” I don’t feel like I look like someone who should be called ‘sir’ by another person, especially when that other person looks older than me. Yet, I’m regularly “sired.” So often by so many older-looking people, that I’ve begun thinking it all disingenuous.

Sorry. I just got off on a tangent there. I know a “sir” isn’t said because of one’s accomplishments. At the very least, it’s a sign of respect when speaking to someone (better safe than disrespectful) presumably older than you. And I imagine the ‘sirs’ I’ve received are in the safe-than-sorry category. Still, I’ve taken it personally - and not in a good way. Nobody knows me from Adam, but he must be receiving “sirs” because I certainly get them and I’m not him. I can’t say that being on the receiving end of a “sir” ruins my day, but it does upset my appletart, and I don’t even own one.

The question remains why am I so sensitive? I should be more grateful that I’m being treated so courteously and respectfully. But for some reason, my self-image seems to be caught up in these arbitrary ‘sir’ greetings. I can shake them off easily enough at the time, but I suppose I don’t want to feel older than my actual age - since I’m not getting any younger. As such, any action/reaction that makes me feel older is unwelcome and certainly unappreciated. I realize there’s minimal intent in these random greetings. Still, the ‘sir’ seems like it should be said to somebody else - someone older than me.

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



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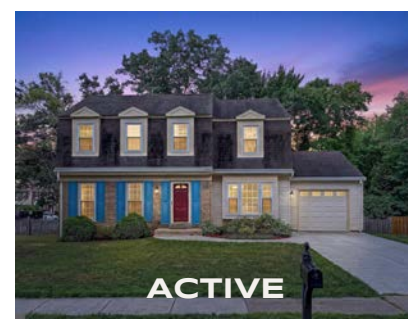
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