

CONNECTION

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Back to School with a Little Help

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Siblings (from left) Delani Richardson, 14; Devan Joseph, 8; and Daryon Joseph, 4 are excited about their backpacks at Britepath's back to school event.

Fairfax City Gives Business a Boost

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106th Anniversary of Votes for Women

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

AUGUST 20 - SEPTEMBER 2, 2026

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

‘That Little Girl Could Have Been Killed’

Vehicle jumps curb, injures people at Fairfax farmers market.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

At least four people were injured during the Saturday Farmers Market in Fairfax City when a driver mistakenly hit the gas while parking her car. Customers at the popular Tyson Farms produce stand watched in horror as half of the vehicle breached the curb and slammed into people waiting to pay for their purchases.

The incident occurred July 25, around 11 a.m., and the victims included a mother and her 4-year-old daughter, a Tyson Farm’s employee and a male customer. First-arriving emergency personnel discovered a woman lying on the ground and a maroon Mercedes wedged diagonally against a tent pole.

The white-haired driver was inside, seemingly dazed and still processing what had happened. And the child struck by her vehicle had already been rescued from under her car before first responders arrived. Police later said the driver didn’t sustain any injuries, and neither the mother’s nor the child’s injuries were life threatening.

Tyson Farms employee Sam Canby was ringing up customers when the car crashed into this vendor’s space. “We were just selling produce and she drove in across the curb, hit the gas and just plowed over everything,” he said, shortly afterward. “She hit me head-on, right across the legs, and threw me like 10 feet. She hit another vehicle and a kid – a little girl, 4-ish, who was trapped under her vehicle. Several customers got hit.

“I heard the car rev, so she definitely hit the gas, instead of the brake. ... Not what we expected [to happen today], at all. It was an accident, though, not malicious or anything. [But] it’s going to cost us several grand – between customers and produce, sales lost, people getting scared and leaving. Understandably, no one wants to buy produce in a traumatic event.”

Canby said he was still in pain and planned to get checked out at a hospital when he returned to Shepardstown, W. Va. It’s nearly a two-hour drive from Fairfax, but he was going to finish working first and said a co-worker would drive him home.

“My leg, my hip, my foot all hurt, and my right shin is scraped up,” he explained. “I landed on my back, neck and head on the asphalt, and I’ve got a headache. I laid on the ground for a few minutes, and things got really bright when I got hit, so I think I’ve got a concussion.”

And that was indeed the case. At the Aug. 8 farmers market, Canby said doctors treated him for a concussion and more. “The big toe on my right foot is broken, my whole right side is black-and-blue, and my right leg is still throbbing,” he said. “But the woman’s insurance company is paying for every-



Tyson Farms employee Sam Canby was hit and thrown 10 feet.

thing.”

Another Tyson’s employee, Ronnie Barrett, was also on scene during the crash and its aftermath. “I was walking under the tent beside the one she struck – she broke both of them – when her car came over the curb,” he said. “I heard people screaming, ‘Stop!’ to her.

“Change trays and cash registers were flying, and the little girl was crying under the car. We all tried lifting up the front end so we could get her out and give her to her mom. At that point, the mom was on the ground; the car hit her right leg. And she held her little girl ‘til the paramedics got here.”

Barrett said he and others then started “assessing the damage of who had priority injuries. Obviously, the mother, child and Sam were first. The little girl had scrapes on her elbow, leg, shoulder and arm, and she was bleeding from all of them. A gentleman was hit, too, and was sitting on the grassy bank [close to Page Avenue].”

“It was just a tragic accident,” he continued. “And fortunately, everyone’s alive – because that little girl could have been killed.”

The driver struck the check-out tents and table where Canby was standing. Just minutes earlier, Michaela McDonough, the owner’s sister, was there beside him, also waiting on customers.

“I normally would have been standing right here, closest to the curb, but I’d just gone to the bathroom,” she said. “When I got back, I saw a lot of police officers and firefighters.

The little girl had been pulled out from under the car by then. Her mom went out on a stretcher, and they all went away in an ambulance. I got lucky; I hate that other people got hurt, but wow.”

Brenda Snyder, market master of the Fairfax Saturday Farmers Market, said the driver “hit a black car first, or she could have driven through the whole stand. I’m just glad it wasn’t worse.”

Her husband, Eric Snyder, said the woman was “a regular, market customer who was always nice and friendly.” He was also there at the time and called 911. “I told them we had people injured,” he said. “Fairfax City police responded first, along with City firetrucks, ambulances and a battalion chief. Then Fair-



PHOTO COURTESY OF RONNIE BARRETT

This car struck another vehicle before jumping the curb and plowing into customers, a vendor’s table and two tents.



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

One of the wrecked tents and some of the cash-register coins on the ground.



A Tyson Farms employee sweeps up the last of the debris – including coins and produce – after the crash.

fax County police came, too, and took over the scene because this [parking lot in the courthouse complex] is county property.”

“I’m so sorry this happened, and on such a beautiful and busy day,” continued Eric

Snyder. “We feel badly for all involved and wish them all the best. Everyone rose to the occasion to help. This is the first time in 26 years something like this has happened here – and, hopefully, the last.”

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Britepaths Holds Annual Back-to-School Event

Gives families backpacks, supplies, dinner and information.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

As her grandson Prince Anderson, 5, posed proudly with his new backpack, Sandra Lewis is praised Britepaths's Back-to-School resource fair. Through this program, its client families received new backpacks filled with school supplies – for free.

"I love it," said Lewis. "I work for the schools in food nutrition, but I don't work during the summer, so I needed this. It helps me out."

And that was the whole point of this event held July 31-Aug. 1 by Fairfax-based nonprofit Britepaths. In between giving out backpacks for students in grades kindergarten through 12, Britepaths Board of Directors member Rochelle Sanchirico explained.

"It's one of the most critical programs we have to support families in the community," she said. "Having school supplies can help determine a child's success during the school year, so it's an honor to be involved."

"I love the events where we get to spend time with the clients, instead of being in meetings," continued Sanchirico. "And seeing how excited the kids are to choose their backpacks really makes the impact of what we do come alive."

Britepaths serves all of Northern Virginia, but the families it helps live mainly in Fairfax County. And during its resource fair, it provided backpacks and school supplies for some 100 families, including 233 children.

"We had a waitlist; we weren't expecting so many people," said Aisha Ali, Britepaths' senior director of development and communications. "The demand for supplies and services in this area has gone way up, and funding sources have gone way down. We're doing our best to keep up, and we're not unique. Every nonprofit is going through the same thing."

But that didn't stop her. She brought in the sponsors for this event and was responsible for making sure Britepaths reached its \$40,000 funding goal for it. "As a nonprofit, all the money went to buying the school supplies," said Ali.

As a result, elementary-school

students received backpacks filled with pencils, crayons, both dry-erase and broad-line markers, colored pencils, glue sticks, scissors, pencil sharpeners and pouches, erasers, plastic folders, composition notebooks, pencil pouches and wired headphones. Students in middle and high school were given mechanical pencils, dry-erase markers, colored pencils, erasers, plastic file folders, highlighters, pencil pouches, ballpoint pens and wired earbuds.

"And this year, we're also giving out [Texas Instruments] T.I. 84 scientific calculators," said Britepaths spokeswoman Yumna Iqbal. "They're required for high-school juniors and seniors, or anyone taking higher-level math, such as pre-calculus."

But because they cost about \$100 each retail, parents often can't afford them. And, said Iqbal, "Even though some teachers might have extras, a student might not want to ask to borrow one because of the stigma and embarrassment attached. So one of our board members, Jessie Doll, brought it up and fundraised for it."

Doll owns ReFrame Wealth, a local wealth-management company, and was a volunteer with Britepaths's financial-empowerment center before becoming a board member. "So she saw the need for these calculators and raised the money for them, herself," said Ali. "One parent even got one for herself because she went back to college and needed it for her own classes, and that was really nice to hear."

"If our clients had to purchase these supplies, themselves, it would have cost them \$140-\$175 per child for just the basics – not including the calculator," she con-

SEE BRITEPATHS HOLDS, PAGE 10



Prince Anderson, 5, poses with his new backpack at Britepath's back to school event.



Happy about their backpacks are the Alvarenga siblings, (from left) Elias, 9; Hixel, 13; and Katherine, 7.



Siblings (from left) Delani Richardson, 14; Devan Joseph, 8; and Daryon Joseph, 4 are excited about their backpacks.



Rochelle Sanchirico helps children find backpacks for their grade levels.



From left are Janice Garcia and Aliyah Taylor, volunteering in the crafts room.



Haja Bah, 10, coloring her superhero.

Fairfax City Program Helps Small Businesses



The bright catchy mural on the outside of Nova Labs shows symbols of what's offered inside.

Grant reimburses half their improvement costs.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Sometimes, a small business just needs a helping hand to attract more customers and keep itself viable. Knowing that, Fairfax City Economic Development (FCED) created a special program that's proving to be a big success.

It's called the Façade and Interior Improvement Grant (FIIG) program; and through it, FIIG has provided financial assistance to new and existing City businesses by reimbursing 50 percent of their project costs, up to \$20,000.

The grant's goal is to reduce the costs associated with the design, repair and rehabilitation of build-

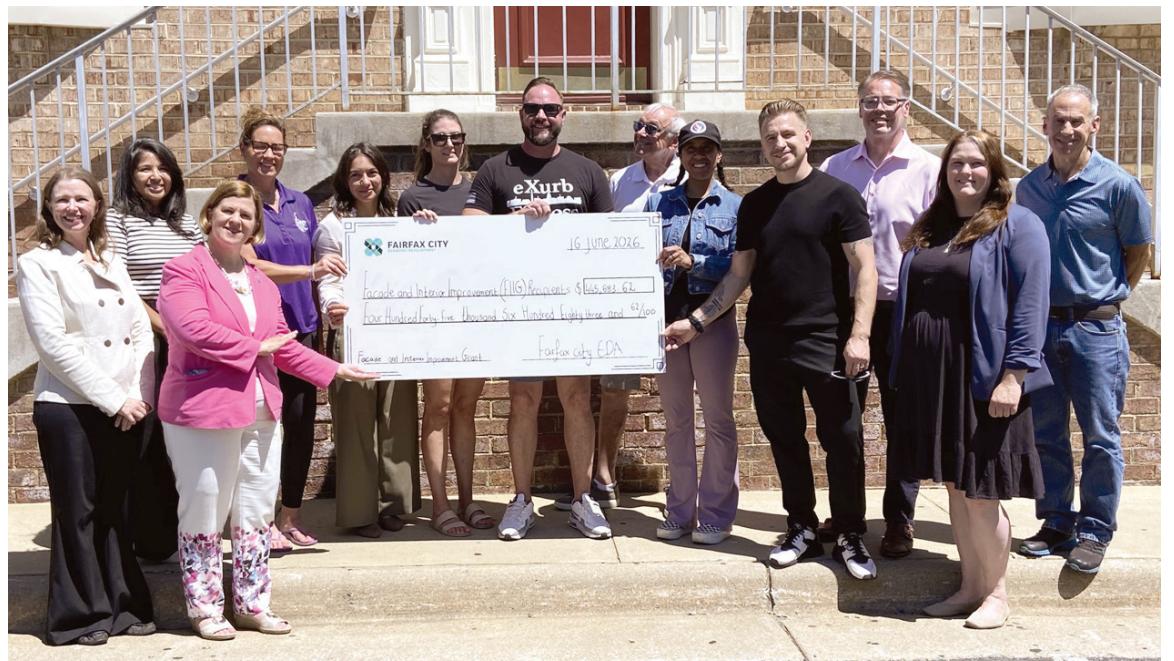
ings or with other high-quality improvements. And in the three years since its inception, FCED's FIIG program has invested some \$445,683 in nearly three dozen Fairfax City businesses.

So FCED recently honored seven of these grant recipients with the presentation of a commemorative check. The ceremony was held at Bonds Entertainment Center on University Drive and, besides the recipients, attendees included Fairfax City Mayor Catherine Read, Economic Development Director Colleen Kardasz and FCED members.

"Thanks to everyone who came out to celebrate these businesses who are investing in continuing to grow and improve their businesses here in Fairfax City," said Read. "We've had the FIIG Grant since 2023, and we've given more than \$445,000 in these grants."

"The City invests in our local businesses because it's important for us to be a good partner. This is what sets our City apart from other jurisdictions where all of these

SEE FAIRFAX CITY, PAGE 5



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

From left are Colleen Kardasz and Catherine Read with some of the FIIG Grant recipients.



Participants pose together after the ceremony outside Bond's Entertainment Center.

How Some City Businesses Used their Grants

Fairfax City Economic Development (FCED) has awarded Façade and Interior Improvement Grants (FIIG) to several City businesses. Among them were the following:

❖ Bonds Escape Room

Bonds Escape Room is an entertainment business next to the Fairfax Regional Library. Since opening, Bonds has provided immersive, team-based, escape-room experiences that bring together friends, families, students and coworkers through creativity, problem-solving and collaboration. Via the FIIG program, Bonds enhanced its exterior signage, helping strengthen its visibility and presence within the City.

❖ Romp n' Roll

Romp n' Roll is a family-focused enrichment and activity center that provides engaging classes and experiences for young

children and their families. Through the FIIG program, Romp n' Roll transformed a long-vacant, former mattress store into a vibrant community destination. The project included new exterior signage and a comprehensive interior buildout.

❖ eXurb Fitness

eXurb Fitness is a fitness facility dedicated to helping individuals achieve their health and wellness goals through a supportive and community-oriented environment. Via the FIIG grant, eXurb completed a series of interior improvements, including drywall and wall padding repairs, as well as the addition of trim and mirror casing, creating a more polished and welcoming environment for its members.

❖ Nova Labs

Nova Labs is a community makerspace providing educational programs, work-

shops, events and collaborative workspace for innovators, creators, entrepreneurs and residents. Through the FIIG program, Nova Labs enhanced its public-facing spaces with updated flooring, lighting and interior improvements, creating a brighter and more welcoming environment for members, visitors and community partners.

❖ Merle Norman Cosmetics

Merle Norman Cosmetics offers beauty and skincare services to the community. Via the FIIG grant, the business completed interior improvements including new flooring, lighting, electrical upgrades, built-in fixtures and office storage, helping create a more functional and welcoming space for customers and staff.

❖ Commonwealth Brewing Co.

Commonwealth Brewing Co. has a prime location atop Main Street in downtown

Fairfax. Using a FIIG grant, the owners spent more than a year renovating their spot before opening to the public. Besides a spacious interior, there's plenty of outdoor seating on the large, covered front patio. Commonwealth makes its own beers and has a full bar with cocktails, wine and cider. It also offers Neapolitan, wood-fired pizza that incorporates the beer fermentation in the dough, sauces and pizza ingredients.

❖ Layered

Layered is a café and bakery offering specialty coffee and eye-catching, handcrafted pastries, and is a welcoming, community-gathering space in Old Town.

Through its participation in the FIIG Program, Layered – which was once a long-vacant McDonald's – underwent a full interior and exterior renovation, including demolition of the previous interior, to create its own modern space.

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Fairfax City Program Helps Small Businesses

FROM PAGE 4

businesses could have chosen to establish themselves. Our Economic Development team and Economic Development Authority are very much invested in making this a place where you can come and grow your business.”

“The FIIG Grant is something we put into place where we meet people halfway,” continued Read. “This is a program where we match with the businesses who’ve also invested – and that is truly the definition of a partnership. You put in some, we put in some, and all of us are focused on growing the businesses who’ve chosen our City. And we do not take that for granted.

“People could choose to put their business anywhere, and the fact that we have businesses that come and stay for a long time – over a decade – and people who choose to move their business to another location within the City, that tells us that we’re doing something right. And we want to continue getting feedback from our businesses that our City government and our Economic Development team are good partners.”

Speaking next, Kardasz said, “That was a wonderful intro to why we’re here today. We’re celebrating our businesses and a program that really is about that partnership and about supporting small businesses. Every business up here [with me] – and several others represented in the audience – know it’s hard work to own and operate a business.

“It’s a constant battle for customers, marketing and market placement. And if we can help fill some gaps and help support our small businesses – by making sure they’re places that people want to come to – that’s exactly the definition of local development and what we want to be doing.”

“We want to be a community where people choose to live, learn, work and play,” said Kardasz. “As Mayor Read said, more than \$445,000 was invested into 34 Fairfax City businesses through this program. That might not seem like a large amount of money in some respects, but the impact is unending.

“And we’re excited to be here to celebrate with the businesses behind me – Bond’s Escape Room, Romp n’ Roll, eXurb Fitness, NOVA Labs, Merle Norman Cosmetics, Commonwealth Brewing Co. and Layered. These are just some of the businesses this program has supported. And I’m happy to say we’re budgeting to continue the FIIG program, so we’ll keep investing in our businesses and our spaces and continue to make Fairfax City a destination of choice.”

After the ceremony, some of these business owners spoke about what the FIIG grant has meant to their companies. Brian Stone owns eXurb Fitness, a community gym and fitness center next to Ratcliffe Park. It’s been in the City for 17 years and received a FIIG Grant in February 2025.

“It helped us totally revitalize and rejuvenate our space,” said Stone. “I couldn’t have done it on my own. We also received a \$5,000 marketing grant this year, in March. It helped us redo the Website and increase our social media presence to give the busi-



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Colleen Kardasz speaks at the podium, while Bond’s Entertainment owner Egor Bond looks on.

ness more attention, and it covered our social media commercial.”

Ilana Cumbey, owner of Romp n’ Roll – which provides classes and activities for babies, toddlers and young children – received a \$20,000 FIIG Grant. “We got it when we were under construction [at Fair City Mall] and used it toward our full buildout and especially for our signage,” she said. “Over 400 families now come weekly for classes for children ages 3 months to 5 years.”

“Being a brand-new business owner in Fairfax has been special because it’s such a small, tight-knit community,” continued Cumbey. “And working with FCED has been wonderful. Having a partnership gives you a lot of peace of mind. It’s comfortable knowing there are people in the City I can reach out to for guidance and support. This grant shows that the City’s here to support small businesses. Opening a business is very expensive, and we were able to use those resources immediately.”

Nova Labs is a large community makerspace for innovators, creators, entrepreneurs and everyday residents. It received a \$20,000 FIIG Grant and, said owner Bradley Matthews, “We completely redid our entry area with new floors and lighting. We also opened up a wall so the whole area is open, bright and inviting.

“And in 2025, we also got a mural grant. FCED helped us connect with a local artist and paid for his commission to do the work, plus the installation. So instead of a plain, brick façade on the Jermantown-Road side of the building, you get a fun glimpse of what’s inside via symbols of what we offer. It’s a striking improvement.”

The colorful artwork represents, for example, 3D printing, welding, leatherwork, blacksmithing, electronics, woodworking and laser cutting. “We’ve always had a partnership with the City, but these grants symbolized their investment in the local businesses and the community because we’re a community-outreach facility,” explained Matthews. “We support the makers, the youth and the startups. And about 40 percent of our members are now building their own businesses out of their spaces in our building.”

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OPINION

Back to School Costs More This Year. That Was a Choice

Chaotic tariffs are sticking Fairfax families with the bill.

BY CONGRESSMAN
JAMES R. WALKINSHAW

There is something special about the first day of school.

Whether it is a kindergarten walking into a classroom for the first time, or a teenager heading into another year of high school, thinking about college, a first job, or finally getting behind the wheel.

The milestones change, but the rituals are familiar.

A new backpack. Fresh notebooks and pencils. The first-day outfit laid out the night before. A hurried cup of coffee while packing lunch and getting everyone out the door on time.

My son starts kindergarten this year, so I know that excitement firsthand. There is pride in watching your child grow up, mixed with the realization that it is all happening too fast.

Across Fairfax, families are getting ready for those exciting moments when schools reopen on August 24.

But this year, there is another moment many parents will recognize: taking a second look at the sales receipt.

According to an analysis by Groundwork Collaborative, families are paying nearly 8 percent

more to stock a backpack than they did last year. Notebooks are up 23 percent. Lunchboxes are up nearly 27 percent. And families packing lunches could spend almost \$400 more per child over the course of the school year.

Parents will still zip up the backpack, take the picture, and send their kids off with a smile. But behind that smile, plenty of parents are already figuring out where else they can cut back.

What can wait until next month? Can we cut something from the grocery cart? Put off a purchase? Carry a balance on the credit card?

Back-to-school shopping is exposing a bigger problem: everyday life has become too expensive for too many families.

And President Trump's economic agenda is why families are getting sticker shock. An analysis by Joint Economic Committee Democrats found that since he took office, the average Virginia household has spent more than \$2,900 extra on goods and services.

Trump's chaotic tariffs are sticking Fairfax families with the bill. His trade policies are making the shoes, clothes, school supplies and

electronics parents are buying right now more expensive. Trump may set the tariffs from the Oval Office, but Fairfax families are paying the price at the checkout counter.

I voted earlier this year to end Trump's tariffs on Canada, and I'll keep pressing Congress to take

back its say over trade.

Another round of tariffs expired last month because Con-

gress never extended them. Almost immediately, the Trump administration imposed new ones under a different law. That is not how this is supposed to work. No president should have unchecked power to keep raising prices in the school supply aisle.

Families are also still feeling the consequences of the so-called "Big Beautiful Bill" Trump and congressional Republicans enacted last year. The law cut food assistance, and analysts project that as many as 18.3 million students nationwide could lose access to free school meals as a result of the SNAP changes. At a moment when parents are already paying more to pack a lunch, Washington should not be making it harder for children to get one at school.

President Trump and congressional Republicans made these choices. We can choose differently.

That's why I'm a cosponsor of the Restoring Food Security for American Families and Farmers Act, which would repeal those food assistance cuts and protect school meals for children.

I'm also a cosponsor of both the Child Care for Working Families Act to bring down one of the biggest expenses parents face and the American Family Act to expand the Child Tax Credit, so families have more room each month for groceries, clothes, child care and everything else that comes with raising a child.

For Fairfax families who need help today, Fairfax County Public Schools is accepting applications for free and reduced-price meals throughout the school year at fcps.edu/frm. Students who qualify can receive breakfast and lunch at no cost.

On August 24, parents across Fairfax will snap one more picture, hand over a lunchbox, and watch their children head off to begin a new school year.

We will smile because they are excited, and because these moments pass too quickly.

But parents should not have to hide financial stress behind that first-day smile.

Fairfax families are paying the price at the checkout counter.

SENIOR LIVING

Northern Virginia Senior Olympics Mission: Living Healthy Longer

Michael Coleman, Northern Virginia Senior Olympics Chair said recently that Living Healthy Longer is NVSO's Mission. "We are proud to offer an ever-expanding variety of events that provide exercise, promote mental acuity and encourage socialization, all of which contribute to living longer healthier lives."

The 2026 NVSO runs from Sept. 11 to Oct. 4. Online registration is open until Aug. 24 at www.nvso.us.

Registration fee is \$20 for an

unlimited number of events. Participants must be 50 years of age by Dec. 31 and live in one of the sponsoring jurisdictions. Coleman said that among the 2026 events are track and field, swimming and diving, tennis, pickleball, cycling, 10 pin bowling, bocce, rock climbing, weight lifting plus scrabble, Mah Jong, duplicate bridge, canasta, darts, cornhole toss, 9 hole golf, miniature golf, line dancing, sudoku, jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles, horseshoes, table tennis and much more.

Most events are in 5 or 10 year age groups and some by gender.

Find the full list of events and venues on the website.

NVSO is sponsored by the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun and Prince William and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church. Additional support is generated by Gold, Silver and Bronze Patrons which goes toward equipment and supplies. Volunteers are always welcome. There is no paid staff.

2026 Gold Patrons are AARP Virginia, Adobe, Ashby Ponds by Erickson Senior Living, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, Falcons Landing, Greenspring by Erickson

Senior Living, Johns Hopkins Health Plans, Retirement Unlimited, Inc. (RUI), Seniors Helping Seniors, The Beacon Newspapers, The Jefferson, The Mather-Tyson, United Health Care, Vinson Hall, Woodlands Retirement Community and Woodleigh Chase by Erickson Senior Living.

Silver Patrons are Chesterbrook Residences and Koons Arlington Toyota. NVSO is also a 2026 recipient of a generous grant from Johns Hopkins Health Plans Corporate Grant Program.

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NEWS

Fairfax City Mayor Visits Woman on 104th Birthday

Not everyone gets a visit from a mayor on her birthday, but Ruby Kingsbury isn't just anybody. A resident of The Boulevard Post Acute, a skilled nursing center in Fairfax, Ruby celebrated her 104th birthday on July 13. And to make sure she did it in style, Fairfax City Mayor Catherine Read stopped by to wish her well, along with some Fairfax County police officers and firefighters. And by all accounts, Ruby thoroughly enjoyed every minute of her special day.

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OF JANE HUGHES



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Local Chefs to Offer their Signature Dishes

**Fairfax City
Restaurant
Week is
Aug. 20-30.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City's Summer Restaurant Week is almost here – and this year, it promises to be even more special than usual. That's because, instead of offering dishes to fit a particular price range, chefs from a variety of global cuisines will be serving their signature dishes.

Running from Aug. 20-30, Restaurant week will feature nearly two dozen local restaurants highlighting the meals they're proudest of. And in doing so, customers will be able to discover

firsthand the stories behind Fairfax City's diverse culinary scene.

This year's "Taste the Tradition" theme invites diners to experience the particular dishes that best represent each restaurant's identity, heritage and culinary expertise. From longtime family recipes to chefs' favorites, each featured dish will offer an authentic taste of what makes Fairfax City's restaurants unique.

"Restaurant Week is one of Fairfax City's most anticipated community events because it brings people together around great food, while celebrating the entrepreneurs and families who make our local restaurant scene so special," said Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read. "Every restaurant has a story to tell, and this summer's theme gives diners a chance to experience the passion, culture and craftsmanship behind the dishes that define our



PHOTOS COURTESY OF FAIRFAX CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Hot Spot Hot Pot's "Premium All You Can Eat" meal.



Sushi Friends Hashi's lunch Sushi Combo.



The Auld Shebeen's Burdocks Fish and Chips.

Fairfax City Restaurant Week is Aug. 20-30

FROM PAGE 8

community.”

The wide range of cuisines offered by the participating restaurants run the gamut from Italian, Korean, Indian and Japanese to Latin American, Irish, Middle Eastern and more. As a result, diners have lots to choose from and an authentic way to experience Fairfax City’s vibrant culinary landscape.

Fairfax City is proud to offer one of Northern Virginia’s most varied and distinctive dining scenes. So throughout this event, residents and visitors alike are encouraged to support the local restaurants, while exploring the signature dishes that best represent each establishment’s hallmark traditions.

Restaurants participating in Summer Fairfax City Restaurant Week include:

Baku Delicious, Bellissimo Restaurant, Big Buns Fairfax, Boba TomTom, Commonwealth Brewing Co., Curry Mantra, Dolce Vita Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar, Draper’s Steak & Seafood, El Pollo Rico, Hamrock’s Restaurant, and Hot Spot Hot Pot.

Also taking part are: Kelly’s Oyster House, Meokja Meokja, Ned’s New England Deck, Okonomi Asian Grill, Old Dominion Pizza, P.J. Skidoos, Patriot’s Pub & Grill, Sushi Friends Hashi, The Auld Shebeen, The Wine House, and Vivi Bubble Tea.



The 2026 Fairfax City Restaurant Committee is comprised of representatives from Fairfax City Economic Development, the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, the Old Town Fairfax Business Assn., Fairfax City restaurant owners, and consultants.

The committee oversees Restaurant Week with the goal of providing visitors with a unique Fairfax City experience while raising brand recognition and strengthening the bonds between residents and food-and-dining establishments.

For more information, including the restaurants’ featured signature dishes, go to fairfaxcityrestaurantweek.com and follow @FairfaxCityRestaurantWeek on Instagram and Facebook.



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VDOT
Virginia Department of Transportation

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
ORANGE	13035	675	DOLLEY MADISON ROAD	NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY	7/28/2026
LEE	10857	640N	ROUTE 0640	SHAFFER CREEK	7/27/2026
CAROLINE	4483	647	REEDY MILL ROAD	MATTAPONI RIVER	7/27/2026
TAZEWELL	18654	693E	ROUTE 693	CLINCH RIVER	7/16/2026
WISE	19475	748E	CUB HOLLOW ROAD	DOTSON FORK	7/8/2026
AMHERST	1417	610	PUPPY CREEK ROAD	HORSELEYS CREEK	7/8/2026

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.



From left, Lauren Dottin and Elsa Angel promote financial empowerment.



Daniela Amaya, 5, has some fun with her spaghetti.



Oscar Lazo with information about GMU admissions.

Britepaths Holds Annual Back-to-School Event

FROM PAGE 3

tinued. “The backpacks, alone, range in cost from \$50-\$100.”

It certainly would have been expensive for Maria Alvarenga, who was able to get these items for her three children, Hixel, 13; Elias, 9; and Katherine, 7. “This is excellent,” she said. “It helps a lot, and we are so grateful.”

Shayna Richardson, there with her three children, Delani, 14; Devan, 8; and Daryon, 4, agreed. “This is definitely helpful with today’s economy,” she said. “Everyone can benefit from a helping hand.” Her children also got books from Britepaths’s free library, the Secret Garden, while at the resource fair.

“I also got some cleaning supplies and water,” said Richardson. “And I signed up for a financial-literacy course because I eventually want to buy a house.”

Besides the backpacks and school supplies, clients also received pantry packs containing hygiene items such as toilet paper, diapers, shampoo, paper towels and pet food. In addition, Wawa donated five cases of soft pretzels, and Britepaths also gave out Goldfish crackers, juice boxes, water and granola bars. And Lasagna Love provided spaghetti and meatballs so families could have free meals while there.

“It’s such a lovely touch, and it’s one less thing families have to think about tonight,” said Ali at the July 31 event. “It also adds to the whole program and makes it more worth it for clients to attend.”

There were also special, arts-and-crafts activities for the children, and Janice Garcia, 16, and Aliyah Taylor, 11, were among the volunteers. “We’re helping them make superheroes out of paper and bags that they color and decorate with pom poms,” said Garcia. “And I like getting to spend time with little kids and helping them express themselves.”

“We’re also helping them decorate colorful bracelets with patterned tape,” said Taylor. “I’m glad that we can help the kids be creative.”

One of the children was 10-year-old Haja Bah, who was happily coloring a superhero to take home. Watching her was her mom, Fatmata Kabba. “This event is amazing,” she said. “It’s helping my family a lot with school supplies, food, financial-education resources and help finding a job or building credit.”

Meanwhile, Doris Lemous was enjoying the spaghetti and meatballs with her daughters Daniela, 5, and Nicole, 10. “This evening has made us really happy,” said Lemous. “The backpacks and school supplies are so helpful for our family, and I thank Britepaths for everything.”

Also on hand was Oscar Lazo, an admissions counselor at GMU. “I’m giving information to people about the GMU college-admissions process, the application and the SAT and ACT score-optional admission process,” he explained. “I’m also handing out pamphlets, stickers and inquiry cards for them to fill out and send to GMU if they have further questions.”

There, as well, were volunteer Lauren Dottin with MVB Bank and Britepaths Programs Office Manager Elsa Angel. Both were signing up people interested in online, financial-empowerment classes and/or one-on-one coaching sessions.

In addition, Ashley Dharmasiri, who manages ServiceSource’s youth program, gave out valuable information about what her organization offers. “We help both parents, and teenagers with disabilities, find and maintain employment,” she said. ServiceSource aids them in overcoming significant barriers so they may obtain jobs and eventually achieve financial independence.

Its youth program, for ages 14-24, enables participants to improve their work skills, while coordinating the crucial support services they need to succeed. It also does the same for adults who receive, or are eligible for, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

Pleased with how Britepaths’s event turned out, Ali said, “This isn’t just a supply distribution. This is different because, first



ServiceSource’s Ashley Dharmasiri with employment information.

and foremost, it’s a celebration with decorations, food and children’s activities – which were co-created by a child in elementary school.

She wanted them to do a superhero art

project because then the kids could see themselves as superheroes. It takes a village – we’re neighbors helping neighbors. It feels great to do this. And I know, if they could help us, they would.”

Summer Golf Internship Spent at Country Club in North Carolina



Leah Rafii of Burke will remember making many friends during her internship.

Burke resident follows marketing passion with sunny internship.

By Mike Salmon
Connection Newspapers

As a high school student looking for a sport to focus on, Leah Rafii was trying out golf on the Robinson High School team at Twin Lakes Golf Course when a huge thunderstorm hit and the coach tried to get them all back to the clubhouse. It was a memorable experience for Rafii.

"I remember running through the trees, we all had to run with our golf clubs," she said. This experience didn't sway her from the sport, so she took it up and now has spent the last summer in a USGA Internship at Pinehurst Country Club in North Carolina.

"I'm wrapping up my last week, it's been amazing," she said.

This summer she started as a member of the inaugural class of the Pathways Launch program, the 24 participants gathered at Riv-

iera Country Club in Pacific Palisades, Calif. for the U.S. Women's Open. The class was selected from over 1,000 applicants and represent individuals from a variety of backgrounds, their information said. The program places each participant across 10 organizations across the country for their summer internship.

In addition to their summer placements across industry organizations, all interns were on-site at the U.S. Women's Open from Thursday, June 4 to Sunday, June 7, participating in a variety of career development programming events.

Early Golf Days

It all started on the Burke Lake par-3 golf course with her father and brother, learning the sport on a local level. She went to Robinson High School and joined the golf team where she was a volunteer coach at her local First Tee chapter, played on the girls' varsity and co-



In Los Angeles, the summer started out at Riviera Country Club in Pacific Palisades, Calif. for the U.S. Women's Open.

ed varsity teams and was named the girls' captain during her senior year. From there she went on to the University of South Carolina where she's going into her third year on the golf team, but has her eye on world travel first.

This fall Leah Rafii's doing an internship in Austria, and then on to Munich in the spring where she might get a visitor. "My mom likes to travel, she will definitely come visit me," she said.

At home in Burke, her golf interest was spurred even further by all the golf matches on television she watched with her father.

Fairfax County High School golf is part of the Virginia High School League sports program which is defined as an organization of the public and non-boarding high schools in the Commonwealth of

Virginia which join with the expressed written approval of their local school boards. Its organiza-

tional home is located in Charlottesville, and it loosely follows USGA rules.



Leah Rafii met many other golfers at the U.S. Women's Open.

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Fairfax County Park Authority

Steve Digby

Planets Aligned for Local Golfer

By Mike Salmon

Some golfers go a whole golf career without getting a hole-in-a-one, but Steve Digby just got two in one day at the Laurel Hill Golf Club in Lorton. It all happened on Saturday, Aug. 8. The odds of this happening are one in 67 million, according to the experts at the Fairfax County Park Authority.

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,

12 ♦ BURKE / FAIRFAX / FAIRFAX STATION / CLIFTON / LORTON / SPRINGFIELD ♦ AUGUST 20 - SEPTEMBER 2, 2026



Circus Vazquez will be at Tysons II on Aug. 7-31, 2026 in Tysons Corner.



The OFC Ignite: Back to School Kickoff & Tailgate Party takes place Saturday, Aug. 29, 2026 at the Old Firehouse Center in McLean.

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

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.

NOW THRU AUG. 27

Summer Concert Series. 7-8 p.m. At National Museum of the Marine Corps, 1775 Semper

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:

♦ August 20, 7 p.m. – U.S. Navy Concert Band

♦ August 27, 7 p.m. – “The President's Own” U.S. Marine Band

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

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

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:

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

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.

WEDNESDAYS NIGHTS

Open Game Nights. 6:30-9 p.m. At Old Firehouse Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Come enjoy table tennis, bridge, mah-jongg, arcade games, a sensory lab and more at the Old Firehouse. Children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

AUG. 3-22

Dog Wash for Fairfax Pets on Wheels Fund-raiser. At Weber's Pet Supermarket in Reston. Every dog wash is \$16 with \$10 going to Fairfax Pets on Wheels.

AUG. 5-30

“Sun-Drenched” Exhibition and Show. At McLean Art Gallery, 6224B Old Dominion Drive, McLean. Opening reception on Friday, Aug. 7 from 5-7 p.m. to meet the artists, enjoy conversation about summer-inspired artwork, and relax with live music, wine, and light refreshments. “Sun-Drenched” captures the warmth, brilliance, and beauty of the season through original artwork inspired by long summer days, flourishing gardens, colorful still lifes, sunlit landscapes, and the simple pleasures of summer.

AUG. 7-31

Circus Vazquez. At Tysons II, 8025 Galleria Drive, in Tysons Corner. The production blends time honored circus tradition with contemporary elements to create a vibrant entertainment experience for modern audiences. Show times are 7:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays; 1 p.m., 4 p.m., 7 p.m. on Saturdays and 11 a.m., 2 p.m., 5 p.m. on Sundays.

DRIVE-IN STYLE MOVIES

Grab your crew and head out to 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly, to sit back, relax and

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ENTERTAINMENT

watch movies “drive-in” style — view and listen from your car or bring chairs and blankets to watch from the lawn. Pack a basket for a moonlit picnic or try a new treat from one of our food truck partners and enjoy free entertainment that comes to you as part of the Fairfax County Park Authority’s Summer Entertainment Series.

Starlight Cinema brings the community together for wholesome family entertainment with a feature film that begins at dark. Gates open at 6:30 p.m., so come early to get a good spot. Mark your calendars for:

Aug. 22: “Cars”

AUG. 20-30

The 1st Stage Logan Festival of Solo Performance will run August 20-30, 2026 at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons, with performances of each show as follows:

LET IT BE ART!: Thursday, August 20 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, August 22 at 5:00 p.m.; Sunday, August 23 at 7:30 p.m.; Friday, August 28 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, August 29 at 2:00 p.m.; Sunday, August 30 at 5:00 p.m.

It Ends With Guinea Pigs: Saturday, August 22 at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, August 23 at 2:00 p.m.; Wednesday, August 26 at 7:30 p.m.; Thursday, August 27 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, August 29 at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, August 30 at 2:00 p.m.

Baron Vaughn: Cycle Breaker: Friday, August 21 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, August 22 at 2:00 p.m.; Sunday, August 23 at 5:00 p.m.; Tuesday, August 25 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, August 29 at 5:00 p.m.; Sunday, August 30 at 7:30 p.m.

Individual tickets can be purchased online at www.1ststage.org or by emailing the 1st Stage box office at boxoffice@1ststage.org.

BACK TO SCHOOL BOOK SALE

At Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Dr., Centreville. Fiction and nonfiction for all ages, DVDs, audiobooks and more. Bag sale on Sunday. Fill a grocery bag with books and DVDs for \$10.

Friday, Aug. 21, 1-5 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 22, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, Aug. 23, 12 to 5 p.m.

RESTON ASSOCIATION DOG PADDLES

Bring your dog for a dip in the pools that have closed for the season and bid farewell to the dog days of summer. Registration is required as space is limited. These events often sell out.

Saturday, Aug 22: Autumnwood Pool

Sunday, Aug. 23: Hunters Woods Pool

Saturday, Aug. 29: Newbridge Pool

Saturday, Sept. 5: Autumnwood Pool

Saturday, Sept. 12: North Hills Pool

Sunday, Sept. 13: Dogwood Pool

SUNDAY/AUG. 23

Cold War Conversation: Dreamland: The Secret History of Area 51. 7 p.m. Virtual. At the Cold War Museum. Aerospace historian Peter W. Merlin will discuss his book and more than 30 years of research into the National Classified Test Facility at Groom Lake, Nevada, better known as Area 51. Hidden in a remote desert valley since 1955, Area 51 became one of the most secretive sites of the Cold War, spawning decades of rumors and conspiracy theories. Merlin cuts through the myths to tell the history of this important flight-test and evaluation facility and the technological innovations developed there in response to evolving global threats.

AUG. 24-30

Metropolitan Washington Summer Restaurant Week. At various restaurants in the DMV. Presented by the Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington (RAMW), Restaurant Week features over 300 restaurants; diners can choose from 11 current Michelin Starred or Michelin Bib Gourmand restaurants, 5 James Beard Awardees and Nominees,

www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



The 1st Stage Logan Festival of Solo Performance runs Aug. 20-30, 2026 in Tysons Corner.



The 33rd Annual Middle Eastern Food Festival takes place Sept. 5-6 at Holy Transfiguration Melkite Greek Catholic Church in McLean.

14 RAMMYS Winners or Finalists, and 30 first-time participants. The week will feature multi-course brunch and lunch selections for \$25 or \$35 per person, and multi-course dinners for \$40, \$55, and \$65 per person for on-premise dining. For the full list of participating restaurants, visit www.rwmdmv.com.

Virginia restaurants include:

Cielo Supper Club

Darvish Kitchen

Fleming’s Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar

Locket Rosslyn

Oak Steakhouse

The Boulevard

The Simon at Reston Station

SENIOR MOVIE DAY

Reston Association presents Senior Movie Day, sponsored by Friends of Reston. Join them on

the fourth Wednesday of each month. Coffee, donuts and OJ are provided, and door prizes are distributed prior to the movie.

Location: LOOK Movie theater at Reston Town Center

Free. Ages 55+

Aug. 26: A Little Prayer (rated R)

Sept. 23: Reminders of Him

THURSDAY/AUG. 27

Lunch N’ Life. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. At American Legion Post 1976, 4206 Daniels Ave., Annandale. Join in a Game Day playing board and card games. To register, call 703-941-1419 or email shepherdscas@vacoxmail.com by August 25th.

SATURDAY/AUG. 29

OFC Ignite: Back to School Kickoff & Tailgate



The Burke Historical Society will meet on Sunday, Aug. 30, 2026 at Pohick Regional Library in Burke.

Party. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Old Firehouse Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Start the school year right with games, food, music and tailgate-style fun with friends at OFC Ignite, the monthly themed family play experience at OFC! Drop in to enjoy ping pong, board games, arcade games, refreshments, the Sensory Room, food and more.

SUNDAY/AUG. 30

Burke Historical Society Meeting. 3-4:30 p.m.

At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Mary Lipsey, local historian, will discuss Myra Bradwell, Mrs. Lincoln’s friend who successfully got Mrs. Lincoln released from an asylum.

SEPT. 3 AND SEPT. 24

“Huzzah!”: Better Said Than Done. 7 p.m. At Jammin’ Java in Vienna. Better Said Than Done has been giving people a platform to share and listen to stories in Northern Virginia and beyond, for 15 years. To celebrate, the organization is staging two storytelling shows. September 3, “Huzzah!” will be presented live at Jammin’ Java in Vienna at 7 p.m. On September 24, audiences around the country can watch “Hip, Hip, Hooray,” live on Zoom, starting at 8 p.m. Visit <https://better-saidthandone.org/events/>

SEPT. 5-6

33rd Annual Middle Eastern Food Festival.

Saturday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Sunday from 12:30-5 p.m. At Holy Transfiguration Melkite Greek-Catholic Church, 8501 Lewinsville Road, McLean. The Festival will showcase authentic Middle Eastern cuisine, traditional pastries, music and dancing, vendors, church tours, a silent auction, and activities for all ages. Visit the vendors, take a guided tour of the church, or engage in a game of backgammon or chess. Children also can find plenty to do in the dedicated kids’ zone, which includes a petting zoo, two moon bounces, 18-foot slide, face painting and a variety of games. A highlight of the event is the Saturday night, 6:30 p.m. “Hafli” (“party” in Arabic) that will feature live music and dancing, including opportunities to join the “Dabke,” a traditional folk line dance. Call 703-734-9566 or visit www.middleeastern-foodfestival.com

SEPT. 5-27

Natural Wonders by Rosemarie Forsythe.

At Reston Art Gallery and Studios, Reston. Reception to meet the artist on September 13 from 2-4 p.m. The exhibition features elements of the natural world Rosemarie saw in her backyard in Virginia and in the far-flung places of her life living and working around the world. Leaping horses, bright parrots, leopards, and even an alligator roam through her paintings. Colorful, highly patterned fish swim through a magical, deep blue sea. Forests of lilies, ferns, and wildflowers reveal glimpses of owls, monkeys, deer, and foxes. Palm leaves sway elegantly in a Pacific breeze by moonlight. Rich landscapes range from southern sand dunes to crisp, northern winter scenes of graceful birch trees rising to the distant sun.

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NEWS

'Your Daughters Will Prophecy'

Local authors
find hope for
today from 19th
century women's
movement

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

This August, on the 106th anniversary of the official certification of women's right to vote in the United States, we note that, in today's world, women's rights and words, still, are often questioned. Modern American women themselves often forget just how recently come-by are the rights that we consider basic. Such as the right to vote, to be protected from domestic violence, to hold a personal bank account, to receive credit without a husband's permission, and to serve on a jury. Relatively recent too, and often challenged, is the right for women to make personal reproductive choices; and even social acceptance of women's conduct and dress, including speaking, holding office; and wearing pants in public.

A recent book, by local authors Lisa Marie Gring-Pemble and Martha Watson, takes us back to the time before passage of the 19th amendment, when women had fewer rights than we enjoy today. The authors note the dilemma of 19th century women who felt called to improve society "caught between their identity as Christians and social norms that silenced them." The book tells how they argued against the challenges of expected subservience by women of their day.

Gring-Pemble relates that women were expected to be silent in public. That society in 19th century America recognized two spheres: public, which belonged to men; and private, which belonged to women. "The Cult of True Womanhood" defined the core virtues for women as: piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity. The authors' book describes how four particular women used the agency of accepted scripture to argue for change and to claim their voice on the moral questions of the day. For its title, "Your Daughters Will Prophecy," the book borrows directly from a specific Biblical text: Joel 2:28, to argue for women's right to speak in public. The authors relate how several women used that, and other scripture, to turn passages derived from the Bi-



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Author Lisa Marie Gring-Pemble holds the book she authored with college and friend Martha Watson.



US POSTAL SERVICE

Postage stamp includes Lucretia Coffin Mott among other leaders, honoring 100 years of the women's movement in 1948.

ble, previously used to create social norms repressing women into arguments to favor their cause. Joel 2:28: "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions."

The Gring-Pemble/Mason book analyzes the rhetorical resources of four American women of the time: Jarena Lee, Sarah Moore Grimke, Lucretia Coffin Mott and Frances Willard; who used scripture to "claim moral and then rhetorical agency;" their right to be heard.

Author Lisa Marie Gring-Pemble has been a professor at George Mason University for 26 years, where

she teaches courses on professional skills, business and communication. She also developed and teaches a course on the early women's movement during the 19th century at Mason. Her co-author, Martha Watson, formerly of the University of Maryland, was her dissertation adviser, now friend. It was Watson who suggested the two write the book together. Watson is now retired from teaching and serves as an Episcopal priest.

Borrowing on its historic atmosphere to help envision women's call to public speaking entangled with religion, we sat down with Gring-Pemble in the pews of the

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'Your Daughters Will Prophecy'

FROM PAGE 14

historic Pohick Episcopal Church. The Lorton church, called George Washington's church, has held services since 1774. Following is an edited summary of questions and answers.

Q - What led you to examine women's history in the 1800's?

A- The author notes the era was a subject of her study "before the book adventure". And she has had an on-going interest "in the way people use language to transform their communities, and the realities of where they live." She describes being "captivated when imagining a time when women could not speak in public and could not advocate at all. How did they find each other and start the women's movement?" She points to the opportunity provided by the Second Great Awakening in the early 1800s. "It was a time when abolitionism, temperance and women's rights were sweeping the country, along with growing church membership. In the competition to save souls, anyone could preach, even women."

Q- Why was it the Bible the women turned to for agency?

A- Gring-Pemle describes that the Bible was well known and readily available at the time, thanks to Martin Luther and the printing press. Many knew the biblical verses, stories, and characters. "The Bible had authority, so women could use its words to challenge and enlarge women's role. They could take passages that people knew but were overlooked when considering women's roles. Like Mary Magdalene, who was the first to find the resurrection of Jesus at the tomb. They reinterpreted that story to suggest Mary Magdalene was obviously a preacher, as the first to proclaim the risen Lord. They also reclaimed passages that were overlooked, such as God taking the rib from Adam to form Eve, as a helpmate. They suggested that God had created Adam and Eve in his own image; creating male and female, which seemed to put them on an equal playing field."

"They also found passages that white men leave out, that suggested that God's wishes should be honored in how to work with women. They found examples of women all over the globe with positions of authority; and those in the Bible in authority." Such as Deborah, a prophet, judge and spiritual leader, who led Israel back to God. "Deborah was a major war player, and she and others document scores of Biblical women, and show what women can do that men have ignored."

The book highlights four women:

❖ Jerena Lee, born a free black woman, who taught herself to write; was the first female preacher in the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), and was the first African American woman to publish an autobiography. She faced hostility while preaching and AME ultimately ruled that women could not preach in 1872. Earlier she preached in the slave state of Maryland, saying, as Gring-Pemle relates, "She can be called to preach because the Bible says 'daughters will prophecy.'" She ignited a

Votes for Women

This year marks the 106th anniversary of the official certification of the 19th Amendment, for Women's Suffrage Rights.

On Aug. 18, 1920, Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the amendment; providing the required majority of the then-48 states. Virginia's General Assembly had voted against ratification in February 1920. It was one of twelve, mostly southern states to do so. However, in February 1952, Virginia symbolically ratified the amendment, after it was law.

The amendment, introduced in 1878, took 42 years to become law. It was officially certified on August 26, 1920. It contained the simple text: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any States on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

conversation in Methodism and her spiritual journey book became that first published autobiography."

❖ Frances Willard, a college educated teacher, who was a founder of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and later became its president until her death. Gring-Pemle describes her as "seen as less caustic than suffrage leaders Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Stanton, and regarded as greater and better known than Queen Victoria [at the time]. She tempered her argument for more women's rights by emphasizing 'home protection' rather than for suffrage."

❖ Sarah Grimke, born to a wealthy South Carolina planter family, she moved to Pennsylvania, became a Quaker, and spoke on the abolitionist lecture circuit; becoming an outspoken advocate for education and suffrage for African American women. It was acceptable for women to write letters. Gring-Pemle says "Grimke wrote her Letters on the Equality of the Sexes, and the Condition of Woman to a friend, knowing the letters would be published. The Governor of South Carolina later exiled her from the state because of the letters."

❖ Lucretia Coffin Mott, a participant in the Seneca Falls Convention, a Quaker preacher; she helped found the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania, the first female medical school, and Swarthmore College, the earliest coed college. Gring-Pemle describes her as "well liked, better known, and as a Quaker, used to speaking." She responded to the prominent Massachusetts lawyer and politician and author Richard Henry Dana, who opined on proper restricted roles for women. "Mott responds without being aggressive, complements his discourse on women, and admonishes him for having the wrong impression of God."

Q - Why did these particular four women stand out to you as representatives of



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Historical photo of Jerena Lee who worked for women's right to speak in public

their era, among all the women activists of their day?

A - "They were chosen for the things they wrote; being so influential and in getting so many other women into the women's movement. ... Lee published her spiritual journey autobiography; Willard wrote extensively on women's rights and social reform; Gimke authored the 15 'Letters on Equality' ... published serially in a newspaper; and Mott's letters were published as "Discourse on Women."

Q - With women's rights still under attack today, do you think history holds strategies that could be effective in helping women's voices be better heard now?

A- Gring-Pemle suggests there are three lessons to take from the 19th century for use by women today. "Honor the complexity of the women's movement. Not all will share all the same circumstances and experiences. The second lesson surrounds the idea of civil discourse. The women then were passionate, biting, riveting, but with different and competing arguments. With discourse and truly understanding where others came from, they were able to find shared goals. And third, with perseverance, determination and grit they fought for issues they would never realize themselves. They never had the opportunity to exercise the right to vote, but they worked for the rights of others. We are still debating many of the same issues, but we can have great hope in women for their fortitude. Because of what they did, 'our daughters can prophecy.'"

The Gring-Pemle/Mason book was published in 2025 by the University of South Carolina press, and is available in hard/soft copy and Kindle on Amazon.

Water You Want from Me?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Now that can't be good news. Yet another email from the company from whom I recently purchased a water fountain for our cats: "Don't skip this" was the message in the subject box. And since I certainly recognized the sender (after as many email solicitations from it as I have already received in a few short weeks) you would too. I'd almost characterize their email pursuit of me and my future dollars as stalking, but it doesn't really meet the threshold. Besides, it's not as if they're staring at me at home from across the street or standing at the end of my driveway waiting for me leave my home. But to insert a Jerry Seinfeld quote: "It's something."

The first headline in the body of their email was reasonable enough: "How to Make the Most of Your blank Water Fountain." So far, so good. Harmless enough, maybe even potentially helpful. And a bit further down the page more key words, so much so that they were in a gold oval. Two that gives yours truly - and so many others like me, pause: "Easy Assembly ... to assure a hassle-free experience." From my perspective and experience, when the products' advisory includes the words "easy" and "assembly" I know that the hours to follow trying to assemble their product will be anything but easy - for me anyhow, and unlikely will lead to anything assembled. Which I can accept though It's very hard on my wife though. I'm well aware of my limits, maybe even understand/rationalize them; she can do neither. From her vantage point, it's pure incompetence.

Continuing on with my meager attempt at resolving this life-long challenge; as I read on down the page, I begin to wonder if I have indeed been led down the garden path, so to speak. Not exactly lambs to slaughter as I'm only talking about a water fountain for cats, not the Bible. Putting things together is not what I do. Writing about the various tasks I can't do is more how I roll. I read further. There are filters that need to be changed on multiple parts of the unit, even a water pump that might need to be likewise changed. All of which I need to pre-order and pre-pay for the next quarter or two. And what's totally worse, in looking at this How-to set of instructions, there is no phone number for me to call, and when I went to their website, from which I originally ordered the fountain, I couldn't find a phone number - or any kind of lifeline there either. I am, in effect, all alone. All of which doesn't bode well for the cats who ultimately will be the true beneficiaries of this fountain.

Moreover, another definitely-not-expected warning came even further down the page: this fountain is not self-cleaning (it needs to be cleaned? Who knew?). That means it will be my self cleaning it. Which adds a bit of insult to my presumptive pain. I mean, if this fountain is so highly rated, shouldn't it be idiot proof? Present company included.

To be fair, I have already emailed the company - which they encourage, to trouble shoot. And in only two days - since they've had an overwhelming response to their product, I received back a very well thought-out and thorough response. (My problem, rather the problem I was having, was that one of our cats was knocking the lid off the fountain and thus stopping the water flow.) I was grateful for the response but, as helpful as it was - though not exactly timely, it has led to a barrage of subsequent emails soliciting me for this, that and the other thing as well all the fountain's accessories, I could possibly want; especially if I order another fountain; because cats behavior being what it is, as with litter boxes, the recommendation is that I have one fountain per cat. And since I have four cats, I've become, at least through their electronic outreach, their hopeful best repeat buyer

And here all I thought I was doing in buying this fountain was assuring our cats would have a steady flow of water. I had no idea - or expectation, that I'd be getting a new electronic best friend who seems to have nothing better to do than to email me, constantly (I exaggerate but I'm sure you get the idea.)

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

MARKET UPDATE
JANUARY - JULY 2026

LONG &
FOSTER
REAL ESTATE

BURKE

237

NEW LISTINGS

▼ -15.66%

12

AVG DOM

▲ +23.6%

\$900,000

MEDIAN SALE PRICE

▲ +2.86%

Bright MLS, January - July 2026 vs January - July 2025,
Residential - Single Family Residence, Burke



MARKET UPDATE
JANUARY - JULY 2026

LONG &
FOSTER
REAL ESTATE

FAIRFAX STATION

99

NEW LISTINGS

▼ -33.11%

14

AVG DOM

▲ +3.78%

\$1,069,000

MEDIAN SALE PRICE

▲ +7.44%

Bright MLS, January - July 2026 vs January - July 2025,
Residential - Single Family Residence, Fairfax Station



MARKET UPDATE
JANUARY - JULY 2026

LONG &
FOSTER
REAL ESTATE

CLIFTON

97

NEW LISTINGS

▼ -38.61%

17

AVG DOM

▼ -4.05%

\$1,095,000

MEDIAN SALE PRICE

▼ -4.78%

Bright MLS, January - July 2026 vs January - July 2025,
Residential - Single Family Residence, Clifton



CURRENT INVENTORY



COMING SOON

5104 Spring Rock Court
Fairfax, VA 22032
\$1,100,000



OPEN SAT & SUN

10704 Stanhope Place
Fairfax, VA 22032
\$1,175,725



COMING SOON

6128 Beton Court
Gainesville, VA
\$799,000



UNDER CONTRACT

7362 Silver Pine Drive
Springfield, VA
\$959,000



UNDER CONTRACT

5960 Ohara Landing Court
Burke, VA
\$825,000



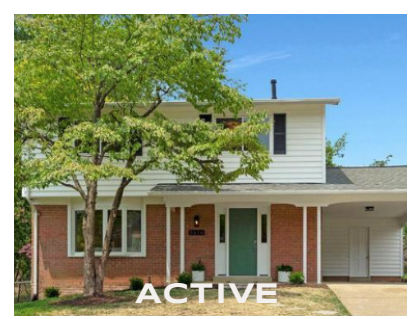
UNDER CONTRACT

8061 Athena Street
Springfield, VA
\$950,000



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Lorton, VA 22079
\$997,000



ACTIVE

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