

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

AUGUST 20, 2026

Capt. Eugene “Red” McDaniel



Capt. Eugene McDaniel and his wife Dorothy in an undated photo with daughter Leslie and son Michael.



PHOTOS/MCDANIEL FAMILY

A crowd awaits the return of Capt. Eugene McDaniel to his Virginia Beach neighborhood following his release from six years as a POW in Vietnam.

Decorated fighter pilot, POW dies at 94.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Capt. Eugene Barker “Red” McDaniel, a decorated U.S. Navy aviator who survived nearly six years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam and spent the rest of his life advocating for America’s missing servicemembers, died Aug. 7 at his home in the Mount Vernon section

OBITUARY

of Alexandria. He was 94.

To the public, McDaniel was a war hero. To fellow prisoners, he was something more enduring: a source of strength in the darkest conditions imaginable.

Shot down near Hanoi on May 19, 1967, while flying an A-6 Intruder during the Vietnam War, McDaniel was captured almost immediately and disappeared into the North Vietnamese prison system. For years, his wife Dorothy and children Michael, David and Leslie had little certainty about his fate.

The Hanoi government did not acknowledge he was a prisoner until March 1970.

“Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is the presence of faith.”

— Capt. Eugene “Red” McDaniel

After six years as a POW McDaniel was released on March 4, 1973, following the Vietnam cease-fire.

Born Sept. 27, 1931, in Kinston, North Carolina, McDaniel grew up as the eldest of eight children in a

family of tobacco sharecroppers. Athletic and ambitious, he attended Campbell Junior College and later Elon College on scholarships. Aviation ultimately proved a stronger calling than athletics, and after entering the Navy he earned his wings as a naval aviator.

SEE DECORATED FIGHTER, PAGE 8



Capt. Eugene McDaniel, right, with bombardier-navigator James Kelly Patterson celebrating the 75,000 carrier landing aboard the USS Enterprise. The two were shot down in 1967 and Patterson remains missing in action.



With his wife Dorothy by his side, Capt. Eugene McDaniel waves to the crowd gathered in his Virginia Beach neighborhood following his release from six years of captivity in Vietnam in 1973.



Capt. Eugene “Red” McDaniel (USN ret) died Aug. 7 at his home in the Mount Vernon section of Alexandria. The highly decorated Vietnam POW was 94.

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ACM ATLANTIC COAST
MORTGAGE

Aldersgate UMC Celebrates 70 Years

Seventy years ago, the Mount Vernon area was still largely undeveloped. A small group of neighbors gathered with a shared vision: to build a church that would serve its growing community. Today, Aldersgate United Methodist Church celebrates seven decades of worship, fellowship, music, education, and service.

The story began on Aug. 12, 1956, when the Rev. Arthur E. "Gene" Thompson was appointed to organize a new congregation. Thirty-five adults and 16 children attended the first worship service at Hollin Hall Elementary School, where the cafeteria served as the sanctuary and hallways became Sunday School classrooms. The church received its charter that October, with local families joining together to establish a permanent congregation.

The community itself was growing rapidly. In the early days, Aldersgate members would sometimes follow moving vans into the newly developing Waynewood neighborhood and invite new residents to worship with them. That spirit of welcoming neighbors has remained a defining part of Aldersgate's identity.

Construction of the first church building began in 1958, and 300 worshippers gathered for the first service in Founder's Hall in October 1959. Continued growth soon made a larger sanctuary necessary. Construction began in 1963, and the present sanctuary welcomed its first worshippers in December 1964. More than 1,000 people attended that first service, along with hundreds of children participating in Sunday School.

Over the decades, Aldersgate continued to grow and adapt. New classrooms, offices, meeting spaces, and music facilities were added. The extension and building of Shepherd Hall increased opportunities for Christian education, while the Guback Center became another gathering place for church and community activities. Founder's Hall, the congregation's original sanctuary, was later modernized and continues to serve as a beautiful gathering space, and a memory of where it began.

Music has always been an important part of Aldersgate's life. As Aldersgate grew, choirs, handbell groups, youth ensembles, orchestras, and contemporary worship ministries flourished through the years. In 2001, the church dedicated a magnificent Casavant Frères pipe organ, adding another chapter to Aldersgate's rich musical tradition.

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A sign announces the "future home" of Aldersgate UMC.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALDERSGATE UMC

The first service in Founders Hall on Oct. 4, 1959



Steeple rising in 1964.



Aldersgate in 2026.

But Aldersgate's story extends well beyond its buildings. In 2014, Aldersgate helped launch The Kingstown Communion as a satellite campus, which now proudly operates as an independent United Methodist community.

Generations of Aldersgate members have put their faith into action through Meals on Wheels, food ministries, disaster recovery, mission trips, and programs serving people in need, both locally and around the world. Ministries such as Stephen Ministry, Phoenix Rising, and ROCK have helped Aldersgate reach beyond its walls to serve neighbors facing difficult circumstances.

The church has also been a place of learning and fellowship. Its Day School has educated generations of children, while confirmation classes,

youth programs, Wednesday night dinners, community theater, small groups, and special events have brought people together.

When the COVID-19 pandemic made traditional worship impossible, Aldersgate adapted with online services and outdoor parking-lot worship, maintaining a sense of community during an extraordinary time.

From a cafeteria at Hollin Hall Elementary to a thriving congregation on Collingwood Road, Aldersgate's 70-year journey is ultimately a story about people, neighbors welcoming neighbors, volunteers sharing their gifts, and generations carrying the church's mission forward.

For 70 years, Aldersgate has stood as a strong and steadfast steeple on the corner—a familiar beacon of faith, hope, and community.

Celebrate with Aldersgate

Please join us in celebrating this milestone on Sunday, Aug. 30, with a worship service in our Sanctuary at 10 a.m., followed by a potluck Homecoming picnic on the front lawn. The Community picnic will feature music by Fort Hunt's own Porch Pirates. We will also have bounce houses and a petting zoo. All are welcome! 1301 Collingwood Road, 22308.

From time to time, you may even catch a glimpse of eagles perched high above our steeple, offering a beautiful reminder of the community and life that surrounds us.

The eagles have become a fitting symbol of Aldersgate—strong, watchful, and always looking toward the horizon. As we celebrate the faith and stories that have shaped our past, we look ahead with hope, continuing to inspire faith, build community, and soar

together into the future.

Celebrate with Aldersgate

Please join us in celebrating this milestone on Sunday, Aug. 30, with a worship service in our Sanctuary at 10 a.m., followed by a potluck Homecoming picnic on the front lawn. (1301 Collingwood Road, 22308) The Community picnic will feature music by Fort Hunt's own Porch Pirates. We will also have bounce houses and a petting zoo. All are welcome!

Local WWII Veteran Celebrates 101st Birthday

A model of courage, resilience and service to others.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Romuald “Rom” Lipinski has lived a remarkable life – from his 1925 birth in Poland to his teens in Siberia to fighting in the Polish Army in Italy during WWII. He later became a civil engineer, moved to America, married and raised a family, never stopped learning and passed on his knowledge to others.

And on July 25 – still sharp as a tack – he celebrated his 101st birthday with his children and friends at Brightview Senior Living in the Centreville area, where he’s a resident. The festivities included Polish pierogies, birthday cake and entertainment by the Wiślanie Polish Folk Song and Dance Ensemble that first performed for him on his 97th birthday.

Afterward, he and his daughters, Eva Lipinski and Yolanda Hipski, told The Connection about his life. (His son Adam had already left).

When war broke out in September 1939, both the Germans and Russians invaded Poland. Rom was 13 then and his future wife, Izabela, was 9, but they didn’t meet until both were adults. And in the early 1940s, the invaders deported both their families to Siberia.

Then in late 1944, the British government helped the Polish people leave there. Izabela went to a refugee camp in Africa for five years, and teenaged Rom joined the free Polish Army – a branch of the British Army. An infantryman, he and his unit went to Sicily and then up through Italy to Rome.

Along the way, Rom Lipinski, then 19, fought in the historic Battle of Monte Cassino – one of the toughest and most significant campaigns of World War II. Monte Cassino was an Italian monastery occupied by the Germans on a high, rugged mountain. The Allies fought them there from Jan. 17 to May 18, 1944, and the resulting Allied victory opened the road enabling them to reach Rome.

Rom was in the 12th Podolski Lancers Regiment from the 3rd Infantry Division, at Monte Cassino



Director of Assisted Living Belinda Griffin and Rom Lipinski enjoying the entertainment together.



Rom Lipinski in 1944 or '45.

from April 30 to May 23, 1944. Finally, on the morning of May 18, 1944, a patrol from this regiment planted its pennant and the Polish flag on the ruins of the Monte Cassino monastery. Before then, however, came fierce fighting.

“The first patrol at Monte Cassino was from my regiment,” said Rom. “We did reconnaissance to find out where the German artillery and soldiers were. Everybody was scared; I was thinking about survival. These memories never leave me. But I considered it my duty to serve. I still keep in touch with the Polish regimental office in Poland.”

After the war ended and he was discharged from the Army, he resettled in England, attending the University of London to continue his education. “That was a feat in itself because, first, he had to learn English,” said Eva Lipinski. “He speaks five languages – Italian, French, Russian, Polish and English.”

“He literally fought for his education,” added Hipski. “He went to ninth and 10th grade in high school; and when he was fighting in Italy, he would take the test to place out of one grade level to another while wearing his battlefield gear. His high school wasn’t as thorough as it should have been. And when he got to college, he had to fight extra hard to get in.”

“Then he had to translate everything from English to Polish, understand those concepts in his mind and then translate them back from Polish to English. Later, he taught us that you go for your education. He’d say, ‘They can take everything away from you, but they can’t take your mind.’ And that’s what he conveyed to us and what I



This photo of Lipinski was taken a few years ago.

conveyed to my child.”

While he was in England, in November 1951, “There was a big rally in Manchester, England, and I went there to see my brother,” said Rom Lipinski. “We went to a dance, and I saw this beauty, and there was a spark between us. She came to our table and we hit it off, right away. After many years of marriage, she told me that, after our second meeting, she went home and started writing, ‘Izabela Lipinski.’”

However, her family had already applied for visas to move to America – which they did, two months later, in January 1952. Many letters and a long-distance courtship followed; and later that year, Izabela returned to England to marry him. Then in December 1953, they moved to America, settling in Perth Amboy, N.J., where Rom continued his studies. In 1961, he received a master’s degree from Newark College of Engineering and became a civil engineer.

“My first job was as a draftsman and designer for a company,” he said. “It paid \$56/week.” In 1965, he and his family moved to An-



Rom Lipinski with daughters (from left) Eva Lipinski and Yolanda Hipski.



Both children and adults performed for the birthday celebration.

nandale, and he became a civil engineer for the U.S. Navy before working for the federal government. He was a civil engineer for the Atomic Energy Commission, later renamed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

“He wrote the building code, still used today, for nuclear power plants throughout the U.S.,” said Eva Lipinski. “Then in 1989, he left to work in a similar field in the private sector until 1997, when he retired at age 72.”

But instead of just relaxing, Rom continued his pattern of being a lifelong learner, taking college classes wherever he lived. He also made it a point to share his knowledge with others.

“After retiring, he took math and philosophy classes at George Mason University,” said Hipski. “He also tutored high-school and college students in math. And during his student career in this area, he tutored students at UVA and NOVA for their professional-engineering licensing exams. He did this until he was 90.”

“He was mowing his lawn until 1993,” added Eva Lipinski. “My mother used to yell at him to stop, but he said it was good exercise for him.” Izabela died in 2019 at age 90, after 68 years of marriage. Besides their three children, they have six grandchildren, one great grandchild and another on the

SEE LOCAL WWII VETERAN, PAGE 10
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Arrest in Stabbing

On Aug. 15, at 10:43 p.m., officers responded to the 7800 block of Richmond Highway in Hybla Valley for a stabbing. When officers arrived, they located a 41-year-old man suffering from stab wounds to the upper body. The victim was transported to a local hospital in life-threatening condition and remains hospitalized. The suspect fled the area prior to police arrival.

Detectives determined the victim and suspect were in an argument prior to the stabbing. Detectives located surveillance footage of the suspect prior to the stabbing as officers were on scene investigating.

The following day, detectives with FCPS Auto Crimes Enforcement Unit, Violent Crimes Division, Criminal Investigations

Division, Warrant Squad and patrol officers flooded the area to identify potential witnesses, additional surveillance footage and locate the suspect.

At approximately 4:40 p.m., Mount Vernon officers report that they saw the suspect in the 3100 block of Sherwood Hall Lane in Hybla Valley wearing the same clothing as in the surveillance footage. A 25-year-old Alexandria man was arrested and a knife was found in his possession. He was transported to the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center and charged with Malicious Wounding. He was held on no bond.

Detectives are asking anyone with information regarding this incident to call our Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 2.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, [stemvol-](http://stemvolunteers.org)

[unteers.org](http://stemvolunteers.org), during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or donaldrea@aol.com.

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

SEE BULLETIN BOARD, PAGE 10

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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 State ID	Route ID	Route Name	Comments	Effective Date
ORANGE	13035	675	DOLLEY MADISON ROAD	NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY	7/28/2026
LEE	10857	640N	ROUTE 0640	SHAVER CREEK	7/27/2026
CAROLINE	4483	647	REEDY MILL ROAD	MATTAPONI RIVER	7/27/2026
TAEWELL	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.

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.

Forgotten Founder of Freedom

BY PAUL GILBERT

George Washington and George Mason were from Fairfax County; Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry were from Virginia. But there was another local founder who was forgotten to time. On Aug. 1, 1791, just 8 years after the American Revolution ended, Robert Carter III began emancipating over 500 enslaved people, because he believed the words "all people are created equal," and acted on them.

This story based in Fairfax County lay largely forgotten for over 200 years. While the founders of our democracy had revolutionary ideas, when Carter took the step of acting on them he was largely ostracized and excluded from history.

The descendants of those eman-

cipated remembered what happened and kept the story alive from one generation to the next. But to the outside world, the largest emancipation prior to the Civil War was forgotten. That changed in 2022, when Paul McCray, a historian with NOVA Parks, began researching what had happened at Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville centuries ago. Eventually, the story unfolded as one lead led to another, and the picture expanded further when he connected with Chrystal Gaskins, a descendant of those emancipated by Carter and the keeper of the family history. The story of this site is now documented, and for the last five years the Fairfax NAACP and NOVA Parks have held Juneteenth celebrations at the site.

Carter was one of the richest



Doretha Spriggs, Paul Gilbert, and Chrystal Gaskins. Doretha and Chrystal are cousins and descendants of the 500+ emancipated in 1791. The three are standing in the cemetery where 103 graves were found.

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Mary Kimm
Editor and Publisher
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Jeanne Theismann
jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com
@TheismannMedia

Mercia Hobson
Staff Reporter
mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com

Mike Salmon
Contributing Writer
miksalm6922@gmail.com

Glenda Booth
Contributing Writers

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

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

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

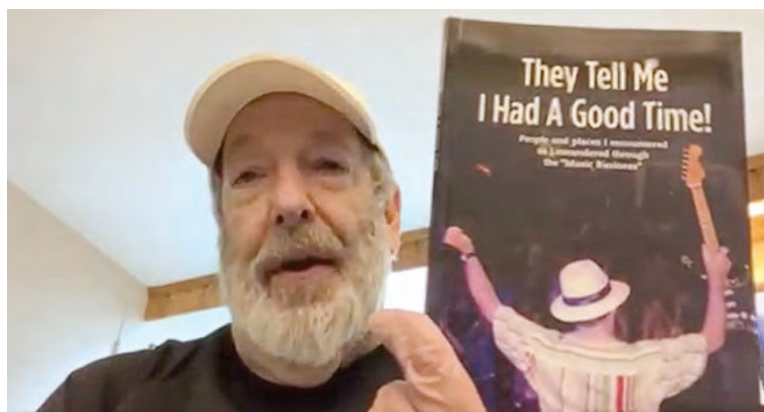
Production Manager:
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CIRCULATION
Circulation Manager:
Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

A Connection Newspaper



Musician Now Involves Old Softball Bats and Gloves



Tom Principato has been doing readings from his book.

Old Town musician Tom Principato shifts direction.

By Mike Salmon
The Gazette

In the late 1980s, it was common to see Tom Principato's name on the Old Town Alexandria musician list, particularly at venues like The Wharf and 219 on King Street where he hammered out a blues sound that fit in perfectly.

"We used to play there a lot, we had a regular show every Wednesday night," said Tom Principato of his shows at The Wharf.

Fast forward 40 years and Principato is focusing on promoting past performances, writing books, and refurbishing used softball equipment. Wait, used softball gear? Like bats and gloves? Old guitars too? These are all on his

"to-do" list.

"There really is a market for refurbished baseball gloves, they're soft and broken in," he said.

In the yard of his Falls Church home, a shed has been transformed into a shop called "GOOD AS NEW" run by Tom and Virginie Principato.

"We have the area's largest selection of good condition used baseball and softball gear at very affordable and reasonable prices," their social media page says. "Why pay so much more at a Sporting Goods store for new gear when we offer all the name brands like DeMarini, Mizuno, Rawlings, Easton, Wilson and Nike as well as classic brands."

There are used bats, gloves, batting helmets, ball buckets, a Washington Senators pennant, Babe Ruth's picture and the air is full of baseball vibes. You can almost hear the roar of the crowd too.

It all started when Tom's wife Virginie Principato spent a short time in a job that she hated so the complaining got the best of her. They both evaluated the situation,



Used softball and baseball gear is now getting a new life at the Principato's store.

and went right to refurbishing bats and baseball gloves. She became an expert in reigniting the magic in these old items. "So that became her job," Tom said.

There's not much overhead either. Social media is their advertising medium and since every office on K Street and King Street has a softball team of some sort, the demand is out there. "Word of mouth is a big part of our business," he said.

Tom Principato as a musician is entering the retired status, but he still plays around the house some,

and maintains his music on the website. The old days were worth remembering though. At The Wharf on King Street, he jammed night after night, and one time a person from the Turkish Embassy came in and liked the sound so much, "she arranged a trip to Turkey for the group," Tom said. Another time, Shirley Povich came in for a show. Frank Zappa came in once when they played at the Speakeasy in Massachusetts.

In 2021, Principato gathered all his thoughts from the past 40 years

of music and put them in a book called "They Tell Me I Had A Good Time," which he wrote during the pandemic. In the book he mentions shows with BB King at the Cellar Door in DC, the Danny Gatton band, and his brush with Frank Zappa.

"The book is full of road stories and anecdotes," he said.

And the softball gloves, hats and bats? They cover the walls of his shop and not in the landfills. Virginie has a large Bobble head collection too.

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Capt. Eugene McDaniel with his bombardier-navigator James Kelly Patterson in 1967 shortly before the aircraft was shot down over Vietnam. Patterson remains MIA.



Capt. Eugene McDaniel next to his A-6 Intruder aircraft in Vietnam.



Capt. Eugene McDaniel, left, being released from captivity in Hanoi in March of 1973.



Capt. Eugene McDaniel lifts his daughter Leslie after his return to Virginia in 1973. At left is McDaniel's wife Dorothy.



Capt. Eugene McDaniel stands on the flight deck as commander of the USS Lexington.



Capt. Eugene McDaniel, right, with President Ronald Reagan. Reagan campaigned for McDaniel during the veteran's unsuccessful run for congress in North Carolina in 1982.

Decorated Fighter Pilot Capt. Eugene “Red” McDaniel, POW Dies at 94

FROM PAGE 1

By the time he arrived in Vietnam, McDaniel was an experienced officer and pilot. He had flown 81 combat missions before his aircraft was shot down.

What followed became the central chapter of his life story. Fellow POWs and supporters later recalled his willingness to endure punishment and torture while helping sustain the morale of other prisoners. His Christian faith, widely cited by McDaniel himself, became a cornerstone of his survival. Decades later, he would describe faith as the one thing his captors could not take from him.

“Courage is not the absence of fear,” McDaniel said often. “Courage is the presence of faith.”

When he returned home in 1973, McDaniel was awarded the Navy Cross, the Navy's highest award for valor. His military honors also included two Silver Stars, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Legion of Merit with Combat “V,” three Bronze Stars with Combat “V” and two Purple Hearts reflecting both combat service and extraordinary courage for injuries suffered during his imprisonment and torture.

“My grandfather was truly a remark-



Capt. Eugene McDaniel with his wife Dorothy celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary earlier this summer.

able man with a backstory even Hollywood couldn't dream up,” said McDaniel's grandson Casey Lindsay. “Despite all the trials and tribulations he faced, he never once wavered in his faith. I often hear the phrase, ‘they don't make ‘em like they used to’ and in this instance, I couldn't agree more. He was tough as nails but kind and compassionate and never failed to do what was right. The world would be a better place if we had more men like him.”

Following his release from captivity, McDaniel resumed his Navy career, later com-

manding USS Niagara Falls and the aircraft carrier USS Lexington. He retired from the Navy in 1982 after serving as a captain and as Navy-Marine Corps liaison to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Following an unsuccessful run for congress in 1982 in North Carolina, with President Ronald Reagan campaigning on his behalf, McDaniel and his wife Dorothy settled in the Mount Vernon section of Alexandria. He authored a book, “Scars and Stripes,” a memoir of captivity, survival and faith. Dorothy McDaniel published her own book, “After the Hero's Welcome,” detailing her experience as the wife of a POW and advocate for nearly 20 years following her husband's return.

McDaniel devoted much of his civilian life to public service and advocacy. He founded the American Defense Institute and the American Defense Foundation, organiza-

tions focused on promoting a strong national defense. More significantly, he became one of the nation's most persistent voices on behalf of POW/MIA accountability, spending decades seeking answers about Americans who never returned from the Vietnam War. Through his writings, public appearanc-

es, and advocacy work, he kept attention focused on the unresolved fate of missing servicemembers, including his bombardier-navigator James Kelly Patterson, and the obligation to account for them.

Still active today, American Defense Institute provides citizen education and leadership training for young Americans. Its POW Awareness Program focuses public attention on American servicemen who are still missing in Southeast Asia.

In 1994, McDaniel helped found Adult Companion Care, (now known as ACCfamily, Inc.) after his own struggles to find quality home care for a family member. Headquartered in Alexandria, ACCfamily is a senior home care agency whose vision is to allow people to stay in their homes for as long as they desire. It now serves seniors throughout Northern Virginia and southern Maryland.

In December of 2023, McDaniel and fellow Alexandria resident and Medal of Honor recipient Col. Paris Davis were honored by Governor Glenn Youngkin as the Virginia Veterans Care Center in Roanoke was renamed the Davis and McDaniel Veterans Care Center. In 2019, McDaniel was named a Living Legend of Alexandria.

McDaniel is survived by his wife of 70 years, Dorothy Howard McDaniel of Alexandria, their children Capt. Michael Howard McDaniel (USN ret), and Leslie McDaniel Lindsay, both of Alexandria, and David Eugene McDaniel of San Diego, Calif. He is also survived by nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

A celebration of Life will be held Aug. 22 at 1 p.m. at Alexandria Presbyterian Church, 1300 West Braddock Road, Alexandria, VA 22302. Donations may be made in lieu of flowers to the American Defense Institute (ADI), 9316 Craig Ave, Alexandria, VA 22309.

For many Americans, “Red” McDaniel became part of a generation of Vietnam-era servicemembers whose courage was tested not only in combat but in years of imprisonment. His life bridged the tobacco fields of North Carolina, the flight decks of Cold War aircraft carriers, the cells of the Hanoi Hilton, and a long campaign to remember those who never returned home.

“Captain McDaniel, thank you for loving our country,” Youngkin said at the VA renaming dedication. “Thank you for demonstrating what selfless service means. And thank you for reminding all of us that freedom is not free.”



Capt. Eugene McDaniel and his wife Dorothy with children Michael, David and Leslie following McDaniel's release as a Vietnam POW.



Dorothy and Eugene McDaniel were married June 23, 1956, in Buies Creek, N.C.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET
Virginia governor Glenn Youngkin, center, stands with Navy Capt. Eugene McDaniel (ret) and Army Col. Paris Davis (ret) at the dedication of the Davis and McDaniel Veterans Care Center Dec. 12, 2023, in Roanoke.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET
Capt. Eugene McDaniel with members of his family Dec. 12, 2023, in Roanoke.



Capt. Eugene McDaniel receives a hero's welcome in his Virginia Beach neighborhood following his release from captivity in 1973.



Capt. Eugene McDaniel, left, with great grandson Ethan McDaniel, son Mike McDaniel and grandson Michael McDaniel.



PHOTO/ALLISON SILBERBERG
Capt. Eugene McDaniel (USN ret), seated, poses for a photo with Scout troop members and leaders June 20 at American Legion Post 24 in Old Town. McDaniel was a featured speaker during an open house celebrating the nation's 250th birthday.



Capt. Eugene McDaniel delivers the keynote address at the prayer breakfast for the Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival in 2013.

Grownups Going Back to School Too – GrandInvolve

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

It's not just the kids that are going back to school, so are some of Fairfax County's adults.

They are volunteers with GrandInvolve, a Fairfax County program which recruits people to help in elementary schools serving the most vulnerable students, many struggling to learn. And while there is no age requirement or upper age limit on volunteers, many retirees are eager to help.

Rick Fuller, a resident of Mount Vernon's Riverside community, will soon start his third year of volunteering two days a week at Riverside Elementary where he coaches second graders in reading.

"Say it with your mouth," he urges, helping youngsters sound out letters of the alphabet. Each student has a laptop computer and using a program called Lexia, he helps them with spelling. He also tutors them in writing short essays and stories.

Helping second graders is a far cry from his 20 years with IBM, a contractor with various federal intelligence agencies. He has had no formal teacher training, but he volunteers to help kids learn because, he says,

"Their little successes make me feel good, knowing that I've done some good."

— Rick Fuller

"I want to contribute. Their little successes make me feel good, knowing that I've done some good."

He recalls one girl that he had to gently scold because she seemed reluctant to work hard. And while it felt uncomfortable at the time, "We got past that," he said. "Now she gives me a big hug."

And while he was focused on a top-level, federal government mission for many years, by helping young students face-to-face he now has a "new mission to support. I'm being helpful to somebody."

Fuller has three adult children and 11 grandchildren, ages 12 to 34.

Giving an Extra Helping Hand
Fairfax Station resident Valerie Shapiro helps youngsters two or three times a week at Lorton Station Elementary School.

"It connects me to other adults and improves my life satisfaction 100 percent."

— Valerie Shapiro

She works with second graders in math and language arts, which includes reading, comprehension, decoding or phonics and writing. In checking for literacy and understanding, she asks questions like, "What do you think? What was the meaning of that?"

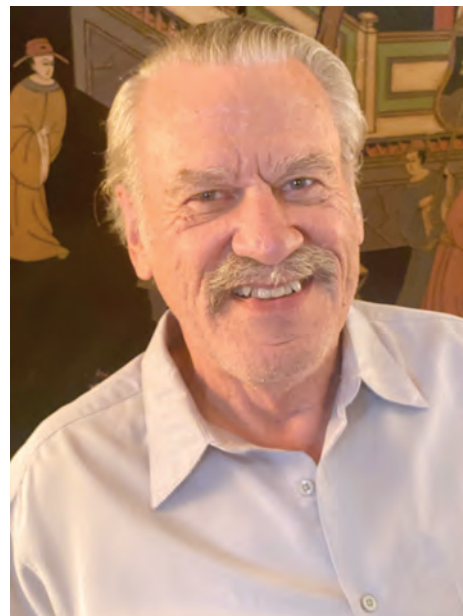
"I help struggling students or kids just needing an extra helping hand," she explained.

"I'm white haired," she offered, and "her"

dren and the world."

Pleased with her father's 101st birthday celebration, Hipski said it was planned by the Polish Embassy. "He's always been active in the Polish community and was invited to embassy events, through the years," she explained. "Poland considered him a hero because of his activities at Monte Cassino."

"In 2025, he received a gold medal from the Polish Army's defense minister. And he also got the White Cross from the Polish government." The Polish White Cross symbolizes suffering, an unblemished past and hope for



Rick Fuller

kids see her as a grandmother. "As they see me come consistently, they develop trust. They look forward to my coming." As the students line up in the lunchroom, some ask, "When are you coming again?"

"I feel like I'm an extension of their home," she said.

As the school year progresses, she finds that the under-motivated youngsters start to show more interest, become more engaged and begin to ask for her help. "I love seeing their progress," she noted.

GrandInvolve is the next logical chapter in her 31-year teaching career with the Fairfax County Public Schools. In those days, she helped screen and test children for learning disabilities and got her master's degree in learning disabilities. "I always looked for the child who was struggling," she said, in

Get Involved

GrandInvolve is a Fairfax County program for volunteers of any age. Volunteers must attend an orientation, pass a background check and commit to at least one or more hours per week. In the 2025-2026 school year, 95 volunteers helped in 27 Fairfax County schools with reading, math, kindergarten readiness, language support and other activities.

Program managers contend that for adults the program helps reduce social isolation and ageism through inter-generational relationships.

Information: <https://www.fairfax-county.gov/neighborhood-community-services/grandinvolve>

kindergarten and grades two and three. Her own need to give back also includes tangible things. She takes pencils and folders to the classroom.

Why does she volunteer to help young students? "I cannot play mahjong all the time. It gives me an active sense of purpose. It connects me to other adults and improves my life satisfaction 100 percent," Shapiro answers.

It is also rewarding to help teachers, to take off some of their load. "I've also learned," she quipped. "I've learned how to use Zoom."

"But most important, it gives me a reason to get up in the morning, a reason to smile. I have touched the lives of people," she said.

Shapiro has two adult children and one grandchild age six.

Local WWII Veteran Celebrates 101st Birthday

FROM PAGE 4

way. Growing up, recalled Hipski, "We used to go sailing in our sloop at Occoquan Regional Park and play on a little train there. We also went boating in Burke Lake Park and skiing in Vermont."

"Our dad was very principled and told us to stand up for justice and to fight and persevere in what we believe in. I also convey this to my son. My brother, sister and I were given gifts of freedom of education from our parents and said we needed to share them with our chil-

dren and the world."

Pleased with her father's 101st birthday celebration, Hipski said it was planned by the Polish Embassy. "He's always been active in the Polish community and was invited to embassy events, through the years," she explained. "Poland considered him a hero because of his activities at Monte Cassino."

"In 2025, he received a gold medal from the Polish Army's defense minister. And he also got the White Cross from the Polish government." The Polish White Cross symbolizes suffering, an unblemished past and hope for

the future. Both the emblem and organization were established to support Polish soldiers abroad and encourage their physical and spiritual wellbeing.

After his birthday festivities, Rom spoke about his life now at Brightview. "I have my good and bad moments but, overall, I feel good," he said. When asked to what he attributes his many years, Eva Lipinski said his sister lived until 102, so there's longevity in his family. He also does his best to keep his mind and body as fit as possible.

"I watch World War II movies on my iPad

and exercise two or three times a day with 2-pound dumbbells," said Rom. "I also exercise my legs, stand up and down and wiggle my feet. I read a lot when my vision was better." He also enjoys listening to classical music and, once a week, a high-school student comes in and plays chess with him.

Appreciative of his birthday party, he said, "It was a nice celebration." He was also deeply touched by the musical performers. "Many of the songs I remembered from my childhood in Poland, and I was really moved."

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reim-

bursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403- 5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria's pre-teens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO,

which stands for "Space of Her Own," and "Space of His Own," serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making healthy choices and succeeding in school and in life. Visit www.spaceofherown.org and www.spaceofhisown.org. For more information on how to become

a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov or phone at 703-746-4687.

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

SEE BULLETIN BOARD, PAGE 12

‘Your Daughters Will Prophecy’

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

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE GAZETTE

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 Bible, 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



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

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 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 wom-

SEE LOCAL AUTHORS, PAGE 12

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.



US POSTAL SERVICE

Stamp honoring Frances Willard who worked temperance reforms, raising the age of consent, and the 8-hour work day.



NY PUBLIC LIBRARY DIGITAL COLLECTION
Historical photo of Jerena Lee who worked for women’s right to speak in public.



US LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Historical photo of Sarah Moore Grinke who worked for abolition and women’s suffrage.

Local Authors Find Hope for Today from 19th Century Women's Movement

FROM PAGE 11

en'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 prophesy.'" She ignited a 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 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; Grimke 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 prophesy.'"

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.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 10

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

The Caregiver Support Group is facilitated by the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services Division of Aging and Adult Services. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the Adult Day Services Center, 1108 Jefferson St., 4-5:30 p.m. Participants are full- or part-time caregivers providing care locally or long distance to a family member or friend. Participants share their experiences, provide support for each other and receive resources to assist them with caregiving. The next Caregiver Support Group meeting is June 7. For more information or to

register, contact Jennifer Sarisky at 703-746-9999 or email DAAS@alexandriava.gov.

FACE Center Support Groups provide parents with a space to share their daily parenting frustrations and triumphs while offering new strategies for helping parents to cope, build positive parent-child relationships and best support their children's learning.

* Support Group in English, every Monday, 6-7:30 p.m. at ARHA Main Building, 401 Wythe St.

* Support Group in Spanish, every Wednesday, 6-7:30 p.m. at Community Lodgings Brookside Center, 614 Four Mile Road.

Registration not necessary. A light dinner and childcare services provided free. Contact Krishna Leyva at 703-619-8055 or krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us for more.

Divorce Workshop for Women. Second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King St. The workshops are designed to provide education on the legal, financial, family and personal issues of divorce in a logical, yet compassionate

SEE BULLETIN BOARD, PAGE 14



FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE

Gas Line Hit by Car in Burke

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

On Wednesday, August 19, just before lunchtime, Fairfax County firefighters were called to the scene of a gas leak at Ox Road and Burke Centre Parkway in the Fair-

view area. A vehicle struck a 12-inch gas line. The driver was transported with non-life-threatening injuries. There is a strong smell of gas in the area. A nearby elementary school and shopping center have been evacuated. Ox Road is closed in both directions. Units will be on scene for an extended period of time

ENTERTAINMENT

MEETS EVERY SUNDAY

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

MEETS EVERY MONDAY

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

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

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

MGNV PLANT CLINICS ARE OPEN

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

YEAR ROUND ON SUNDAYS

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

NOW THRU SEPT. 13

Rebecca J. White Birth of a Torii. At the Athinaeum, Alexandria. The "Birth of a Torii" series re-imagines the origin of a torii, a traditional Japanese gate to a sacred space or shrine. In Rebecca's work, torii's are shown as a mark of reverence or divine protection.

NOW THRU SEPT. 17

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

Concert dates:

August 6 – Eric Scott (Modern Soul, Funk & Groove)
August 20 – Seneca Creek (Bluegrass)
September 3 – Femi and the Foundation (Funk, Rock, Hip-Hop, R&B)
September 17 – Sol Roots (Funk, Blues, Soul & Rock)

NOW THRU SEPT. 30

Spiritual Expressions: Differences and Similarities Exhibit. At Mount Vernon Unitarian Church Art Alcove, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. Digital photographic images by Jeanne Tiff. Contact: Nina Tisara, ninat@ninatisara.com, 703-625-8313.



The Chalk-A-Block celebration takes place on Saturday, Sept. 19, 2026 at the TideLock development in Old Town North.

AUG. 7-29

The ChronoScape: Artistic Explorations of Time Travel. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Art exhibit explores humanity's enduring fascination with time travel. Join us for an experience that challenges and celebrates the infinite paths of time from ancient worlds to speculative futures. Opening Reception: Friday, August 7, 2026 from 7-9 p.m. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibit.

AUG. 14-23

Alexandria Restaurant Week. For 10 days and two weekends, restaurants across Alexandria will offer prix fixe dinner menus you won't find any other time of year. <https://visitaalexandria.com/restaurants/restaurant-week>

FRIDAY/AUG. 28

Evening in Remembrance of Benjamin Thomas. 7 p.m. At Shiloh Baptist Church, 1401 Jamieson Ave., Alexandria. The Alexandria Community Remembrance Project invites the public to a conversation about Civil Rights in Uncertain Times with Deputy General Counsel for the NAACP, Myesha Braden. Also features music by Charles E. Miller and remarks from Mayor Alyia Gaskins. Braden, a Tulane Law Graduate, has spent her entire career working on civil rights. She has served in leadership positions at the Department of Justice, in the Obama White House, and in the nonprofit world. Mr. Miller, a performer and educator, has performed genres from classical to gospel with the Washington National Opera and the Maryland Lyric Opera.

MONDAY/AUG. 31

The Chamber ALX's Golf Classic. 11 a.m. At Laurel Hills Golf Club. Join in a fun day on the greens! Bring your team, invite a prospect, or treat a client; The Chamber ALX Golf Classic is the perfect way to step away from the office and connect with other local businesses in a relaxed, casual setting. Whether you're aiming for a trophy or just there to enjoy the day, everyone is welcome!

NEPENTHE GALLERY IN SEPTEMBER

Location: Nepenthe Gallery, 7928 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria.

September 10th: Gallery Discussion About Banksy and His Works;
September 17th: New Collection from Tamara Minarchi;
September 24th: Opening of Special Exhibit, Alexandria Experience, by World Renowned Artist, Alexei Butirskiy;
September 25th: Live Painting Demonstration by Alexei Butirskiy;

September 29th: Fundraiser for EdenSpring.

SEPT. 4-26

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage: Voices Through Visuals Art Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave, Alexandria. This exhibit honors Hispanic culture, and its rich traditions, resilience, and artistic contributions through a range of media and perspectives, and explores themes like heritage, migration, family, cultural pride, and transformation. Opening Reception: Friday, September 4 from 7-9 p.m. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

SATURDAY/SEPT. 5

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

SUNDAY/SEPT. 6

The Hot Lanes Concert. 7 p.m. At Fort Hunt Park, Pavilion A, Alexandria. The band 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.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 10

The Chamber ALX's 2026 Legislative Reception. 5:30-7 p.m. At the Alexandrian Hotel, Alexandria. Don't miss one of the Chamber's premier events of the year—the 2026 Legislative Reception. This annual gathering brings together elected officials, business leaders, and community stakeholders for an evening of meaningful conversations, valuable networking, and connections that help shape the future of Alexandria and the region.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 19

Chalk-A-Block. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. At TideLock development, 1111 N. Fairfax Street, Old Town North in Alexandria. Chalk artists will transform TideLock's interior drive into a spectacular temporary canvas, creating large-scale works of art throughout the day. Artist/architect Anila Angjeli, who captivated the crowd last year with her colorful "Wings in Bloom" creation and accompanying interactive art activity, and master muralist Patrick

Kirwin will be among the artists returning to Chalk-A-Block this fall. Visitors can watch the artwork come to life while enjoying live music from local favorite The Okays, browse handmade goods from local artisans and makers curated by Made in ALX, and sample food and beverages.

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 23

The Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce's 29th Annual Chamber Golf Classic. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Laurel Hill Golf Club, 8701 Laurel Crest Drive, Lorton. For almost thirty years, this popular event has provided more than \$365,000 in scholarships for local high school students to study business, preparing the next generation of business and community leaders.

THE BIRCHMERE

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

AUGUST

Thu. 20: An Evening with NRBQ & The Whole Wheat Horns \$39.50

Fri. 21: Robert Earl Keen w/ Race Ricketts \$69.50

Sat. 22: Robert Earl Keen w/ Race Ricketts \$69.50

Sun. 23: Robert Earl Keen w/ Race Ricketts \$69.50

Tue. 25: Robert Glasper \$79.50

Fri. 28: Raheem DeVaughn \$85.00

SEPTEMBER

Wed. 2: The Wailin' Jennys \$75.00

Thu. 3: The Wailin' Jennys \$75.00 SOLD OUT!

Fri. 4: The Wailin' Jennys \$75.00 SOLD OUT!

Sat. 5: John Cafferty & The Beaver Brown Band \$45.00

Sun. 6: 7th Annual DANNY GATTON Birthday Celebration \$39.50

Wed. 9: Margo Price – Wild At Heart Tour, w/ Jeremy Ivey \$65.00

Fri. 11: Herman's Hermits starring Peter Noone \$65.00

Sat. 12: EagleMania: The World's Greatest Eagles Tribute Band \$45.00

Tue. 15: The Robert Cray Band \$59.50

Thu. 17: Tweet \$49.50

Fri. 18: The Secret Sisters w/ Caleb Elliott \$39.50

Sat. 19: The Wellermen – USA 2026 Tour \$29.50

Sun. 20: Rufus Wainwright w/ Hohnen Ford \$69.50

Mon. 21: Sierra Hull \$45.00

Tue. 22: 40 Fingers \$45.00

Thu. 24: Robin Trower \$79.50

Fri. 25: Eric Darius \$39.50

Sat. 26: Eric Roberson w/ Allen Harris \$69.50

Sun. 27: Eric Roberson w/ Allen Harris \$69.50

Wed. 30: Shinyribs w/ Patrick Sweany \$35.00

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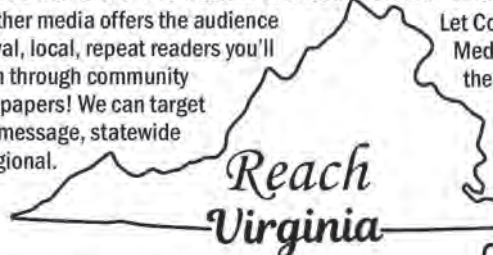
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SENIOR LIVING

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, pick-

leball, cycling, 10 pin bowling, bocce, rock climbing, weight lifting plus scrabble, Mah Jong, duplicate bridge, canasta, darts, corn-hole 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.

Forgotten Founder of Freedom

FROM PAGE 6

people in America. As a youth he had been in a musical group with a young Thomas Jefferson, he knew Washington and Mason, and through marriage he was related to the Fairfax and Lee families. His name should be known at least as well as the others.

In 1775, he created the Baptist Meeting House in what is today Bull Run Regional Park. He encouraged everyone who worked for him, black and white, free and enslaved, to worship there. That church continued in operation until the 1820s, and while the wooden church is gone, those buried in the cemetery around the church are a key part of the evidence of what happened there. While the cemetery was mostly occupied by the enslaved, Carter buried his son in an unmarked grave in the same cemetery. Most of the graves there are unmarked because Carter believed in humility. He himself is buried in an unmarked grave at a different site.

By 1789, Carter wrote that he

was hoping a law would be passed freeing the enslaved. When that didn't happen, he wrote on Aug. 1, 1791, "I have for some time past been convinced that to retain them in Slavery is contrary to the true Principles of Religion and Justice, and that therefor it was my Duty to manumit [free] them." With that he set about freeing over 500 people over a few years, starting with the oldest. In addition, he helped the emancipated start new lives. He leased and sold land to them and helped them set up businesses. The area around the church at Bull Run became a thriving freeman's community. As the story was uncovered, NOVA Parks did ground penetrating radar and found 103 graves at this site, which speaks to the size of this community. "It has been so wonderful to see our family story lifted and shared with the world. I am grateful for all that NOVA Parks, and the Fairfax NAACP have done," remarked Chrystal Gaskins.

Research on this site is ongoing, as are improvements like the on-

line self-guided tour created this year by Girl Scout Camdyn Parker. The Religious Affairs Committee of the Fairfax NAACP have taken on the mission of promoting this site and story, and since Carter's motivation was based on his religious beliefs, many faith groups of all kinds have toured the site and reflected on what it means to live by their beliefs.

As we mark the 250th anniversary of our experiment with democracy, let's remember both the aspirational ideas of freedom and democracy, as well as the brave and bold actions of Robert Carter III and others in our history who have set the example for us to follow. This story of freedom and justice, based right here in Fairfax County, should be as well-known as any other from our founding.

Paul Gilbert was the Executive Director of NOVA Parks from 2005 to 2025. In 2022 Gilbert received the Freedom Fund Award from the Fairfax Branch of the NAACP for his work to tell diverse history in the parks.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 12

way. The workshop fee is \$25. Visit www.novasecondsaturday.com for more.

ONGOING

Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program. The City of Alexandria has reinstated its sewer Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program for homeowners in designated areas that historically experience basement back-ups

or flooding. The program reimburses homeowners for up to 50 percent of the cost of installing a BFP device by a licensed plumbing contractor, up to a maximum of \$2,000. The current program period is through Dec. 31, 2019. Alexandria homeowners should call the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services at 703-746-4014 or visit www.alexandriava.gov/tes.

Robust Walking. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9 a.m. at

Mount Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Ave. Free 55+ robust walking 1-hour exercise class (with chair exercise option). No class on holidays. Contact jikingconsulting@yahoo.com.

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

Summer Golf Internship Spent at Country Club in North Carolina

Burke resident follows marketing passion with sunny internship.

By Mike Salmon
Mount Vernon Gazette

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 Riviera 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



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

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

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

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.



Planets Aligned for Local Golfer

By Mike Salmo
Mount Vernon Gazette

Some golfers go a whole golf career without getting a hole-in-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, holes 8 and 11 at Laurel Hill. Hole number eight is a 200 yard hole while number 11 is 135 yards. The odds of

this happening are one in 67 million, according to the experts at the Fairfax County Park Authority.

FCPA said that approximately 15 golfers get a hole-in-one per year at Laurel Hill Golf Club but they have eight courses around the county for golfers to try their luck. The Park Authority currently plans to install a digital screen to celebrate golfers who achieve a hole-in-one.

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Steve Digby



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4217 Scotland Rd | \$1,050,000



9400 Ludgate Dr | \$1,450,000



2008 Mason Hill Rd | \$1,099,999



4006 Renault Pl | \$949,000



2203 Pennsylvania Blvd | \$2,200,000



8540 Mount Zephyr Dr | \$650,000



4401 Dolphin Ln | \$1,199,000



3801 Washington Woods | \$1,500,000



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



3602 South Pl | \$1,450,000



3612 Center Dr | \$1,565,000



6403 14th St | \$860,000



8339 Wagon Wheel Rd | \$850,000



8910 Bordeaux St | \$1,025,000



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



4212 Pickering Pl | \$1,049,000

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