

CONNECTION

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



Ron Kowalski, of Lorton, and Joshua Henry, of Falls Church, staff Lorton Community Action Center

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PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Holiday Joy from Encore

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New City Manager for Fairfax

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Filling the Need, Can They Keep Up?

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NOTICE OF WATER RATE AND BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

December 11, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 11, 2025, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2026, include the following:

- An increase in the Availability Charge from \$4,930 to \$5,090*.
- An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$24,290 to \$24,850.
- An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,840 to \$1,960*.
- An increase in the Account Charge from \$48 to \$50.
- An increase in the Quarterly Service Charge from \$16.55 to \$17.55*.
- An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$4.03 to \$4.35 per 1,000 gallons of water.
- An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$4.15 to \$4.20.
- An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$58 to \$61.
- An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
- An increase in the Overhead Charges for Materials from 12% to 14%.
- An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge Inspection Fee from \$47 to \$48.
- New proposed rate: After Hours Service Restoration Charge of \$58.

*Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is also proposing a \$253 million budget for calendar year 2026.¹ Water sales are expected to provide \$222 million and the remaining \$31 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2025	2026
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 73,630	\$ 81,178
Power and Utilities	14,489	15,070
Chemicals	15,134	16,089
Purchased Water	8,712	9,313
Supplies and Materials	6,981	8,080
Insurance	1,066	1,410
Fuel	793	885
Postage	675	692
Contractual Services	15,510	15,650
Professional Services	2,194	2,310
Other	2,866	3,270
Sub-Total	142,050	153,947
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(12,005)	(12,104)
Total	\$ 130,045	\$ 141,843

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$54,018,574
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$45,492,000

¹Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

Visit fairfaxwater.org/rates to view a copy of the proposed changes.

Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Jessica Love at 703-289-6029. Interested parties may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on **Wednesday, December 10, 2025** to be included in the record of the public hearing.

Daniel Alexander Is Fairfax's New City Manager

He brings 30 years' experience in public service.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO COURTESY OF MATTHEW KAISER

Daniel Alexander

Daniel C. Alexander will be Fairfax City's new city manager, effective Jan. 5, 2026. After a nationwide search, he was introduced to the community at the City Council's Nov. 18 meeting.

He'll replace Acting City Manager Melanie Zipp, who's held that role since the previous Acting City Manager, Bryan Foster, retired Nov. 1. Alexander is currently serving as a deputy county executive in Prince William County, where he's overseen 15 public-safety and community-services agencies since February 2022.

"After a wide-ranging search and careful deliberations, City Council has selected a candidate that brings a great deal of experience in local government to our City," said Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read. "Mr. Alexander is a seasoned professional who understands the demands of running municipal operations and will be a steady leader for

our very capable leadership team and employees. We look forward to working with him."

Alexander has amassed three decades of public-service experience with six local governments. In Prince William, he provided strategic leadership and administrative oversight for its Safe and Secure Community program, representing more than 2,600 professionals and having a yearly budget exceeding \$500 million. He also helped establish the county's Office of Community Safety.

Before then, he spent more than 18 years

SEE DANIEL ALEXANDER, PAGE 9

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For the rest of 2025, our branches have chosen a charity to support through the #GiveWithBoC campaign. Show your support and consider giving at your local branch or online! #BankLocal

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Local Pantries Fill Growing Need

Can they keep up?

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

In November, as the days of the federal government shutdown lengthened, so did the lines of those visiting the food pantry at United Methodist Church on Sydenstricker Road in Springfield. The number of families requesting service at Lorton Community Action Center pantry climbed higher too. Fortunately, at both pantries the shelves were filled with food, sourced with available grants, and by other individual and group donors who realized the growing need. But some pantry managers wonder how long the needed level of support, of money and volunteers, can be sustained at such high levels.

Lorton Community Action Center

At the Lorton pantry, Executive Director Rob Rutland-Brown estimates they saw a 21 percent increase in October over previous months, with over 300 families served each week, a sharp increase from last year. Rutland-Brown surmises that as costs of groceries increase, a family's available money is not going as far. Healthy food, fresh fruits and vegetables, and meat, all cost more, bringing more guests to the pantry.

The Lorton pantry sources their food offerings in three ways: donations from local grocery stores which pantry volunteers pick up regularly; from community donations, including churches, businesses, schools, scout troops, and individuals; and from the pantry's annual budget purchases, mostly meat, vegetables and dairy products. That budget comes from the county, foundations,



Executive Director Rob Rutland-Brown of Lorton Community Action Center is seeing the increase in families needing services



Client services administrator Elsa Golban of Lorton, provides "incredible" assistance to guests at Lorton's pantry

businesses and individual donors. In years since COVID, the pantry has benefitted from an annual \$125,000 grant. They also receive an annual \$35,000 donation from Fairfax County.

Although little information is collected

from guests, Rutland-Brown estimates that about half are immigrant families, noting, however, they are seeing a growing number of military guests, both active duty and veterans. They also have a growing number of seniors, including those who need home

delivery services.

The Lorton pantry is fortunate to have a large cadre of volunteers. About 400 volunteers supplement services staff, and work

SEE LOCAL PANTRIES, PAGE 14



Ron Kowalski, of Lorton, and Joshua Henry, of Falls Church, staff Lorton Community Action Center



Tom Cohen with his son Brad and daughter Nicole (not pictured) regularly volunteer, picking up food from area grocery stores for the Lorton Community Action Center pantry

The Lamb Center Honors a Legacy of Service



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Mary Petersen and Gerry Connolly celebrating the June 2016 ribbon cutting for The Lamb Center's current building on Fairfax City's Campbell Drive.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ASHLEY BELL

Tara Ruskowski addresses the people attending The Lamb Center's annual banquet.

Mary Petersen receives Connolly Community Impact Award.

BY ASHLEY BELL
SPECIAL TO THE CONNECTION

In a moving tribute to a leader whose compassion shaped a community, The Lamb Center presented its inaugural Honorable Gerry Connolly Community Impact Award to Mary Petersen. The ceremony took place during TLC's annual Hope and a Future Banquet – a celebration of faith, service and transformed lives.

The event was held Oct. 9 at the Falls Church Marriott Fairview Park, and the award was created to honor the late congressman's lifelong commitment to public service and advocacy for Fairfax's most vulnerable residents. Presenting it alongside Connolly's wife, Smitty, and daughter, Caitlin, was his former chief of staff and congressional successor, U.S. Rep. James Walkinshaw (D-11th).

Petersen was chosen because her more than 30 years of service to The Lamb Center exemplify the values that defined Connolly's legacy – compassion, collaboration and dignity for all. A former Lamb Center Board of Directors chairman, Petersen was involved in TLC since it opened in 1992 and helped spearhead fundraising for its current facility on Campbell Drive.

"Gerry loved the closeness of local service, the ability to see results," said his widow. "He saw every act of kindness, large or small, as a way to strengthen the fabric of our community. Honoring his legacy through this award – and recognizing someone like Mary Petersen, who's quietly uplifted others



From left, James Walkinshaw, Tara Ruskowski, Mary Petersen, Caitlin Connolly and Catherine "Smitty" Smith.



Army veteran Zuri M. speaks to the crowd.



From left, Dirk H. and Police Officer Rick Cline.



From left, Lamb Center Intake and Case Management Administrator Jennifer Edwards, board member Cindy Pivik and volunteer Adele Neuberg with TLC's Deacon Dave Larrabee.

SEE THE LAMB CENTER, PAGE 14

Help Britepaths Make the Holidays Brighter

Donations are needed toward gifts and food.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The holidays are supposed to be a happy, joyous time of year. But to parents struggling to make ends meet, they can also bring pressure and stress. Families in need wonder how they can possibly celebrate the season while paying rent and putting food on the table. And when it comes to holiday gifts, no parents want to disappoint their children.

Luckily, Fairfax-based nonprofit Britepaths is doing all it can to ease their burdens and make their holiday season brighter. And the

community – individuals, businesses, groups and organizations – can help by donating financially (see Website at the end). Here's what Britepaths has planned:

Winter Wonderland Celebration

This month, Britepaths will host a brand-new holiday event called Winter Wonderland, a festive two-day celebration for its client families. Children will enjoy crafts, activities and free books to take home. Meanwhile, parents will be able to select toys for their children in Britepaths' own "toy shop," where every gift will be wrapped with care by volunteers.

Each child from client families will receive a \$50 grocery-store gift card. And while it may seem like a small amount, it actually makes a huge difference for families facing food insecurity during the winter break from school when children don't have access to free or reduced-price meals.

"We hope to spread some joy and relief to local families experiencing financial hardship," said Britepaths Executive Director Abra Kurt. "Together, we can replace hunger with hope and help create cherished memories for our neighbors experiencing food insecurity."

The event will be held at a site which will be transformed into a Winter Wonderland offering the experience of a holiday market. In addition, there'll also be resource tables offering community-support information and programs to promote long-term stability. And personal-hygiene and household-item packs will be available for families needing essentials.

The whole shebang will be run by volunteers and staff and decorated by a 75-person team from real-estate developer EYA. The goal is to create a welcoming space that reminds Britepaths' client families that people have their backs and, hopefully, brighter days are ahead for them.

Replace Hunger with Holiday Cheer

When public schools in Northern Virginia close for winter break, many of the children in Britepaths' client families lose access to the free and reduced-price meals they depend on during the school year. And as the weather turns colder, Britepaths also sees families faced with higher utility costs and having to make difficult choices regarding their holiday budgets.

But the community can make a difference for them by helping to put wholesome food on their holiday tables. Donations of grocery-store gift cards will help ensure they may share nourishing meals and joyful moments this holiday season. To donate to the Winter Wonderland event and/or toward helping feed hungry families, go to <https://e.givesmart.com/events/KQb/>.

– YUMNA IQBAL

CONTRIBUTED TO THIS STORY.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED

Have some extra time to drive a neighbor to a doctor's appointment? You pick the days, times, and places that are convenient for you. There is no minimum driving requirement. Not only

do you help older adults in need, you also get to meet wonderful folks, often with very interesting backgrounds and stories to tell. The Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church (SCMAFC), is an all-volunteer,

non-sectarian, non-profit organization. Its mission is providing free transportation to seniors for medical and dental appointments or run errands to grocery stores and pharmacies. Visit the website at <https://scmafc.org/volunteer>, or

email contact@scmafc.org.

VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia Caregivers' Support Group takes place the first and third Tuesdays of each month, 10-11:30 a.m.

via Zoom. This group is for caregivers of family members with dementia. Meetings are gently facilitated. For more information and to get the Zoom link, contact Jack Tarr at jtarr5@verizon.net or 703-821-6838.



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Encore Dancers Will Celebrate Three Decades

Performers dazzle in holiday show, 'The Christmas Wish.'

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

When Daniel was a boy, Santa didn't bring him his Christmas wish. Now grown, he manages a hotel in New York City. But his job consumes his time, and his love for the holiday season and its festivities has seriously dimmed. So when an elf named Felix goes there to grant his long-forgotten childhood wish, problems and hilarity ensue.

That's the premise of Chantilly-based, Encore Theatrical Arts Project's upcoming Christmas show, "The Christmas Wish." A Broadway-style extravaganza featuring dazzling dances, colorful costumes and elaborate sets, it'll be presented at Northern Virginia Community College's Richard Ernst Theatre, 8430 Center Drive in Annandale.

"The dancers have been rehearsing 20-25 hours/week since the end of July and are really incredible," said Encore founder Raynor van der Merwe. "They're high achievers and such a hardworking, passionate group. I'm so lucky to work with them."

The curtain rises Saturday, Dec. 13, at noon, 4 and 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, Dec. 14, at noon and 4 p.m.; Friday, Dec. 19, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 20, at noon, 4 and 8 p.m.; and Sunday, Dec. 21, at noon and 4 p.m. Tickets are \$27-\$40, with Girl Scout packages available, via www.encore-tap.org or call 703-222-5511.

Centreville High grad and Encore alumna Paige Williams wrote the script, for the second year in a row. Most of the scenes take place in the hotel lobby and in Santa's workshop at the North Pole.

And joining the 26-student cast are professional actors Logan Dolence as Daniel and Matty Rafanelli as Felix. "The storyline is so entertaining, and our guest performers have the most amazing singing voices," said van der Merwe. "There's great music and dancing, and the whole show is joyful, entertaining and uplifting."

It's special, as well, because it's Encore's 30th anniversary Christmas musical. And to celebrate, there'll be a 6:30 p.m. reception



Back row, from left, Clarissa Yeager, Wynter Smith, Adeline Raines, Claire Youk and Dewi Vollmer; middle row, from left, Lexi Platenberg, Saaya Patel, Kiera Raines and Emma Packard; and front row, from left, Layla Oliver, Nadiya Vandrapu and Daniella Serna.

for Encore alumni and their families before the Dec. 20 show. The alumni will also perform the iconic number, "We Need a Little Christmas," together onstage.

Clarissa Yeager, a dancer for 12 years – six with Encore, plays the role of Jessica, a hotel staff member. "She's passionate about her job, but a little forgetful," said Yeager. "She's also a jokester and a fun person to be around. I really like her; I have lots of choices in how I can portray her. And her relationship with Daniel is insightful because it shows his character."

Her favorite song is "Let Yourself Go," danced by the hotel doorman and maids. "It's an old-school, classic, musical number that's really fun," said Yeager. "There's a lot going on, and it's very festive and upbeat." She plays the doorman in this dance and gets to wear one of the costumes she likes best – a fancy top hat, red jacket and black pants with a red-stripe down each leg.

She said this show has "a lot of magic and is perfect to see this time of year to get you into the holiday spirit. When I watched it for the first time, I thought it was awesome, and I wanted to be up on stage doing that too. And now, I get to make other people in the audience feel that way, too. I get to share something everyone can enjoy and be a part of. The whole time, the show transports you into a Christmasy world. And it feels like you're seeing the 'Virginia Rockettes.'"

Chantilly High senior Nadiya Vandrapu, an Encore dancer for seven years, portrays Stephanie, Daniel's head of staff at the hotel. "She's trustworthy and is the only person who can handle him [and his temper]," said Vandrapu.

"And she makes sure everything runs smoothly whenever he's away. She's hardworking and patient, and can be clumsy, but she's well-meaning and also bubbly and outgoing."

Enjoying her role, she said Stephanie has lots of costume changes and funny scenes – including one where she's dressed as Frosty the Snowman. "I can have lots of creativity with the way I play her," said Vandrapu. "And her different costumes show all the jobs she's doing and the depth of her character."

She particularly likes the number, "Curtain Tap," a tap dance where the curtain's closed and the audience can only see the dancers'



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BECCA PERRON

Back row, from left, Lexi Platenberg, Wynter Smith and Kiera Raines; and front row, from left, Daniella Serna, Layla Oliver and Emma Packard.

feet in fuzzy, cartoon-character and animal slippers. "I'm Elmo," she said. "It's an Encore classic, and I like hearing the audience's reaction to it. They did it in my first year here, so I'm glad I can do it for my last year, as well."

Vandrapu said this show is "fun for the whole family – not just kids,

but parents, too, for different reasons. There's singing, dancing and acting for everyone, and adults will also appreciate our professional level of dancing. It's a wonderful way to get into the Christmas spirit and a fun, holiday activity to participate in."

SEE ENCORE DANCERS, PAGE 7



Back row, from left, Claire Youk and Adeline Raines; middle row, from left, Clarissa Yeager and Dewi Vollmer; and front row, from left, Nadiya Vandrapu and Saaya Patel.



Back row, from left, Clarissa Yeager, Adeline Raines and Claire Youk; middle row, Dewi Vollmer; and front row, from left, Nadiya Vandrapu and Saaya Patel.

Encore Dancers Will Celebrate Three Decades

FROM PAGE 6

Playing Chilly the Elf is Chantilly senior Claire Youk. She's been dancing since age 6 when she joined Encore. "Chilly's in charge of North Pole security, and Felix is her best friend, although they have more of a sibling dynamic," said Youk. "Felix has all these crazy ideas about granting Daniel's wish – even though he's now a grown man. And when Felix leaves the North Pole to do it, she covers for him and then goes to New York to bring him back."

"So Chilly is mainly annoyed," continued Youk. "She's a level-headed, no-nonsense person who takes her job very seriously and doesn't want to get into trouble with Santa Claus. I love playing her because being annoyed onstage is a different emotion from when I'm dancing and being happy."

Youk's favorite song is "Once-A-Year Day," sung by the elves. "It's chaotic and has lots of props, flips, falls and tricks, so we have to be on top of everything while we're dancing," she explained. "We wear multicolored costumes that are only in that one number. And that

song showcases the elves in the workshop."

Calling "The Christmas Wish" unique, she said, "You can't get a high-production, Broadway-type, Christmas show around here except for Encore's. And it's done by students who are really well-trained dancers. The plot changes every year, so it's always different. And you can see this show multiple times and still see new things each time."

Chantilly senior Adeline Raines portrays Annie the Elf. "She's friendly and also curious," said Raines. "When an alarm sounds at the North Pole, she asks her friends if they know what's happening. But she stays calm and relaxed, instead of worrying. Last year, I played a shy character, so it's fun to play someone more outspoken."

Dancing since age 3 and with Encore since age 7, she, too, loves the style of dance they do, plus the camaraderie they feel. "We're all excited to be onstage together," said Raines. "It's long hours, but fun long hours. My favorite number in the show is the 12-minute finale. We did this my first year in company, so it's full circle for me.

There are lots of different sections with different costumes – plus jazz, tap and ballet – all within the same dance."

Raines said people will enjoy the production's funny storyline and appreciate that it's different from other holiday shows. And, she added, "The reindeer costumes are really cute. It's fun to see them dancing onstage because they add such variety to the show." There's also a sense of excitement among the Encore dancers because "The Christmas Wish" marks three decades of this special event.

Reflecting on how it feels to celebrate 30 years of Christmas spectaculars, van der Merwe said, "I never slowed down or stopped to think about where I was in my journey. And then suddenly, here we are. So this has been a nostalgic time, as I've been going through old photos and videos for the reception."

And I have an immense feeling of love and gratitude for what I get to do and for all the amazing people who've passed through this company – and especially those who supported me at the beginning."



PHOTO COURTESY OF BECCA PERRON

In no particular order, Sofia Martinz-Garcia, Daniella Serna, Wynter Smith, Kiera Raines, Amelle Ahmed, Manasvi Singh, Layla Oliver, Lexi Platenberg and Emma Packard.



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The Potomac River, Stuck at a B Grade

A grade of B sounds OK, but the details are daunting.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

The Potomac Conservancy gave the Potomac River a B grade in its recent report card, the fifth B in ten years. And while a B is better than the D the river got in 2011 or the C in 2013, the river is “showing no overall improvement in a decade,” the Conservancy announced. “The Potomac’s overall health has stopped improving.” The river is still not safe for swimming or fishing, concludes the analysis.

Dubbed “the nation’s river,” at least the Potomac is not an “open sewer,” as the Washington Post denounced in 1951 or “a national disgrace,” as President Lyndon B. Johnson lamented in 1965.

The Potomac River watershed drains 14,670 square miles in four states, a watershed with a population of around seven million people. It supplies drinking water to five million people. Of the total population in the watershed, 81 percent live in urban areas. In Northern Virginia, it forms the eastern border of the city of Alexandria and Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties.

In a separate, recent Conservancy report, Belin wrote, “Extreme droughts and flooding are becoming the new norm, degrading stream health and community safety. And powerful interests are moving fast: rolling back federal protections, slashing conservation funding and allowing for unchecked data center sprawl.”

The report card uses six indicators: pollution, fish, habitat, land, people and climate.

The Good News

Labeled as “good news,” the report card shows a steady decline in nitrogen, phos-



The Potomac River viewed from Collingwood Park.



Several groups collect trash like this along the river’s shoreline multiple times a year.

phorus and sediment and an increase in river-related recreation, up ten percent since 2020.

Over one-fifth of the land in the watershed is protected from development.



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

The report card indicates that river-related recreation is on the rise.



PHOTO BY JENN LOVING

A volunteer collects trash at one of Potomac Conservancy’s Potomac River Clean Ups



Many people find sitting by the river relaxing.

The River’s History

In “The Potomac River, A History and Guide,” published in 2012 book, author Garrett Peck traces the river’s natural and human history, from its origin as a trickle at the foot of West Virginia’s Backbone Mountain 3,140 feet above sea level to its mouth at the Chesapeake Bay.

Here are a few facts from the book.

The Potomac River:

- ❖ is 383 miles long and flows “through some of the oldest land in the world”;
- ❖ is “spared from channelization that permanently scarred so many of our nation’s rivers”;
- ❖ in the Alexandria-Mount Vernon area is tidal;
- ❖ has five remaining lighthouses, including Jones Point on the southern end of Alexandria.

Daniel Alexander Is Fairfax's New City Manager

FROM PAGE 2

as an agency chief in three different jurisdictions and served as acting assistant city manager in Cape Coral, Fla. And he's led organizations through periods of growth, modernization and cultural transformation. Alexander obtained a Master of Arts in Public Administration and a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from the University of Florida and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy.

In his new role with Fairfax, he'll implement City policies and provide management and administrative support to all City departments, offices and agencies, overseeing a staff of more than 600 employees. His hiring was approved by unanimous vote of the City Council.

"I'm humbly thankful for this opportunity and look forward to advancing your vision as a Council and your agenda for the City of Fairfax," said Alexander. "To our community, I commit to being engaged and accessible, listening and learning as we go."

"And to our workforce, I've already seen how dedicated and professional a staff we have here. So I look forward to supporting them in the work they do every day. Thank you again for this great opportunity to serve; I look forward to working with all of you."

As for Zip, once Alexander officially starts his new job with Fairfax, she'll resume her regular responsibilities as assistant city manager.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MATTHEW KAISER

Front row, from left, Daniel Alexander and Catherine Read. Back row, from left, Councilmembers Stacey Hardy-Chandler, Anthony Amos, Stacy Hall, Tom Peterson, Rachel McQuillen and Billy Bates.

- MATTHEW KAISER CONTRIBUTED TO THIS STORY

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



SOCIAL MEDIA

The scoreboard at the West Springfield stadium.

The final play was a hail Mary pass but it fell short for Lake Braddock.

West Springfield Spartans Advance to Region 6C Championship

BY MIKE SALMON
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Last Saturday, the West Springfield Spartans beat Lake Braddock to get one step closer to the state championship which is like the Super Bowl in local high school football.

On Saturday, Nov. 29, the Spartans beat Lake Braddock 28-14 and are now advancing to the Region 6C championship.

The news about the victory reached the big time when they showed a clip during Sunday night's NFL game between the Washington Commanders and the Denver Broncos.

Earlier playoff games included a 28-7 win

over Fairfax on Nov. 21 and a 48-13 victory over West Potomac on Nov. 14.

It was a cold, blustery day at West Springfield last Saturday as the Spartans capitalized on an interception in the first quarter, followed by a touchdown by quarterback Scott Lewis who ran one in late in the game.

The Bruins tried a Hail Mary pass for

the final play of the game but there were too many Spartans batting the ball around and one ended up intercepting it before the buzzer sounded, ending the game.

On Saturday, Dec. 6, West Springfield plays North Stafford at 2 p.m. at North Stafford High School in Stafford County, which is about 30 miles south of Springfield.

Holiday Dress-up

BY SUSAN LAUME
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Horses and riders of Tamarack Stables in Lorton were among those dressed for the season recently. The riding group donned costumes to add to the fun of their event at Laurel Hill Equestrian Center in Lorton. The horse and rider teams participated in western games, including fast gallops, weaving, barrel circling, and keyhole. Apparently, horses enjoy dressing for the holidays too.

Lillian Thompson, of Lorton, with Bell of the Ball



Clare Bonomi, of Mount Vernon, with RJ

Fifty Cents

Last week, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors reviewed the findings of a new “Revenues and Returns” analysis prepared by the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service and commissioned by Fairfax County. The analysis provides an updated snapshot of how much revenue Fairfax County generates for the state and how much of it returns to the county through direct and indirect appropriations.

The numbers show that Fairfax County contributes a significant portion of the state’s General Fund (~20%). Yet receives back half of what it generates. For every \$1 Fairfax County produced in revenue, it received ~\$0.50 in return. This total reflects both direct aid, about 21.2 percent (e.g., K-12 funding), and indirect or other state support, about 29.5 percent (e.g., Medicaid funding), totaling roughly 50.7 percent. The analysis also makes clear that Northern Virginia is a key driver of the Commonwealth’s revenue; without the contributions of this region, the state’s financial landscape would be significantly different.

This analysis provides important context for Fairfax County and neighboring jurisdictions as we continue working in partnership with state leaders to explore solutions that ensure a fair and sustainable approach to funding critical core services like public education.

Key takeaways (FY 2024):

- ❖ Fairfax County is Virginia’s largest locality, with about 1.15 million residents — roughly 13% of the state’s population.
- ❖ The county generated approximately \$5.77 billion in General Fund revenue (20.7% of the state total).
- ❖ State General Fund appropriations benefiting Fairfax totaled about \$2.93 billion, or 11.1% of statewide spending.
- ❖ For every \$1 contributed, Fairfax County receives roughly \$0.50 back.

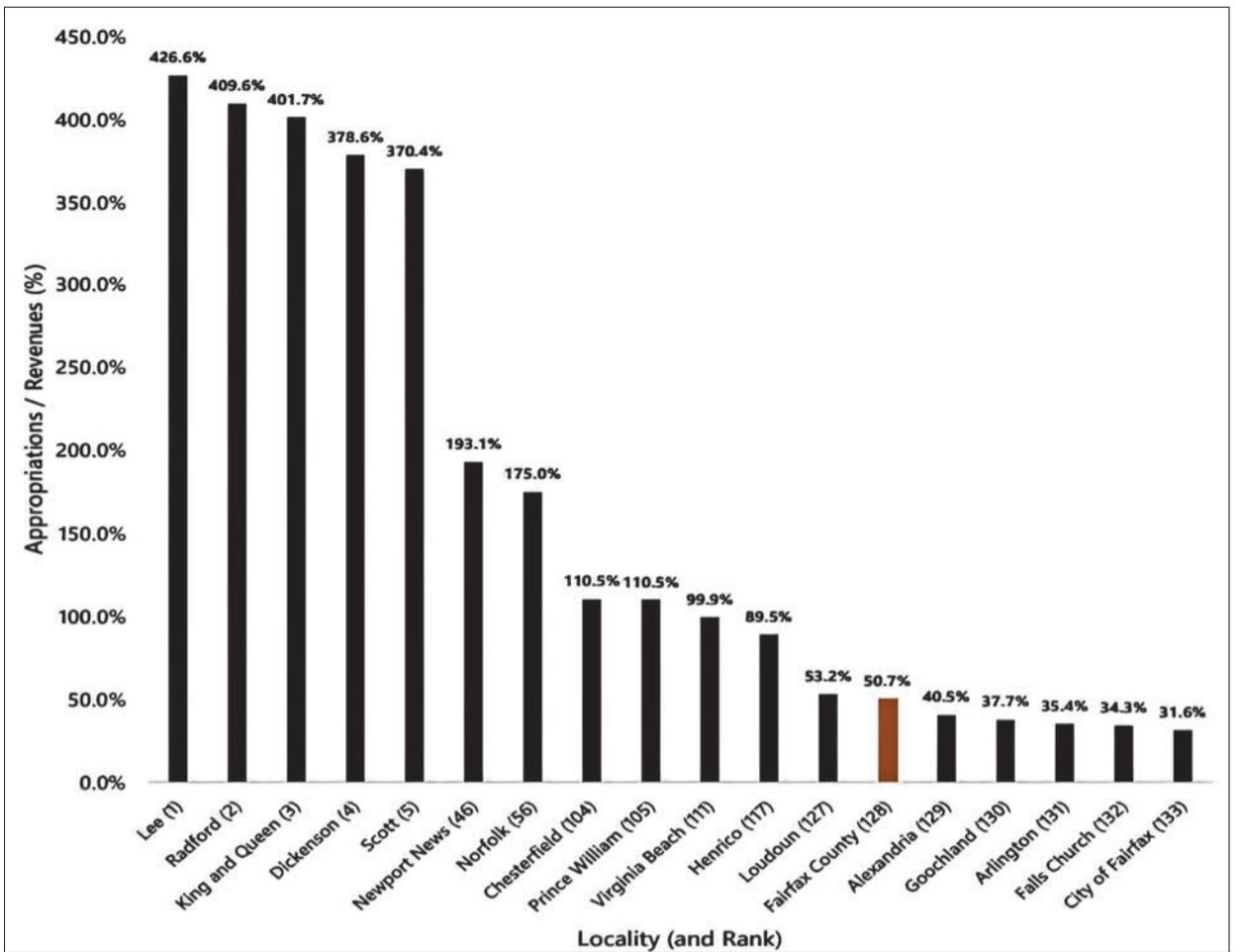
Regional Comparisons:

- ❖ Arlington County: \$1.406 B generated; \$0.498 B received (approximately \$0.35 per \$1)
- ❖ Loudoun County: \$2.092 B generated; \$1.114 B received (approximately \$0.53 per \$1)
- ❖ Prince William County: \$1.405 B generated; \$1.552 B received (approximately \$1.10 per \$1)

The analysis also includes a breakdown of how this revenue is generated. This chart shows the estimated \$5.77 billion Fairfax County contributed to the state by category, highlighting the major sources of General Fund revenue, see chart.

SOURCE: FAIRFAX COUNTY

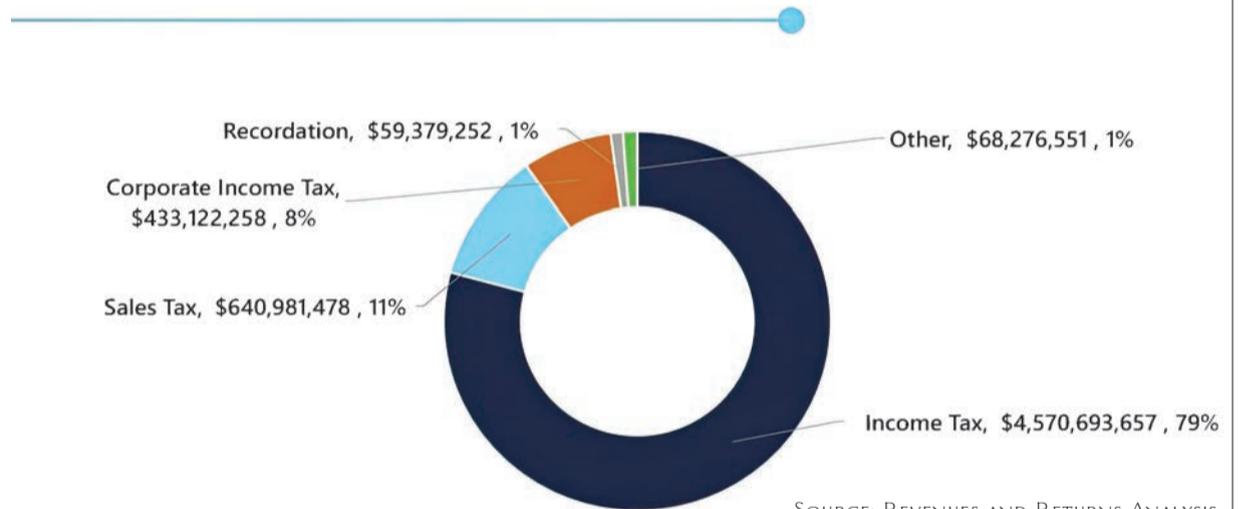
See the full, 80-page report here https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic-initiatives/sites/economic-initiatives/files/Assets/eic_materials/November_25_2025/FairfaxCounty_RevReturnAnalysis_2025-11-20.pdf



SOURCE: REVENUES AND RETURNS ANALYSIS

Fairfax County Appropriations as Percentage of Revenues (FY 2024): Fairfax County receives approximately 50 cents back on each dollar contributed to Virginia revenues and ranks 128th out of 133 localities. City of Alexandria received approximately 40 cents and Arlington County approximately 35 cents back on each dollar contributed to Virginia revenues.

Fairfax County – Estimated \$5.77 Billion General Fund State Revenue Generated by Category



SOURCE: REVENUES AND RETURNS ANALYSIS.

Estimated \$5.77 billion in state General Fund revenue generated by Fairfax County, by category.

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Del Ray Artisans Gallery,
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delrayartisans.org/holiday-market-2025

New Attention for Mycology

Mycology program added to conservation network.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Going unnoticed by most, they have no cute face, bushy tail or brilliant feathering to capture interest. Much of their work is done underground, literally. Yet their work is essential to sustaining biodiversity, our ecosystems and human health.

NatureServe, a non-profit organization whose network includes over 60 nature conservation organizations across the US and Canada, recently launched a program for mycology. Mycology is the branch of biology which studies fungi, including yeasts, molds, lichen and mushrooms, a group distinct from plants and animals.

NatureServe's new lead mycologist, Dr. Jessica Allen, has two decades of scientific practice, research and university teaching in her background, maintaining the thrill, beauty and respect for the mycologic organisms. Allen has taken pleasure in this biologic category since her undergraduate college days. Although she loves all parts of the category, she has developed a particular interest in lichen.

Lichen are actually composite organisms; a combination of a fungus and a photosynthetic partner like an alga or cyanobacteria. The fungi provide a protective structure and absorption of nutrients, while their partners provide food through photosynthesis. Found on all continents and in many different climates, lichens' super power is the ability to grow on bare rock. They break down the rock over time creating soil for plants. Allen finds beauty as well as function in lichen which grow in soil, on trees and man-made surfaces, as well as rock.

The fungus category "tend to be invisible," overlooked in general and in conservation efforts, Allen says. Most fungi are microscopic, so not easily noticed. Some are pathogens, so people don't love them for good reasons. They are mysterious, so people aren't clear about how to connect with them. They could be slimy or smell weird. They often present unseen underground, attached to plant roots, or



PHOTO PROVIDED

Dr Jessica Allen who heads up NatureServe's newly established mycology program

"associated with decomposition, a gloomy factor of the life cycle."

Why should we care, pay more attention to these unseen workhorses of the environment, and devote a program to them? Allen says fungi should be thought of as allies. They work building underground networks that nourish plants, recycle matter into fertile soil, feed wildlife, and give rise to medicines that save lives. They are indispensable for agriculture, carbon storage and ecosystem re-

silience.

"For too long, fungi have been overlooked in conservation conversations, despite their central role in nearly every ecosystem. With this program, we are shining a much needed spotlight on fungi, ensuring their diversity is recognized, valued, and protected." NatureServe describes fungi as "the great connectors and recyclers of the Earth, quietly sustaining ecosystems and human health."

Fungi are "master chemists, each producing a unique set of compounds that have already given us lifesaving medicines like penicillin and lovastatin (a statin medication used to treat high blood cholesterol and cardiovascular disease), as well as industrial products like citric acid," NatureServe says. A discovery in the 2010s found that a species of fungus, *Pestalotiopsis microspora*, is a mushroom capable of breaking down and digesting polyurethanes. Plastics have proved difficult to recycle, causing damage to the environment.

Despite their importance, much of the fungal kingdom awaits discovery. While scientists have for-

SEE NEW ATTENTION, PAGE 13



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

White-pored Chicken of the Woods (*Laetiporus cincinnatus*) a bracket fungus often found growing at the base of Oak trees and prized for taste.



PHOTO BY TROY McMULLIN

Pale-bellied Frost lichen (*Physconia subpallida*), a rare lichen in Virginia and endangered in Canada, shows a white, intricate rosette structure, often mistaken for frost



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Virginia's most common lichen, Common Greenshield (*Flavoparmelia capevata*) is widely seen, along with other Greenshield species on trees and structures, shown on this Wakefield Park bridge with Goldspeck (*Candelariella* sp.)



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Eastern American Jack-O'-Lantern (*Omphalotus illudens*) a colorful and poisonous mushroom found growing at the base of trees

AUTHOR'S CORNER

'The Beagle Has Landed'

A resident of Vienna has written a children's book about living in London with her beagle, Amos.

"I have lived in Vienna, Va. for a total of 17 years and I got my rescue beagle, Amos, from Mutt Love Rescue in Fairfax,

Va.," said author Rowena Saura.

The local author left her job at the Smithsonian in 2018 to live in London with her rescue beagle. The adventures couldn't help but happen ...

"It was delightful taking my American beagle all over England. He became an expert rider on the Tube, double decker buses, and trains. He served as an effective 'ambassador,'" Saura said. "Londoners and tourists always wanted to say 'hello' to him and give him a pat on the head.

"Walking around London with a dog is like walking with a celebrity"

Amos died at the end of 2024, but Saura said she'll always remember the good cheer he brought to people across continents.

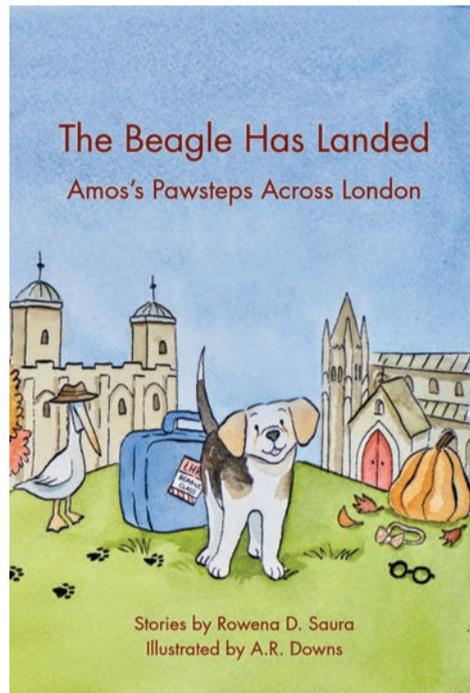
"I hope the book's humor and emphasis on kindness and friendship will appeal to children and the adults who read to them, Saura said.

The book "also includes some interesting bits about London history, food, and culture.

"The Beagle Has Landed" is available for pre-orders now at major online retailers. Visit www.AmosBeagle.com to fetch your copy and to dig deeper into Amos Beagle's adventures.



Rowena D. Saura, author, with Amos the beagle.



"The Beagle Has Landed," By Vienna author Rowena Saura.



Amos the beagle in the UK Countryside.

New Attention for Mycology

FROM PAGE 12

mally described around 150,000 species, experts estimate that more than 2.5 million exist worldwide. Species discovery is only part of the puzzle. Like wildlife, fungi face mounting threats, from habitat loss to pollution. However, unlike for plants and animals, work to identify species most at risk, and taking action to save the species, has rarely been attempted, leaving fungi especially vulnerable at a time when biodiversity loss is accelerating, Allen added. "Conserving their diversity protects this living library of solutions — critical for developing new drugs and tackling emerging health and environmental challenges."

Area master naturalists and tree rescuers use another NatureServe product, i.mapInvasives in tracking and management of unwanted plant species. NatureServe provides free access to everyone, to species and ecosystem profiles on their web site. For those interested, see <https://www.natureserve.org/access-data>. Data included relies on verified scientific studies, so not all Virginia species have been addressed to date. For those who would like to explore more about lichen, Allen recommends this field guide targeted to those in urban areas, which she co-au-



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

False Caesar mushroom (*Amanita puravolvata*), one of the *Amanita* species, warns of its toxic potential with bright red coloring. The genus contains some of the world's most deadly mushrooms.

thored, with hints on hunting them: <https://yalebooks.yale.edu/book/9780300252996/urban-lichens/>

As for NatureServe's new mycology program, "We are only beginning to understand the true scope

of fungal diversity," said CEO, Anne Bowser. "Shining a light on these vital organisms will help ensure that North America plays a leading role in protecting one of Earth's most essential, and under-recognized, kingdoms of life."

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Local Pantries Fill Growing Need

FROM PAGE 3

varying shifts and hours. Volunteers pick up groceries, sort products and stock shelves, assist guests in making selections, and drive food to the home-bound. One volunteer, Tom Cohen, of Burke, who regularly picks up food from his assigned Giant store with his two children, shared that an employee there once commented on the importance of the pantry's work. The grocery worker shared that he himself was once struggling to make a start. "This makes a difference in these people's lives, and this place [the pantry] kept many families alive."

For more information, see <https://lortonaction.org/donate>

Sydenstricker United Methodist Church

Sydenstricker United Methodist Church has a long history of offering food twice per month through a partnership with Capital Area Food Bank, and of making sandwiches to donate to So Others Might Eat.

The church's pantry has been helping about 200 families this year, noting a growing line of cars waiting for service. Pastor Don Jamison relates that on some of their recent past Tuesday and Thursday pantry days, cars have started to line up at 9:30 a.m. for the 3:30 p.m. opening. He speculates that families, some from Maryland, many Hispanic, share this option with friends, who may choose United Methodist



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Pastor Don Jamison, Sydenstricker United Methodist Church, says food services will be impacted as the number of volunteers available declines amid growing need

because they offer fresh produce, meat and dairy products, as well as canned and dry packaged food staples.

The church sources from three Giant Food stores and an Aldi, where they are able to

make purchases at a significantly reduced cost through their Capital Area Food Bank association. All food on offer is within recommended use dates. Jamison explains much is being replaced on the grocery

store shelves by new truckloads of product designated for particular shelving, making that food available at a reduced price. The church also receives produce from Rising Hope Mission, an outreach kitchen and pantry in Alexandria.

Changes are coming soon to the services Sydenstricker United Methodist is able to provide. For the church it is not about food resources, guests, or funding. It is about the volunteers available to provide the support efforts. Jamison says many church members and volunteers are seniors, involved for years, who are not now able to continue the work. He says the church will be forced to limit the number of families they serve, restricting their coverage to Zip Codes within a ten mile radius. They expect to work with families by appointment instead of delivering to cars in line on open pantry days.

The church's sandwich ministry will continue and volunteers are welcome to help. Find volunteer information at: <https://www.sydenstrickerumc.org/Sandwich-Making>

What is unknown for these local pantries and others throughout the region, is how long can they count on the funding? Will the government stay open through the next budget deadline? Will prices come down to ease the struggles many face to make ends meet?

Pantry managers remind everyone that they accept donations at their physical sites and on-line.

Hypothermia Season

As colder weather sets in, people experiencing homelessness urgently need safe shelter and support.

There were 1,322 people experiencing literal homelessness in Fairfax County on the night of the 2025 Point in Time Count. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/point-time-count-2025>

The county's services for those experiencing homelessness include:

- ❖ Six shelters for adults and families. Call Fairfax County Coordinated Services Planning at 703-222-0880 (TTY 711) to request a bed or outreach if you are unsheltered. Or, go directly to the nearest shelter.
- ❖ A 24-hour hotline for victims of domestic

At Risk?

If you see someone you think is at risk for hypothermia, call 703-691-2131 TTY 711. This is the non-emergency police number. A police officer will respond and conduct a wellness check.

and sexual violence: 703-360-7273, TTY 711.

Fairfax County's Hypothermia Prevention Program runs from Dec. 1 to March 31 and helps to ensure no one experiencing homelessness sleeps outside during the winter. The program provides warm shelter,

food, clothing, connections to supportive services and more for unhoused individuals. Overflow shelter capacity is available if unseasonably cold weather occurs. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/hypothermia-prevention-program>

The Hypothermia Prevention Program is operated in partnership with nonprofits, faith organizations and community groups.

Unhoused adults in need of immediate shelter can go to any of the adult shelters or one of the regional Hypothermia Prevention Program locations. Adults with children should contact Coordinated Services Planning; county staff will connect the family with appropriate shelter and resources. 703-222-0880, TTY 711, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

You can support these efforts by making financial contributions and donating essen-

tials like clothing, furniture, school supplies and funds to participating nonprofits. Volunteering at shelters or contributing to prevention programs can also make a tangible difference in helping those who are experiencing homelessness.

❖ A list of nonprofit partners seeking financial help, and donations of clothing, furniture, school supplies and more, is here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/nonprofit-partners>

Job training, shelter support, fundraising and other assistance is needed across the county. Volunteer opportunities can be found on the Volunteer Fairfax website.

If you see someone who is unsheltered and you think is at risk for hypothermia, call 703-691-2131 TTY 711. This is the non-emergency police number. A police officer will respond and conduct a wellness check.

The Lamb Center Honors a Legacy of Service

FROM PAGE 4

for decades – would have meant the world to him."

"It just felt right honoring Congressman Connolly's legacy through Mary's incredible years of service," said TLC Executive Director Tara Ruszkowski. "To see our community fill the room, give generously and stand together in faith was humbling. It reminds us that hope is not only alive, it's abundant."

Emceed by Claude Jennings and Jerry Woods, radio personalities at WGTS 91.9,

this year's banquet welcomed more than 500 people and helped TLC raise an unprecedented \$273,000 – its highest total since the banquet's inception.

Attendees were also inspired by testimonies from TLC guests Dirk H. and Zuri M., who shared their stories of transformation made possible through The Lamb Center's ministry. Army veteran Zuri spoke about her journey from homelessness to healing.

Dirk's journey began after Fairfax City Police Officer Rick Cline, liaison to The Lamb

Center, found him in rough shape and encouraged him to visit the center. There he found the support he needed to get back on his feet. Now both Zuri and Dirk are newly housed.

Amid the ongoing challenges of homelessness and affordable housing, the banquet also served as a reminder that when compassion leads, transformation follows.

The Lamb Center is a daytime resource center for individuals experiencing homelessness in Fairfax. It provides breakfast,

lunch, showers, laundry service, Bible studies, case management, employment opportunities, housing and job counseling, AA meetings, small-group opportunities, nurse-practitioner services, a dental clinic and more. As a Christian ecumenical community of faith, TLC works on behalf of all people experiencing poverty or homelessness, regardless of race, religion, creed or any other status.

To help support Hope and a Future, go to thelambcenter.org/hope.

The Potomac River, Stuck at a B Grade

FROM PAGE 8

Runoff Is Rising

As for bad news, polluted stormwater runoff is increasing and is the only source of pollution that is on the rise. When runoff flows over paved and hardened surfaces, it carries pollutants like oils, fertilizers and trash. Urban and agricultural environments are major contributors to polluted runoff.

Pollution is exacerbated by continuing forest loss and extreme weather, like droughts and downpours. Pollution is “driven by policies that tolerate industrial agriculture, unchecked development and reckless deforestation,” the report contends.

At a Nov. 12 press conference, Michael Nardolilli, Executive Director of the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, attributed polluted stormwater to dense development’s widespread impervious surfaces. Hedrick Belin, president of Potomac Conservancy, stressed the goal of having rainwater naturally infiltrate into soils instead of washing off hard surfaces.

Some Fish Are Struggling

Populations of striped bass, white perch and small mouth bass have steadily dropped over the past 20 years. Striped bass got a D-grade and both white perch and smallmouth bass got a grade of D+. Shad populations are unstable.

Invasive fish like blue catfish are pushing native species out of their traditional habitats. Chesapeake Channa, invasive northern snakeheads, “have established a firm foothold in the watershed,” the report asserts.

“Consuming fish remains illegal for communities who live in and around Washington, D. C.,” says the report.

Habitats

Land use and river quality are inextricably linked. “Our forests and wetlands are not decorative — they are defenders,” the report maintains. “They filter pollutants, protect against flooding and offer sanctuary to people and wildlife alike. ... Restoring and protecting our land is not just about beautification — it’s about repair, reconnection, and power.”

Forested buffers garnered an A grade. There’s been “an uptick in installed forested buffers over the past three years,” but all states lag behind in their watershed implementation plan goals for forest buffers, falling 132,645 acres short.

In implementing best management practices for land, the report concludes that Maryland and Washington, D.C. “have made strides, while Virginia lags far behind,” calling these disparities “political” and the choices communities have made. Best management practices are measures set by the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership to protect and restore water quality.

The river’s wetlands, forests and shorelines are at risk by development and poor planning. “The Potomac’s habitats — its wetlands, forests and shorelines — are being pushed aside by unchecked development and fragmented planning. When ecosystems are broken, so is our ability to breathe, cool down, grow food and find peace. True res-



PHOTO BY JOHN BRIGHENTI

Fall colors reflect on the Potomac on a calm morning Autumn morning



PHOTO BY POTOMAC CONSERVANCY

Memorial Bridge over the Potomac River.

toration goes beyond conservation — it requires reinvestment in places where both ecosystems and communities have been neglected,” the report argues.

The report gives stream water quality a grade of C+, tidal water quality a C- and underwater grasses a C- grade.

Warnings

Global warming is changing the climate, leading to warmer air and water tempera-

tures, longer droughts and more severe rain storms that stress the river’s ecosystems.

Rising sea levels mean more local flooding. By 2080, Washington, D.C., could have water levels 1.3 to 4.3 feet higher than today. Among the suggested solutions are restoring wetlands, reestablishing stream connectivity and upgrading stormwater systems. Other solutions include holding polluters accountable, implementing “nature-based solutions” and reclaiming public spaces for community

use.

Belin is hopeful. He said via email, “We’re not just protecting forests or pulling trash. We’re safeguarding a river that over five million people depend on for drinking water and outdoor enjoyment.”

We’re building trust that community-led conservation can solve big problems. We’re restoring hope.”

The report: <https://potomacreportcard.org/>

ENTERTAINMENT

HOLIDAY LIGHT SHOWS AT NOVA PARKS
Drive, Walk and Skate into the holidays with three unique holiday light show experiences. Tickets for the 2025 holiday season are now on sale and all 3 NOVA Parks light shows will be open as of November 15.

Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights

Walk a sparkling half-mile garden trail while sipping on a hot beverage for an enchanting evening at Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights in Vienna.

Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights is an elegant garden trail aglow with countless sparkling lights, perfect for a date night or family holiday outing. The half-mile walk through the enchanting Meadowlark Botanical Gardens (Vienna, VA) features lighted nature themes and animated displays along a paved wheelchair and stroller-accessible trail. Stay warm by sipping on a hot beverage (with or without spirits) as you walk and s'mores to finish out the evening. Treat your pup to their favorite walk of the year on specific dates. The Winter Walk of Lights is illuminating the gardens for its 14th season, bringing joy to more than 100,000 visitors each year.

Open nightly Nov. 7 through Jan. 4. Capacity is limited; reservations are required to ensure access on a specific date. Prices range \$19-24 per person; promo codes available for specific dates. Visit winterwalkoflights.com for details.

Bull Run Festival of Lights

Drive through 2.5 miles of dazzling lights at Northern Virginia's largest drive-through light show at the Bull Run Festival of Lights in Centreville.

Experience the magic of the holidays at the Bull Run Festival of Lights, Northern Virginia's largest drive-through holiday light show! A family favorite for three decades, the Bull Run Festival of Lights dazzles with a 2.5-mile display of holiday and fairytale vignettes. Enjoy time with family while staying warm and cozy as you slowly drive through the animated displays in Bull Run Regional Park. New displays are added every year—drive through the Winter Wonderland where it's always snowing and see the tallest light display yet.

Open November 14 through January 4. \$30 per vehicle online; additional discounts available for specific dates with promo code. Visit bullrunfestivaloflights.com for details.

Ice & Lights – The Winter Village at Cameron Run

Skate and explore a winter village wonderland for a playful outdoor experience at Ice & Lights – The Winter Village at Cameron Run in Alexandria.

Just minutes from Old Town Alexandria, enjoy ice skating amidst a winter wonderland at Cameron Run Regional Park (Alexandria, VA). Ice & Lights offers a fun, unstructured outdoor family experience to explore unique light displays, snap family pictures or selfies with a variety of displays, and take a spin on the outdoor ice rink.

Tickets are available for the Village Only or Village and Ice Skating. The Winter Village opens November 15 and nighttime ice skating begins November 28. Daytime ice skating begins December 6. Prices range \$9-24 per person depending on activity and date. Capacity is limited; reservations are required to ensure access on a specific date. Ice skating reservations are required. Visit cameroniceandlights.com for details.

Visit novaparkslights.com for more information and to purchase tickets.

HOLIDAY LINEUP AT MCLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER

The McLean Community Center is thrilled to announce a joyous lineup of holiday and Winter programming guaranteed to spark wonder, laughter, and festive spirit for the whole family. Whether you're a fan of soulful seasonal tunes, a Holiday Craft Show tradition, or charming musicals, there's something for everyone to enjoy this season!

Begin the season celebration with a three-day indoor juried Holiday Art & Crafts Show, December 5-7, featuring 80 regional artisans offering pottery, glass, jewelry, décor, fine art, foods, and more, with live music and an on-



A three-day indoor juried Holiday Art & Crafts Show takes place Dec. 5-7, 2025 at the McLean Community Center.



Enjoy *I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas* by The Barter Players on Dec. 22, 2025 at the McLean Community Center.



The Capital Art & Craft Festival (www.CACF.art) Dulles Expo Center, Friday, Dec. 12 and Saturday, Dec. 13: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Sunday, Dec. 14: 10 a.m. -4 p.m. Senior discount available; children under 12 free.

site café. Then join us on Saturday, December 13, from 10 a.m.–noon for Milk and Cookies with Santa, complete with classic cookie decorating, winter crafts, hot chocolate, photos with the jolly guy himself, and a chance for kids to create their own stuffie friend. Finally, ring in the new year at the 5th Annual Winter Block Party on Saturday, January 3, from 1-4 p.m., with firepits and s'mores, hot choco-

late, ice carving demos, a children's business fair, and a full afternoon of food, crafts, and entertainment.

The Alden Theatre is celebrating the holiday season with a festive lineup sure to delight all ages. On Saturday, December 13 at 4 p.m., experience KEVIN!!!!—a hilarious, one-hour theatrical reimagining of the holiday classic, *Home Alone*, by Recent Cutbacks, featur-



The Metropolitan Follies will perform on Saturday, Dec. 6, 2025 at the Old Town Fairfax Festival of Carols & Lights in Fairfax.

ing puppets, live projections, foley effects, and a four-person choir. Then, on Saturday, December 20 at 7 p.m., groove to *Sounds of the Season: A Lil' Maceo Holiday*, a high-energy concert starring saxophonist Lil' Maceo, gospel violinist Eric Taylor, and friends. On Monday, December 22 at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m., enjoy *I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas* by The Barter Players—a heartwarming musical about family, hope, and one special hippo. The 11 a.m. show will be ASL-interpreted and sensory-friendly. On Sunday, Jan. 4 at 2 p.m., the audience-favorite *Furia Flamenca* is back with a show for the whole family. "A Trip to Spain" introduces children to flamenco music and dance, shares some of the art form's history and invites audience members to participate in flamenco-making. Tickets for Alden shows are on sale now at aldentheatre.org.

NOW THRU DEC. 25

Photos with Santa. At Tysons Corner Center, Lower Level, McLean, near Wasabi. Make magical memories with Santa! Walk-ins are welcome, or reserve ahead to skip the line and receive a free personalized digital message from Santa (powered by Portable North Pole). Visits are free, photo packages available for purchase.

NOV. 6 TO FEB. 24, 2026

Bernie Boston, A Retrospective Photography Exhibition. At Pleasant Grove Church and McLean Community Center. Presented by McLean Project for the Arts and The Friends of Pleasant Grove. Sponsored by The Friends of Historic Pleasant Grove, 8641 Lewinsville Road, McLean. Visit www.historicpleasantgrove.org.

DEC. 4-6

Winterfest. 5-9 p.m. At Brown's Chapel Park, Reston. This three-night event at Brown's Chapel Park in Reston is the perfect kickoff to the holiday season, with a walk-through trail with thousands of festive holiday lights and other holiday activities. In addition to the light displays, fire pits with s'mores, Enchanted Forest and lots of food and vendors.

DEC. 4-7

Tysons Library Quarterly Book & Media Sale. At Tysons Pimmit Regional Library 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Huge selection of books and media for all ages and interests. Thursday, Dec. 4, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 5, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 7, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.: Bag sale. \$10

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ENTERTAINMENT

for a full grocery sack or half price if less.
Visit <https://www.tysonslibraryfriends.org/>

DEC. 4-21

“Birthday Candles.” At 1st Stage, Tysons Corner. Ernestine Ashworth spends her 17th birthday agonizing over her insignificance in the universe. Soon enough, it’s her 18th birthday. Even sooner, her 41st. Her 70th. Her 101st. This poignant and funny play takes its audience through the highlights, heartbreaks and extraordinary moments that make up one woman’s ordinary life. Show times as follows: Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. General admission tickets are priced at \$25 (limited availability), \$40 (limited availability), and \$55. Student, educator, and military tickets are \$15. Tickets can be purchased online at www.1ststage.org or by calling the 1st Stage box office at 703-854-1856.

DEC. 5-7

Norwegian Christmas Festival. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Norway House, 3846 Meredith Drive, Fairfax. Shop indoors for Norwegian giftware, Christmas decor, chocolates, cheeses, fresh lefse. Reserve entry time at [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0F4EA62EA46-58479328-norwegian#/. Visit without reservations outside fun with Fjord horse Sofie, Viking craft demos, kid’s music corner and more.](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0F4EA62EA46-58479328-norwegian#/)

DEC. 5-28

Very Artful Holidays. McLean Art Gallery December Show. At Chesterbrook Shopping Center, 6224 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. Opening Reception Friday, Dec. 5, 5-8 p.m. Featuring 200 works from local artists, live music, unique holiday gifts, wine.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Jingle on the Lake Christmas Festival. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Lake Anne Plaza, Reston. Join the Reston community for a day-long holiday celebration, starring Santa himself with a fleet of decorated boats, Santa’s elves on paddleboards and the graceful Vienna Singing Princesses! Rumor has it that the Grinch (played by talented theater student Liam Birch) might attempt to steal Christmas again...but Santa (played by genial neighbor George Broderick) and the kids know how to deal with him... Calling on kids of all ages to come greet Santa and have great fun! Shop the Christmas market on the plaza and at the Reston Community Center for unique gifts, participate in several children’s activities, enjoy hot chocolate, food, treats, ballet and choir performances, and more, in the picturesque heart of Reston.

SCHEDULE:

10 a.m.- 4 p.m.: Christmas Market
11:40 a.m.: Lake Anne Elementary School Choir
12 p.m.: Boat Parade and Santa arrival
12:45 p.m.: Vienna Singing Princesses
1:30 p.m.: Sunrise Valley Elementary School Choir
2:15 p.m.: SLHS A Capella groups
3:00 p.m.: Reston Conservatory Ballet

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Christmas with Fairfax Choral Society. 3 p.m. At Annandale United Methodist Church, 6935 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Join in an afternoon filled with beautiful music, festive spirit, and uplifting performances by the Symphonic Chorus, Concert Choir, and Master Singers.

DEC. 6 & 13

Tours Through Christmas Past. Noon to 2 p.m. At Ratcliffe-Allison-Pozer House, 10386 Main Street, Fairfax. Free tours and family activities through 200 years of history.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Wolf Trap’s Holiday Sing-a-Long. 4 p.m. At Wolf Trap’s Filene Center, McLean. This musical celebration will include a performance from “The President’s Own” and local choir groups for a festive evening of Sing-A-Long Christmas carols and Hanukkah songs. Here’s



The “Holiday Spectacular” and “Tiny Tots” takes place on Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025 at Chantilly High School.



The Bull Run Festival of Lights runs now through Jan. 4, 2026.

a few things to know before you go: New, unwrapped toys will be collected for Toys for Tots at the entrance of the Filene Center. Donations are voluntary and not required. Bring a bell for the Jing-A-Long during the singing of “Jingle Bells.”

Join in the tradition of the candlelight procession while exiting the Filene Center during the last verse of “Silent Night.” Battery operated or LED candles are preferred. This event is free, but registration is required.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

“It’s a Wonderful Life.” 4 p.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., SE, Vienna. Vienna Theatre Company is getting into the spirit of the season with a special holiday production of “It’s a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play”. The audience will be immersed in the world of Bedford Falls as this theatrical adaptation of the classic film is presented as a live 1940s radio broadcast, following the story of George Bailey, a man on the brink of despair on Christmas Eve, who is shown

the impact of his life by his guardian angel, Clarence. Tickets are available at the door only - \$5 children; \$10 Adults; \$8 Seniors. Visit www.viennava.gov/theatre.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Traveling Players’ Commedia Christmas Carol (2024). 7 to 9:30 p.m. At Traveling Players Studio, Tysons Corner Center. This live screening event includes a free drink with every ticket and a talkback after the film with Artistic Director Jeanne Harrison and the cast.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Old Town Fairfax Festival of Carols & Lights. 4 p.m. At Old Town Square, 10415 North Street, Fairfax. Featuring the Metropolitan School of the Arts’ Metropolitan Follies. Visit www.metropolitanarts.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Holiday Maker Market and Artisan Fair. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Nova Labs Makerspace, 3850 Jermantown Road, Fairfax. Discover a

wide variety of handmade gifts perfect for spreading holiday cheer. From one-of-a-kind home decor, wood-turned bowls, crafts, cooking accessories, toys, and chainmail dragons. You’ll find something special for everyone on your list. Visit market.nova-labs.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Living Nativity. 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. At St. Christopher’s Episcopal Church, 6320 Hanover Ave., Springfield. Come meet Baby Jesus and pet Delilah the Camel and other animals. Bring family and friends to enjoy the greatest story of all times and live music and refreshments. This event is free. If possible, bring a new toy to donate. Donations of toys will be distributed to local organizations that help families in Springfield. All are welcome! Visit <https://www.saintchristophers.net/>

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Winter Wonderland. 12-3 p.m. At The Boro Tysons: 8350 Broad Street, Tysons. The Boro, SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 19

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Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 17

Tyson's destination for luxury urban living, invites the community to celebrate the holiday season at Winter Wonderland, a festive afternoon filled with seasonal cheer in Boro Park. Guests are welcome to enjoy interactive activities, sweet treats, live entertainment, and special character appearances, creating memorable moments for families and friends.

Meet Santa: Snap magical photos with Santa in front of The Boro's festive gingerbread house holiday installation.

Festive Beats: Enjoy holiday classics and seasonal favorites throughout the event.

Holiday Crafts: Guests can decorate festive stockings and create their own magical reindeer food mix to take home.

Sweet Treats and Giveaways: Complimentary Santa hats, gingerbread men, candy canes, and other festive surprises for all ages.

Hot Chocolate Bar: Warm up with hot chocolate provided by Bluestone Lane.

Glitter Tattoos: Sparkling designs available for children and adults.

Gingerbread Inflatable Slide: Slide into holiday fun in a whimsical gingerbread setting.

SANTA'S COMING TO TOWN!

Holiday Schedule for the Burke Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department.

Wednesday, Dec. 3: 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. Bring your family and friends to the Santa Meet & Greet in the Banquet Hall at 9501 Old Burke Lake Road, where smiles, laughter, and holiday cheer are guaranteed. Snap a photo with the jolly man himself. Share your Christmas wishes. Create memories you'll cherish forever.

SANTA RUN SEASON BEGINS Saturday, Dec. 6: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Santa and his jolly elves will kick off the 2025 Santa Run season by visiting Burke Lake Road between Lee Chapel/Burke Center Parkway and Burke Road, including Shiplett Boulevard (north of Capella Avenue, Lincolnwood Court, Woodedge Drive, Burke View Avenue and Court, Robby Court, Blincoe Court, Burke Towne Court, Hillcock Court, Coffer Woods Place, and Burke Manor Court.

Saturday, Dec. 6: 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. Once Santa and the reindeer are recharged, they will be ready to visit the neighborhoods and streets off Zion Drive from Guinea Road to Jib Lane, including Falmead Road (off Guinea Road), Starboard Drive, Wood Wren Court, and Sandy Lewis Drive.

Sunday, Dec. 7: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Santa and his hoofed helpers will start off today by visiting the following: Burke Lake Road from Lake Braddock High School to Braddock Road, including streets off Signal Hill and Parliament Drive. Braddock Road from Guinea Road to Dansbury Forest Drive, including streets off Southampton Road, Dunleigh Drive, Bradford Drive, and Woodland Way.

Sunday, Dec. 7: 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. Once Santa and the reindeer are recharged, they will be ready to visit the following: Lee Chapel Road from Burke Lake Road up to and including Goldfield Lane including Wooden Glen Avenue, Covered Bridge Road, and Ironmaster Drive (up to Meadowrill Lane). Shiplett Boulevard between Burke Lake Road up to and including Capella Avenue. Old Keene Mill Road between Sydenstricker Road and Burke Woods Drive including Burke Wood Drive, Four Oaks Lane, Silas Burke Street, Torrence Street, and Koziara Drive (up to Glenway Court).

Wednesday, Dec. 10: 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. Bring your family and friends to our 2nd Santa Meet & Greet in our Banquet Hall at 9501 Old Burke Lake Road, where smiles, laughter, and holiday cheer are guaranteed. Snap a photo with the jolly man himself. Share your Christmas wishes. Create memories you'll cherish forever.

See the full schedule and plan your festive fun today at <https://bvfrd.org/santa/>

DEC. 6-7

Holiday Train Show. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum will host its 34th annual holiday train show on Saturday, December 6th (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and Sunday, December 7th (noon to 4 p.m.) with a multitude of model trains to include N(NTRAK), HO (PMC), LEGO, G

(WVMGRS) scales and the European Train Enthusiasts (ETE) group will display in a multitude of scales. Visit our gift shop for holiday gift items. Santa is planning a stop on both days! Adults as well as children 13 and over, \$6; children 5 to 12, \$3; 4 and under, free; museum members, free. Information on the museum and show can be found on the web: www.fairfax-station-railroad-museum.org; Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR>, or call 703-425-9225.

SUNDAY/DEC. 7

Metropolitan Follies. 11:30 a.m. at Kingstowne Towne Center, Kingstowne. Featuring the Metropolitan School of the Arts' Metropolitan Follies. Visit www.metropolitanarts.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 7

Victorian Christmas. Noon to 3 p.m. At Historic Blenheim in Fairfax City. Featuring the 8th Green Machine Regiment Band. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov.

SUNDAY/DEC. 7

McLean Winterfest Parade with Block Party.

The festive day kicks off with the pre-parade showcase at 2:30 p.m. at the Langley Shopper Center on Old Chain Bridge Road. This popular event will feature local dance groups and other performing artists, bringing energy and movement to Downtown McLean. The McLean Winterfest Parade begins at 3:30 p.m. on Old Chain Bridge Road. This year we encourage participants to embrace the spirit of the season by showcasing the "warmth and magic of sharing with others" through creative floats, performances, and decorations. The parade will feature marching bands, community groups, schools, non-profits, and local businesses all coming together to spread holiday cheer. Immediately following the parade, the celebration continues with the debut of the Winterfest Block Party at the Langley Shopping Center, starting at 5:00 p.m. This festive gathering is designed to extend the joy and create a full evening of fun for all ages, featuring:

A special appearance by and free photos with Santa Claus.

Live music and entertainment.

Fun activities, arts, and a collection of food vendors offering savory and sweet treats.

MONDAY/DEC. 9

Jubilo Jubilo – A Celebration in Song. 7 p.m.

At Annandale United Methodist Church, 6935 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Experience the magic and spirit of the holidays as the Fairfax Choral Society Youth Choirs share selections that celebrate hope, wonder, and jubilation. This cherished annual tradition is the perfect way to welcome the season with family and friends.

THURSDAY/DEC. 11

"Holiday Spectacular" and "Tiny Tots." At Chantilly High School. For 45 years, Chantilly High School Theatre has delighted young audiences with Holiday Spectacular and Tiny Tots, a beloved holiday tradition. This year, they present Holiday Spectacular and Tiny Tots with the entire Performing Arts Department — Band, Choir, Theatre, and Orchestra — featuring over 250 student performers!

Performance Dates:

Holiday Spectacular: Dec. 11, 7 pm and Dec. 12, 7 pm

Tiny Tots: Dec. 11, 9:30 am, 11 am and 12:45 pm

Location: Chantilly High School Auditorium.

Tickets: chantillydrama.org.

DEC. 12-14

The Capital Art & Craft Festival (www.CACEart) will feature handcrafted, one-of-a-kind art in more than a dozen mediums including glass, jewelry, leather, paintings, prints, photography, pottery, wearable art and wood. This winter show is known for being a treasure trove for holiday shipping with artists from throughout the country selling items that cannot be found in department stores. Free parking is offered at the Dulles Expo Center. Dates: Friday, Dec. 12 and Saturday, Dec. 13: 10

a.m. – 5 p.m.; Sunday, Dec. 14: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Tickets: \$10 in advance; \$12 at the door. Senior discount available; children under 12 free. Ticket information: www.CACEart

DEC. 12 TO JAN. 3

Benjamin's Winter Circus Adventure. At Dulles Town Center, Dulles. John Davenport, the ringmaster for this winter spectacular, is a third-generation circus performer and is bringing his show to Dulles Town Center for the winter season to keep the family Christmas traditions going. Those who attend this 90 minute circus spectacular will see a showcase of performers from around the world as they defy gravity, entertain the big top and have the crowd asking for more. While maintaining the charm of a traditional circus, Benjamin's Winter Circus Adventure is also introducing motorbikes, extreme riders and more thrilling acts to keep everyone on the edge of their seats. Visit benjamincircus.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 13

Historic House Tours. 10:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

At Sunrise at Silas Burke House, 9619 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Members of the Burke Historical Society will be leading free tours of the historic house located on the grounds of Sunrise at Silas Burke House. Reservations are not required. Email: burkehistoricalsociety@hotmail.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 13

Vienna-Falls Chorus celebrates the Holidays.

At American Legion Post 177 3939 Oak Street, Fairfax. Family Friendly Matinee featuring Crafts, Holiday Market, Photobooth Doors open at 1 p.m. Show starts at 2 p.m. Tickets \$10 for 14 and up. Evening Dinner Show featuring Pasta Buffet, Salad Bar, Dessert at 6 p.m. Show starts at 7 p.m. Tickets \$30. Visit www.viennafalls.org

DEC. 13-14

Mia Saunders Ballet Presents The Nutcracker. 3 p.m.

At Centreville High School, 6001 Union Mill Road, Clifton. The Mia Saunders School of Ballet (MSB) invites the community to celebrate the holiday season and join in its cherished "Season of Giving" with the 31st annual production of The Nutcracker. This year's production continues MSB's long-standing tradition of giving back to the community. Proceeds from ticket sales, program boosters, and advertisements will benefit the Centreville High School Drama Boosters and the PCD Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to improving diagnosis, care, and research for primary ciliary dyskinesia (PCD). Tickets are \$10 for children ages 5 and under and \$12 for ages 6 and up. Tickets can be purchased online or at the door. For more information, visit www.miasaundersballet.com.

SUNDAY/DEC. 14

Vienna Boys Choir Christmas in Vienna. 4 p.m.

At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Admired across the globe for their pure sound and technical mastery, the cherubic ensemble features boy sopranos and altos from ages eight to 14, representing 31 countries, and harmonizing their incredible vocals in captivating performance. Built on six centuries of tradition, the Vienna Boys Choir counts Joseph Haydn and Franz Schubert among its illustrious alumni.

SUNDAY/DEC. 21

Holiday Hands On Day. 1-4 p.m.

At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Join Fairfax Station Railroad Museum as they close out 2025 with a Holiday Hands On Day. Join Conductor Mario as he shares his trains. The young and young at heart will be encouraged to be an engineer and allowed to drive the trains. Enjoy holiday crafts, a Reading Circle with a local author (reading of the book *Elike* and the Magic Train is from 2 to 2:30) and more! Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5, \$6 for special events. Seniors, \$4. Military both active and retired, \$4. 703-425-9225.

A Key Moment



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

So, this is what it feels like to be self-sufficient. I've rarely experienced a moment of pride like this. Why? Because if this "it" had to do with yours truly using his hands to solve a problem, the problem usually remained unsolved. As an adolescent, I remember my father having a toolbox in the house, but its purpose escaped me. As a result, I, nor my brother, Richard was groomed for home/car/computer repair. Typically, then and now, if I had a problem that involved using my hands, it pretty much meant using my fingers to make a call to a person or a service to do what I couldn't. But not last Sunday. I faced my problem with a can-do approach rarely seen in my problem-solving history. What was it I fixed? I replaced the battery in the key fob of my 2022 Audi Q3. A first in my 20-plus years of Audi ownership.

As with these many tasks (car, computer, household), I am unhelpful, shall we say. In addition, not only am I incompetent, but mostly I'm just not that interested. As the second son of Barry and Celia Lourie, renters until my father retired at age 70, I was not really exposed to any household/honey-do-type chores. My sole job was taking out the rubbish from under the kitchen sink and depositing it in the "rubbish pale" buried in the ground downstairs/outside near the side entrance to our second-floor home. Occasionally I had to take out the trash "canned up" behind the garage and drag it out to the front of the house for the weekly trash pick-up. That was pretty much it. If anything needed to be fixed, a call was made and arrangements were soon to follow. My primary pursuits were sports and chocolate. (Not lawn care either as we were renters and as such, it was not our responsibility.)

It wasn't until I was married at age 24 that my deficiencies really became apparent. It wasn't so much a problem for me as I had spent my entire life birth to wedding, not having and/or not being able to do anything constructive around the home, car and nowadays, the computer. However, it was much harder on my wife Dina. Her expectation was that as a man I had some intrinsic God-given abilities to be useful. It was a disappointment (I'm moderating her reaction) when she realized that I had no such abilities.

Having spent years showcasing how little I could do, this particular key-fob problem presented an opportunity. Moreover, on the face of it, changing a battery didn't seem insurmountable. In fact, when this key-fob issue arose previously (batteries do run out), I took the key-fob to the dealer, and they happily obliged my incompetence and changed the battery for me. However, not being a complete dunce, I did pay attention as the service person swapped out the battery on my key fob. I have to admit; even by my standards, the battery replacement didn't seem all that complicated. After all, I'm not a complete idiot, despite what some of you regular readers may feel, so I decided I'd give "it" a try.

First, I looked at the key fob to see what I could see. I saw nothing, as in any clues as to how I might solve this problem. I poked and prodded and nothing. Moreover, there was no indication that there was any hope for a future with my changing this battery without some kind of help. Vowing to move on, I asked myself: where might there be information about my car's key fob; And it hit me, just like I was a character on one of those old "Firesign Theatre" albums: the owner's manual. Ta da. Success. Not so fast. I couldn't follow the diagrams (though I could follow the table of contents). As has occurred many times before with me, following written how-to directions like this is next to impossible. Let me clarify, following directions/diagrams presented in this two-dimensional way is not next to impossible, it is absolutely/unequivocally impossible - for me. And as soon as I realized, what I was up against, I closed the owner's manual in disgust. Down but not yet out, I sat back in my driver's side seat and thought. Then it came to me: the internet. There are sites to show people how to do almost anything. Replacing a key-fob battery is child's play (except this child couldn't play). I got out of my car and walked into my house and turned right toward my home office. The one with the computer/internet. I sat down and cautiously typed in "How to change the battery in the key fob on a 2022 Audi Q3?" And there the headline popped up on my computer screen: "Changing the battery in a key fob" I clicked on the top entry and viola, a video began. The simple words of wisdom I heard from the host, while he actually, in front of my eyes, changed the battery gave me hope. Hope that one day I could change/replace the battery. And as it turned out, this was that day.

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



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