

APRIL 16 - 22, 2026

FOUNDED
1991

VOL. XXXVI
No. 10

Falls Church News-Press

Northern Virginia's Newspaper

FALLS CHURCH,
VIRGINIA

WWW.FCNP.COM

FREE

'Democracy Thrives In Sunshine'

Tuesday's Referendum On Voting Fairness

*Deceptive Trumper 'Vote No'
Tactics; N-P Says 'Vote Yes'*

BY NICHOLAS F. BENTON
FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

As Virginia voters prepare to decide a high-stakes redistricting referendum in voting that concludes on election day next Tuesday, April 21, a relentless wave of misleading advertising and controversial messaging by pro-Trump 'Vote No' proponents is sowing confusion and raising alarms among election officials, civil rights leaders, and political observers.

The News-Press, along with Virginia Gov. Abigail Spanberger, former U.S. President Barack Obama and many other responsible leaders have urged a 'Vote Yes' on the referendum.

The ballot measure would temporarily give the Democrat-controlled General Assembly the power to redraw congressional district lines ahead of the 2026 midterm elections—authority currently held by a bipartisan commission established in 2020. Supporters argue the move is necessary to counter aggressive partisan redistricting ordered by President Trump in Republican-led states.

Early voting in the election concludes Saturday, and the final election day is next

Continued on Page 3

RISK-TAKER ART SHOW



MERIDIAN HIGH SCHOOL'S International Baccalaureate (IB) art students are sharing their creative work with the Falls Church community this week. The school's art department invites the public to attend the art show through 9 p.m. tonight (Thursday, April 16) in the school's lobby. According to a school statement, "Their pieces highlight how students have grown as risk-takers, confidently exploring new techniques and expressing original ideas." (Photo: Courtesy)

F.C. Council's Preliminary Vote: No Tax Rate Change

BY NICHOLAS F. BENTON
FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

The Falls Church City Council voted unanimously Monday night to advertise a real estate tax rate with no increase for the coming fiscal year, setting an early marker as it heads into the final phase of budget deliberations.

The 7-0 vote establishes the maximum rate the Council can adopt when it finalizes the budget later this spring. Under state

law, the rate can be lowered but not raised above the level voted on this Monday.

While preliminary, the action signals a clear inclination by the Council to avoid a tax rate increase, and Falls Church Mayor Letty Hardi again intimated her interest in a one cent cut in the rate. In addition to the relief it would provide City homeowners, it would also go further to distinguish Falls Church from the region, where fiscal pressures in Arlington

and Fairfax, the City's immediate and much larger neighbors, are particularly severe this year.

Falls Church taxpayers are reminded that at \$1.185 per \$100 of assessed valuation, the City's tax rate has actually declined significantly in recent years, down from \$1.355, due to the benefits of the City's recent-years' aggressive commercial economic growth.

By contrast, in Fairfax County, leaders are working to close a budget gap approach-

ing \$300 million, with tens of millions in reductions under consideration. Among the areas potentially affected are human services programs, including child care assistance, senior services and other public support programs that have seen rising demand in recent years. Fairfax County Public Schools, which accounts for more than half of county spending, is also facing a significant shortfall, raising

Continued on Page 4



masterpiece
MINI GOLF

SEASON OPENER & TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY, APRIL 18
2:00-5:30PM

FUN FOR ALL AGES!
LIVE MUSIC, PRIZES, BUNNYMAN BEERS





WWW.WORKHOUSEARTS.ORG/MASTERPIECE-MINI-GOLF

NOTICE OF PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

(TO26-04) ORDINANCE SETTING THE RATE OF TAX LEVY ON REAL ESTATE FOR TAX YEAR 2027 AND ON PERSONAL PROPERTY, MACHINERY AND TOOLS AND ALL OTHER PROPERTY SEGREGATED BY LAW FOR LOCAL TAXATION IN THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH VIRGINIA FOR TAX YEAR 2026

The City of Falls Church proposes to increase property tax levies.

1. Assessment Increase. Total assessed value of real property, excluding additional assessments due to new construction or improvements to property, exceeds last year's total assessed value of real property by 5.35 percent.
2. Lowered Rate Necessary to Offset Increased Assessment. The tax rate which would levy the same amount of real estate tax as last year, when multiplied by the new total assessed value of real estate with the exclusions mentioned above would be \$1.125 per \$100 of assessed value. This rate will be known as the "lowered tax rate."
3. Effective Rate Increase. The City of Falls Church proposes to adopt a tax rate of \$1.185 per \$100 of assessed value. The difference between the lowered tax rate and the proposed rate would be \$0.060 per \$100, or 5.33 percent. This difference will be known as the "effective tax rate increase." Individual property taxes may, however, increase at a percentage greater than or less than the above percentage.
4. Proposed Total General Fund Budget Decrease. Based on the proposed real property tax rate and changes in other revenues, the total General Fund budget of the City of Falls Church will increase by 0.76 percent.

Public hearings on the increase will be held on April 27, 2026 and May 11, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., or as soon thereafter as they may be heard, in the Council Chambers, 300 Park Avenue, Falls Church, Virginia. The hearings shall be open to the public. The City Council will permit persons desiring to be heard an opportunity to present oral testimony within such reasonable time limits as shall be determined by the City Council.

For copies of legislation, contact the City Clerk's office at (703-248-5014) or cityclerk@fallschurchva.gov or visit www.fallschurchva.gov. The City of Falls Church is committed to the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. To request a reasonable accommodation for any type of disability, call 703-248-5014 (TTY 711).

CELESTE HEATH, CITY CLERK

FALLS CHURCH BUSINESS NEWS & NOTES

OAR's Gathering: A Virtual Celebration of Justice, Joy, and Liberation

Thursday, April 16, 7:55 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. - OAR's Liberation Gathering is a time to reflect on our shared vision of justice, joy, and liberation for individuals and families impacted by the criminal legal system. Learn how OAR journeys with individuals and families to create pathways to opportunity; how restorative justice, diversion, and fair chance programs strengthen our community; and celebrate the collective impact we make. Registration is required to attend. <https://business.fallschurchchamber.org/events/details/oar-s-liberation-gathering-a-virtual-celebration-of-justice-joy-and-liberation-83799?calendarMonth=2026-04-01>

Northern Virginia Business Leader Survey Results

A recent survey from nine Northern Virginia chambers including the Falls Church Chamber, and a public relations firm Pinkston, found a mixed outlook on the strength of the economy. The Q1 2026 report, released April 7, surveyed 210 CEOs, corporate executives and business owners with operations across the region from March 23-30. The survey found 66 percent of respondents believe the Northern Virginia economy will either remain about the same or decline over the next six months. Another 34 percent said they believe the regional economy will grow, including 27 percent who predicted slow growth and 7 percent who predicted significant growth. Among Falls Church respondents, 47 percent believe it will grow slowly. While 47 percent of local responses are pessimistic about the national economy, 47 percent of Falls Church business leaders are somewhat optimistic about their company performance in the next six months. In terms of hiring, 73 percent are experiencing the same difficulty in finding qualified talent as they did a year ago and 40 percent believe they will increase hiring in six months. That included 34 percent who said it would remain about the same, 29 percent who expected it to decline slowly and 3 percent who expected it to decline significantly. Another 34 percent said they believe the regional economy will grow, with 27 percent predicting slow growth and 7 percent who predicted significant growth.

Local Rammy Finalists

The RAMMY finalists have been released to recognize their place among the best in the business. Local Solace Outpost was named one of the top Beer Programs of the Year. Ingrid Arteaga of Open Road was named to the Employee of the Year list. Celebrity Dolly was named one of the Hottest Sandwich Spots, a category where public votes select the winner between April 20-May 17. Winners will be announced on June 29 at Arena Stage.

https://www.bizjournals.com/washington/news/2026/04/06/rammys-restaurant-awards-revealed.html?utm_source=st&utm_medium=en&utm_campaign=we&utm_content=WA&j=45162349&senddate=2026-04-11&utm_term=ep18&empops=p18

All Media Exhibit Opening Reception

Falls Church Arts hosts the Meet the Artists Reception in the gallery on Saturday, April 18, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. This exhibit references American life – history, culture, ideals, struggles or visions - during the 250 years since the Declaration of Independence. The exhibit runs through May 31.

Sounds of Home at 250: Many Voices. Many Stories. One Shared Home

Little City Concerts performs the Sounds of Home at 250 on Saturday, April 18 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. at Falls Church Episcopal. The program explores the idea of belonging through music, highlighting some of the diverse voices and histories that shape current American life.

CityDance Summer Intensives Audition

CityDance Summer Intensives offer, a residency-style program for dancers (ages 9–19) seeking rigorous training and inspiring repertory experiences this Sunday, April 19, 12:00 – 4:00 p.m. Students will train under the guidance of renowned guest artists, professional companies, and our esteemed in-house faculty, including Marianna Rozanova, Molly Hohlt, Vladimir Tapkharov, Kseniia Stetsenko, Tatsiana Paulava and Emily Abrom.

<https://business.fallschurchchamber.org/events/details/citydance-summer-intensives-audition-84061?calendarMonth=2026-04-01>

Creative Photography Workshop

Bring your smartphone or camera to unlock your creative potential in an immersive workshop at The Sycamore School on Sunday, April 19, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. led by professional photographer Tod Cohen. He will cover lighting & composition tips, and the "why" behind powerful imagery. This session is designed for beginners and enthusiasts to help you move beyond the standard snapshot and develop your personalized vision. Register by April 17. <https://business.fallschurchchamber.org/events/details/creative-photography-workshop-84894?calendarMonth=2026-04-01>

Continued on Page 14

'Vote Yes' on Referendum Tuesday Aimed at Countering Trump

Continued from Page 1

Tuesday. Polling places in the three precincts of Falls Church will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. that day.

In recent weeks, voters across the state—particularly in Black communities—have reported receiving mailers and text messages from 'Vote No' proponents containing misleading claims about who supports or opposes the referendum. Some of the materials falsely suggest that prominent Democrats, including former President Barack Obama and Virginia Governor Abigail Spanberger, oppose the measure, despite clear evidence to the contrary.

The News-Press was among the first mainstream news organizations to call out the deception campaign by pro-Trump elements in its April 2 edition that identified in a Page One article the role of billionaire Trumper Peter Thiel in bankrolling the effort with up to \$5 million in contributions. Later, an article in the Washington Post confirmed the Thiel role in an April 10 story.

Many 'Vote No' ads have gone further, drawing widespread condemnation for

invoking imagery from the civil rights era. Flyers and mailers distributed by groups opposing the referendum have featured references to Jim Crow laws and even images of the Ku Klux Klan, implying that the redistricting proposal would harm Black voters. Civil rights organizations, including the NAACP, have denounced these tactics as "manipulative" and "misinformation," warning that they echo historical efforts to suppress minority voting.

"It's a lot of confusion," one NAACP leader said at a recent community meeting, describing how the ads have muddied public understanding of the ballot question.

Television ads, billboards, and flyers have also come under scrutiny for using images of political figures in ways that imply endorsements that do not exist. Election officials warn that such tactics, while not always illegal, can blur the line between persuasion and deception.

Several Virginia political leaders, elected officials, and civil rights advocates have publicly condemned the deceptive advertising and misinformation surrounding the April 21 redistricting referendum. Their statements have focused on both the

misleading content and the use of racially charged imagery.

State Attorney General Jay Jones issued one of the strongest rebukes, accusing outside groups of deliberately misleading voters—particularly Black voters—through inflammatory tactics. He said the ads "deliberately exploit the history of Jim Crow and the Civil Rights Movement to mislead Black voters and suppress participation."

Several members of Virginia's U.S. House delegation released a joint statement condemning the mailers. They "strongly condemn the deceptive and offensive mailers being sent to Black voters across Virginia." The statement added that the materials "misuse imagery from the Civil Rights Movement... weaponizing one of the darkest chapters in our nation's history... to scare voters and manipulate the outcome."

Congressman Bobby Scott criticized the broader misinformation environment and its impact on voters. "The problem with misinformation is, if you don't respond to it, people will believe it... we gotta spend time responding to this nonsense."

State Sen. Mamie Locke, chair of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus, emphasized the harm of racially targeted messaging. She called the mailers "deeply offensive and deceptive," warning they manipulate historical trauma to influence voters.

Civil rights leaders affiliated with the NAACP have been among the most vocal critics. Gaylene Kanoyton (NAACP Virginia State Conference political action chair) warned voters, "Don't be fooled into voting 'no,'" describing the campaign as rooted in misleading claims and out-of-context quotes. NAACP leaders more broadly said they were "standing... to fight against that disinformation" so voters can make informed decisions. Kanoyton also noted the confusion these tactics create, saying, "It's a lot of confusion... no different than when... they tried to scare people out of voting."

Wes Bellamy (Virginia State University, former Charlottesville vice mayor) criticized the use of respected Black leaders' words out of context. He called the tactic "distasteful, dishonest... and poor politics," warning of backlash against efforts to "misinform and trick voters."



Senior Living DONE BRIGHT

Check all your senior living boxes with a one-and-done move to Brightview Woodburn.

- ✓ 24/7 PEACE OF MIND
- ✓ CHEF-PREPARED, NUTRITIOUS MEALS
- ✓ PERSONALIZED CARE PLANS BY TENURED STAFF
- ✓ ROBUST DAILY PROGRAMMING
- ✓ SUPPORT, COMFORT, AND CARE FOR YOUR LOVED ONE

BRIGHTVIEW
SENIOR LIVING
WOODBURN

CONTACT US TODAY TO SCHEDULE
YOUR PERSONAL VISIT!

571.540.8255 | BrightviewWoodburn.com

3450 Gallows Rd | Annandale, VA
Assisted Living | Memory Care



SCAN TO HEAR
WHY RESIDENTS
LOVE THEIR
BRIGHT LIVES!

Brightview Senior Living is Ranked
Amongst the Nation's Best



F.C. Council Unanimous in Preliminary Vote for No Tax Rate Hike

Continued from Page 1

the possibility of cuts to after-school programs, staffing levels and other support services.

Arlington County faces a smaller but still significant gap, estimated in the range of \$30 million to \$40 million. While large-scale cuts are more difficult due to the structure of its budget, officials there have signaled that reductions could affect discretionary programs, staffing and the pace of capital projects if additional revenues are not identified.

For Falls Church, the central budget driver remains its public schools, which account for the largest share of city spending. The City operates under a revenue sharing agreement with the schools, which are in themselves now bound by collective bargaining agreements with its employees.

One of the major changes in the City Manager's current proposed budget is higher than usual salary increases for the police department. Police starting salaries

would increase by 14 percent to keep pace with nearby jurisdictions like Arlington, which recently announced a \$90,000 starting salary.

Implementing these higher police salaries is estimated to cost the city \$400,000. Other city staff are proposed to receive a 4 percent merit-based increase.

To balance the budget while funding these raises, the proposal includes eliminating seven vacant positions, including one school resource officer.

Council members also opted, for now, not to pursue implementation of a Commercial and Industrial (CNI) tax rate, which would shift a greater share of the tax burden onto business properties. While the option has been discussed as a way to ease pressure on residential taxpayers, concerns about its potential impact on the city's commercial base and long-term economic competitiveness led the Council to defer action at this stage.

Each penny on the real estate

tax rate is equivalent to 1/10,000 of the assessed value of a property. In Falls Church, the median home value is \$1,073,900, the highest in the region. A penny on that value translates into \$107.

The proposed budget documents and discussions indicated that personal property tax rates are currently projected to remain unchanged. While overall tax bills may rise due to a 6.9 percent increase in property assessments, the tax rates themselves are proposed to stay flat.

The proposed FY2027 budget does include increases for sanitation (5 percent), stormwater (7 percent), and solid waste fees.

Monday night's vote reflects an effort to balance those demands while maintaining a measure of tax restraint, even as neighboring jurisdictions move closer to decisions that could reduce services more severely.

The Council will continue its budget work in the coming weeks, including public hearings and work sessions, before adopting a final

budget and tax rate, typically in May.

Although the unanimous vote suggests a broad level of agreement

among Council members, the most difficult decisions still lie ahead as the city works to reconcile competing priorities.

WHAT BURST



WHAT THEY CLAIMED



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



<p>SOLD</p> <p>7616 Wood Mist Ln Falls Church \$500,000 2 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths</p>	<p>Please join me for my annual FREE SHRED EVENT Saturday, April 25th 9am-12pm Haycock ES 6616 Westmoreland St Falls Church, VA 22043 <i>A safe and easy way to dispose of sensitive documents.</i></p>	<p>FOR SALE</p> <p>1225 Fairmont St NW #202 Washington, DC \$339,900 2 Bedrooms, 1 Bath</p>
--	--	--

Serving all of Falls Church, Northern Virginia, and DC

MARKET EXPERT
Up to date on trends and market statistics

LOCAL AGENT
Living, working, and raising a family in Falls Church

BETHANY ELLIS
REALTOR®, Licensed in VA & DC
SRES, e-PRO, Corporate Relocation Specialist,
NVAR Lifetime Top Producer & Multi-Million Dollar Sales Club

703-307-7003
bethany.ellis@longandfoster.com
www.buyandsellwithBethany.com

[buyandsellwithBethany](https://www.facebook.com/buyandsellwithBethany)

LONG & FOSTER
REAL ESTATE

McLean Sales Office
1355 Beverly Rd Ste 109
McLean, VA 22101
703-790-1990

VMT vacations **SAVE \$250 ON ALL TOURS!**
MORE THAN 50 GUIDED TOURS AVAILABLE

Enjoy affordable, well-planned group travel designed especially for mature travelers. Our guided tours include accommodations, transportation, baggage handling, sightseeing, entrance fees, a professional Tour Director, and select meals—so you can relax and enjoy the journey. Airfare can be added from your gateway city at an additional cost.

<p>MUST BOOK BY 6/30</p> <p>Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta & Southwestern Tour 10 DAYS STARTING AT \$2,749 \$2,449*</p> <p>BASED ON SEP 25, 2026 DEPARTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witness the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta • Soak up the history & culture of New Mexico in Albuquerque and Santa Fe • Tour Roswell with its fascinating exhibits of the alleged UFO crash 	<p>MUST BOOK BY 6/30</p> <p>Autumn Leaves Tour 10 DAYS STARTING AT \$3,799 \$3,549*</p> <p>BASED ON SEP 14, 2026 DEPARTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience autumn in New York • Tour one of Newport's famous mansions • Discover the Freedom Trail in Boston • Enjoy a guided city tour of Philadelphia
--	--

CALL US: 1-855-792-6266

*Per person based on double occupancy & includes tax service/gov't fees.
Ask your Travel Consultant for terms & conditions. Add-on airfare with transfers available for most major gateways.

Shame on Trump, Thiel For Election Lying

NICHOLAS F.
BENTON

FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

The volume of misleading and deceptive claims in ads by pro-Trump forces urging a “No” vote on next Tuesday’s referendum in Virginia is deeply troubling and, in many cases, beyond the pale, like pro-Trump billionaire Peter Thiel’s heavy funding of so many of those ads.

In this column last week, I pointed to Lincoln’s concept of our “better angels” as essential to a nation committed to democratic values—an idea that remains critical if we are to heal and move forward.

At its core is the notion of mutual human respect.

My dad left his imprint on me in one very important way. His simple mantra was, “Your word is your bond.”

That idea, understood properly, lies at the heart of Lincoln’s “better angels.” It reflects a fundamental respect for others—the recognition that when you give your word, you are entering into a relationship built on trust.

If you commit to doing something for another person, do it. Be someone who can be counted on. Like anyone else, I’ve had moments when I promised to be somewhere or do something that, later, I didn’t feel like doing. But at those moments, my dad’s words would come back to me. And, time and again, I found that keeping my word was the right choice.

If you develop a reputation for not keeping your word, trust erodes. People may excuse it once or twice, but over time the damage accumulates. At minimum, if you cannot keep a commitment, you owe the other person honesty and advance notice.

Embedded in all this is respect—not just for others, but for their time and their dignity.

This applies directly to truth-telling more broadly.

We don’t assign enough importance to it. Too often, we treat a lie as something fleeting—something that, if it goes unnoticed, carries no real consequence.

But that misses something fundamental: a lie is not just a private

act. It is an imposition on others. It distorts their understanding and manipulates their decisions. In that sense, lying is a form of harm—an assault on the trust that makes human relationships, and democratic society, possible.

Too often, the burden is shifted. The liar assumes it is up to others to detect the falsehood and correct it. If no one does, then so be it.

“Well,” the shrug seems to say, “you didn’t catch me.”

Modern society has, in some ways, adapted to this. We build institutions, regulations, and enforcement mechanisms on the assumption that people will lie if they can get away with it. If they are caught, they are punished. If not, they move on.

But a healthy democracy cannot function on that basis alone. It depends on a shared commitment to truth—not just fear of consequences.

That is why the current moment is so troubling.

Some of the messaging surrounding this referendum has gone beyond ordinary political disagreement into the realm of distortion—misleading claims, misattributed positions, and, in some cases, the use of imagery and rhetoric that invoke painful chapters of our history in ways that confuse rather than clarify.

When that happens, the damage is not just to a single campaign. It is to the broader civic fabric.

I have long believed that one of the enduring contributions of major religious traditions has been their emphasis on virtue—on instilling habits of honesty, responsibility, and respect for others. However imperfectly expressed, those values have helped sustain social trust.

When political actors instead lean into deception, especially while invoking those same traditions or moral language, the result is doubly corrosive.

Voters in Virginia now face an important decision. They deserve to make it based on clear, honest information—not confusion or manipulation.

If we are serious about Lincoln’s “better angels,” then the responsibility does not rest only with those producing the messages. It rests with all of us—to demand better, to seek the truth, and to hold one another accountable.

Because in the end, a democracy cannot function if truth itself becomes optional.



A Penny for Your Thoughts

By Penny Gross

Former Fairfax County Supervisor

July 20, 1969 was a warm summer day in the Washington region, perfect for picnics and outdoor recreation. It also was the day that changed civilization forever, as Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin achieved what humans had dreamed of for millennia – walking on the moon. That was more than 55 years ago, but the memory and national excitement about the feat still is very fresh. My date (we would get married the following year) and I decided to go to Burke Lake Park so he could do some fishing. I packed a picnic lunch and my little transistor radio so we could listen to the broadcast of the moon landing. For those too young to remember, the transistor radio was a small battery-operated radio that used new semiconductor technology rather than traditional vacuum tubes. Not needing a plug or outlet and a little larger than a deck of cards or a bar of soap, the transistor radio meant music and news could accompany you anywhere. Very old school compared to devices today, but it was transformative for the time.

There were other visitors in the park, and we sensed both excitement and fear. Excitement for what might be, and fear for

what might, or might not, happen. Fortunately, the moon landing came off as planned by NASA, and all of America breathed a sigh of relief. Even Walter Cronkite, the “most trusted man in America” for his nightly anchoring of the CBS Evening News, was speechless when, later that evening, astronaut Armstrong stepped out of lunar module “Eagle” onto the moon’s surface, uttering his famous “one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind” comment. For a few days at least, America was united in celebrating mankind’s most significant scientific triumph at the time, but it wasn’t long before some people accused the government of conspiratorially manufacturing the landing in a movie studio.

Overshadowed by the war in Iran and Mr. Trump’s unprecedented attendance at Supreme Court arguments about birthright citizenship, the April 1 launch of Artemis II may not have caught the attention of many, but those rocket lift-offs are mesmerizing. The sheer power, the bone-shaking noise, the incendiary clouds of flame and smoke reflect decades of scientific research and development and billions of public and private dollars spent on expanding space travel.

It also reflected the bravery of the four-person crew who trained for the mission for years but also knew the dangers of space flight. Their reports back to Mission Control and the American people were filled with hope and more than a bit of awe about viewing Earth rise over the edge of the moon.

The splashdown of the Integrity capsule into the Pacific Ocean near San Diego ten days later similarly awed those who watched it. As in 1969, there was both excitement and fear for the crew as they hurtled at extraordinary speeds back into Earth’s atmosphere. Only when bright orange and white chutes deployed and gently guided the capsule into the three-foot waves did many breathe a little easier. My daughter was transfixed and shouted “wow!” repeatedly. That’s when I remembered that her experience with space flight was tinged by the tragedy of the Challenger explosion when she was in elementary school.

The successful launch and return of Artemis II and Integrity brings back the positive curiosity that fueled previous generations. The poet Emily Dickinson (1830 – 1886) wrote that “Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul, and sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all.” In Dickinson’s eyes, hope was a bird. Thankfully, the Integrity crew reinvigorated hope with a similar, but larger and more powerful, symbol at a time when hope, for many, seems elusive.

CITY OF FALLS CHURCH CRIME REPORT

Week of
April 6 - 12, 2026

Fraud – Computer Invasion, W Broad St, Apr 6, 12:25 p.m., a business owner reported three unknown suspects installed a card skimmer device onto a credit card processing machine. The first suspect is described as a white male in his mid-20s, approximately 5’10” to 5’11” in height, with facial hair, wearing a black beanie, dark hooded sweatshirt, black pants, and black sneakers. The second suspect is described as a white female in her late 20s, approximately 5’5” to 5’8” in height, with black hair, wearing a white hat, black T-shirt, white pants, and black shoes. The third suspect is described as a white female in her mid-20s, approximately 5’5” to 5’8” in height, with black hair, wearing a black beanie, black shirt, red and black flannel jacket, black pants, and light-colored shoes. Investigation is ongoing.

Fraud – False Pretenses, E Broad St, Apr 7, 11:03 a.m., victim altered payroll information and subsequently lost funds after receiving a scam email from an unknown suspect impersonating their supervisor.

Larceny of Vehicle Parts, Ridge Pl, between 12 a.m. on March 29 and 12 a.m. on April 8, an unknown suspect stole the catalytic converter off the victim’s vehicle.

Visit Us at
Fcnp.com

Don’t Miss the
Memorial Day Issue

Coming May 21

Contact
Sue for Advertising:
sjohnson@fcn timer.com

Falls Church News-Press

Since 1991, an award-winning LGBT-owned general interest community newspaper.

Vol. XXXV, No. 10
APRIL 16 - 22, 2026

- City of Falls Church
- Business of the Year 1991 & 2001
- Member, Virginia Press Association

NICHOLAS F. BENTON
OWNER &
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
NFBENTON@FCNP.COM

NICK GATZ
MANAGING EDITOR
NGATZ@FCNP.COM

SUE JOHNSON
ADVERTISING SALES
SJOHNSON@FCNP.COM

AMY BOWKER
COPY EDITOR

CIRCULATION
DELIVERY@FCNP.COM

TO CONTACT THE NEWS-PRESS

PHONE: 703-532-3267

EMAIL: FCNP@FCNP.COM

DISPLAY ADVERTISING
SJOHNSON@FCNP.COM
703-587-1282

CLASSIFIED & LEGAL ADS
CLASSADS@FCNP.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
LETTERS@FCNP.COM

NEWS & NOTES
NEWSANDNOTES@FCNP.COM

OBITUARIES
OBITS@FCNP.COM

SUBSCRIPTIONS

DISTRIBUTION & DELIVERY
DELIVERY@FCNP.COM

WWW.FCNP.COM

The News-Press is certified by the Commonwealth of Virginia to publish official legal notices including probate, abc notices, small and foreign estates. We will provide the appropriate paperwork. A comprehensive book on the 36 year history of the News-Press, "The Life and Times of the Falls Church News-Press": by Charlie Clark (History Press, 2023), can be purchased at local bookstores or online. The Falls Church News-Press is published weekly on Thursdays and is distributed free of charge throughout the City of Falls Church and the Greater Falls Church area to over 140 locations. Offices are at 105 N. Virginia Ave., #310, Falls Church, VA 22046. Reproduction of this publication in whole or part is prohibited except with the written permission of the publisher. ©2025 Benton Communications Inc. The News-Press is printed on recycled paper. A searchable archive of all issues of the Falls Church News-Press since 1991 can be found at bit.ly/44kt6Sc.

EDITORIAL

Take the Trouble to Vote 'Yes' Tuesday

Citizens of Falls Church and environs may think their vote won't matter here because we can expect a strong "Yes" vote next Tuesday on the referendum that is aimed at countering Trump's efforts nationwide to gerrymander Congressional districts in his favor.

But every vote here matters enormously, given that the final tally will be a statewide one and there are no assurances how things may go elsewhere in the state. The unprecedented level of downright deceptive advertising by pro-Trump forces, run from outside the state by the likes of pro-Trump billionaire Peter Thiel, may wind up confusing enough voters that the overall referendum will fail. Or, at least we can be confident of the fact that the outcome will be close.

So, yes, your vote matters, a lot. In fact, this could be one of the most consequential votes of all in the national push to get rid of Trump. If it passes, it authorizes the Virginia state legislature to redraw the state's 11 U.S. Congressional district maps in a way that will enhance chances for a Democratic majority in 10 of the districts. This would represent a gain of four Democratic congressmen in the state, a move that would offset efforts by Trumpers in Texas, North Carolina and other states to slant changes in those states to their advantage.

Please, take the trouble to vote this time! Nothing would be more apropos than for the City of Falls Church to claim its oft earned position as No. 1 in the entire state for voter turnout than this time around. It would make a powerful statement against Trump's power grab.

The landslide election in Hungary this week to oust the Trumpian leader Viktor Orban there is a powerful signal to the entire world. The way to defeat tyranny is with a winning vote that is so overwhelming that the mere thought of overturning it is deemed futile. So it must be next week in Virginia, and across the nation this November. The spirit of this upcoming vote must carry with it the sense of what Democrats and fair-minded people generally will do faced with Trump's treachery and tyranny. They will not deal lightly with it, and if they don't, the Trumpians really should fear this.

Not the least of their crimes, the estimated 650,000 lives lost in just the last year and a half due to craven cuts in the budget for the Agency for International Development (AID), as documented by Nicholas Enrich in his new book, "Into the Wood Chipper." The book title is taken from a quote by Elon Musk when he took over Trump's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) and assigned unqualified youth to take a hatchet to the US AID and other budgets.

PLATFORM

1. Keep the news clean and fair.
2. Play no favorites, never mix business and editorial policy.
3. Do not let the news columns reflect editorial content.
4. Publish the news that is public property without fear or favor of friend or foe.
5. Accept no charity and ask no favors.
6. Give 'value received' for every dollar you take in.
7. Make the paper show a profit if you can, but above all keep it clean, fearless and fair.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Regarding Baseball Field At Meridian

Editor,

In regard to the article and editorial on affordable housing in the FCNP, we have to face the reality that building housing in our area is expensive, period, full stop. Affordable housing may not have the bells and whistles and the amenities of middle-income and upscale housing, but the costs of land and construction are much higher than we would all like them to be.

That said, lower-cost housing is a necessity not only as a manifestation of the shared humanity of rich and poor, but also for economic reasons, including the fact that the lack of affordable housing threatens the availability of paid caregivers for a growing aging population and of workers needed across the economy.

The issue is not yes-affordable housing or no-affordable housing. Construction of new housing and repurposing adaptable commercial and public spaces are absolutely necessary and in significant numbers. However, we should expand the range of strategies used to reduce the affordable housing crunch. One very significant option is preserving existing housing stock when at all possible. Little is spent

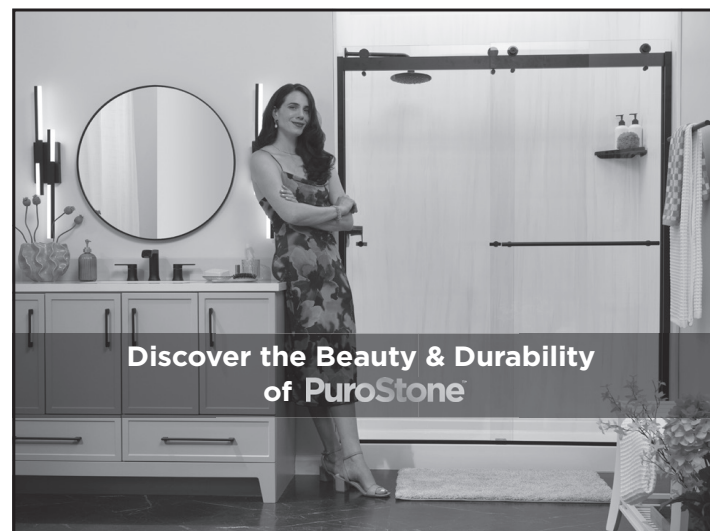
on helping low-income older adults and other low-income households repair, update and make accessible their existing homes. Without help to make redeemable homes habitable, at much lower cost than new construction by the way, a house falls into disrepair and the inhabitants are more likely to join the waiting lists for new affordable housing.

Making home sharing safe and available is another alternative. Whether combined with a remodel or not, a homeowner may stay in their own home and earn a bit of rent from another person who might otherwise be on waiting lists for the too few available affordable housing units.

There are also strategies for making new construction of affordable housing more cost-effective, including allowing the use of public land and property owned by congregations for affordable housing, with all essential safeguards but without as much red tape as other housing developments.

As the saying goes, "You keep getting what you always get if you keep doing what you always do." When it comes to affordable housing, we all need to widen the lens through which we view it and consider all options.

Irv Katz
Falls Church



Discover the Beauty & Durability of PuroStone



CALL NOW
(844) 945-1631

\$1500 OFF*

PLUS
ZERO Interest,
ZERO Payments
Financing for 12 Months**

Military & Senior
Discounts Available

*Includes labor and product; bathtub, shower or walk-in tub and wall surround. This promotion cannot be combined with any other offer. Other restrictions may apply. This offer expires 6/30/2026. Each dealership is independently owned and operated. **Third party financing is available for those customers who qualify/Participating dealers only. See your dealer for details. ©2026 Bath Concepts Industries, LLC.

NOVA Nightsky Debuts 'Anthropology' at Falls Church Presbyterian

BY PATRICIA LESLIE

Under the lights in the basement of the Falls Church Presbyterian Church is a theatre company unknown to many in The Little City called NOVA Nightsky, only five years old and ready to present its 25th production, "Anthropology" starting April 16.

The group is composed of dedicated theatre lovers, actors, writers, dancers, producers, and many with a Falls Church connection. They are motivated to present plays for and about women.

The founder and producing director, Jaelyn Robertson, said the name of the company originated at its first show in 2021 when the group performed outdoors during Covid at the American Legion building on Oak Street.

The troupe liked their name so much, they decided to keep it.

"We didn't know if it'd be our first show or our last," Robertson said in a group interview at the church, but NOVA Nightsky is still performing, its new show by Lauren Gunderson, one of America's most produced living playwrights.

"Anthropology" is an adult drama which embraces contemporary themes and problems of isolation, family friction, grief, new technologies and "how we cope," Robertson said.

Some "moments are very sad, but it ends with a ray of hope."

Four talented actors strike strong punches.

The sister of Merrill (Elyse R. Smith) has disappeared and is presumed dead - or is she?

Using her engineering skills, Merrill creates an artificial intelligence personification of her sister, "Angie" (Fosse Thornton), to help Merrill manage her depression, but it's not long before Angie starts to assume control and reveal she's got some secrets about "Angie."

To make matters worse, without Merrill's approval, Angie invites Merrill's ex, Raquel (Hannah Ruth Blackwell) over to visit.

Shall we resume where we stopped off?

Soon enough, Merrill's mother, Brin (Mattie Cohan), shows up, bewildered by what she hears and sees.

NOVA Nightsky chose the play last year after its successful launch in London in 2023 and other performances around the world.

Sarah Baczewski, the director of "Anthropology" and the company's artistic director, beamed, "This show is great for us, a newer work which we wanted to spearhead and be the first in the DMV to do and show that it can be done on a community theatre stage.

"We loved it, compelling, a sci fi drama, psycho thriller, with humor," which "tackles so many interesting issues."

Robertson added that the play "checked all our boxes with four women in middle adulthood across multiple generations and a female playwright. We have an entire female production team with the exception of an amazing team of talented men" who handle technicals.

Robertson thinks many in the audience will be able to identify with issues the play raises.

"Oh, this could be my house," Robertson imagined possible audience thoughts. The play will target "modern reality rather than the future, because AI is here now. What we're coping with now as a society is very real."

One of her goals when she founded the company "was to try and feature as many women as possible because we always have more women showing up than men at auditions and I wanted to feature roles for women in a very specific age bracket, sort of in the middle age of life, after your kids have left home."

The group could not say enough good things about the church whose venue, the basement, is much warmer than the word "basement" implies. It may be the first time the church stage has been used in 30 years, they said.

They think a Falls Church art district that includes NOVA Nightsky, the State Theatre and Creative Cauldron makes a lot of sense. "Residents can walk to these places!" Robertson exclaimed.

The group has had plenty

of experience doing outdoor shows, having performed them twice in the church parking lot and eager to present one at Cherry Hill Park, but the city, not so enthusiastic. Ditto, the City of Fairfax.

Adam Ressa directs the outstanding backstage crew whose AI staging in a mysterious manner of ghostly holograms makes technicals worth the price of admission alone.

He's helped by Jeff Fitzgerald, Nate Eagle and Nate's son, Alex, age 12. Sharon

Kim is stage manager.

Thursday, April 16 is opening night with performances through April 25 on Thursdays and Fridays, at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, April 18, at 1 p.m.; Sunday, April 19, 7 p.m.; and Saturday, April 25, 2 p.m.

The Thursday, April 23 show will be "pay what you can."

Tickets online are \$28 and at the door, \$30. Duration: Less than 90 minutes

Falls Church Presbyterian Church - Memorial Hall, 225 E. Broad St., Falls Church 22046



From left, Elyse R. Smith is "Merril" and Mattie Cohan is "Brin" in NOVA Nightsky Theatre's "Anthropology." (Photo: Nate Eagle)



From left, Hannah Ruth Blackwell is "Raquel" and Elyse R. Smith is "Merril" in NOVA Nightsky Theatre's "Anthropology." (Photo: Nate Eagle)

FALLS CHURCH NEWS BRIEFS

Amadeus Comes to Meridian High Stage Next Week

The drama and brilliance of Amadeus by Peter Shaffer, a powerful story of rivalry, ambition, and the genius of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart will be performed by the Meridian High drama department on the Meridian stage three nights next week.

Meridian's talented students bring this compelling play to life with energy, creativity, and passion on stage. "Join us for an unforgettable evening and support our school performers—you won't want to miss it!" urges Meridian drama instructor Shawn Northrip.

Shows will be Thursday, April 23; Friday, April 24; and Saturday, April 25 at 7:30 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m.

F.C. 'Brunch Crawl' Deemed A Success, Businesses Say

An independently-organized "brunch crawl" that included some of Falls Church's most valued restaurants in its downtown area on a Sunday, such as Ireland's Four Provinces and Harvey's, was deemed a huge success, participants told the News-Press.

Between 50 and 70 patrons took advantage of the experiment, getting a pass at their first place visited that offered big discounts at others on the list. Meanwhile, the City of F.C. is moving on getting authorization from the state to establish a downtown area as a "Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area" (DORA) that could augment a "brunch crawl" or other event.

OLLI Festival at George Mason University Coming Next Month

The upcoming OLLI Ideas Festival at George Mason University will offer a vibrant celebration of lifelong learning and community engagement, bringing together curious minds from across Northern Virginia. Hosted by the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at George Mason, the festival is scheduled for May 8-9, 2026, and is designed primarily for adults aged 50 and older who are interested in continuing education, cultural enrichment, and social connection.

The two-day festival is free and open to the public, emphasizing accessibility and inclusivity. Organizers aim to introduce attendees to the wide range of educational, social, and cultural opportunities available through OLLI Mason. Over the course of the event, participants can attend more than 20 classes, demonstrations, and interactive sessions spanning subjects such as art, music, history, health, and wellness.

A key highlight of the festival is a panel discussion titled "Global Perspectives on Longevity," which will feature George Mason faculty and other experts exploring issues related to aging and quality of life. In addition to this discussion, attendees can take part in hands-on activities such as watercolor painting, tai chi, and chair yoga, offering both intellectual stimulation and physical engagement.

The event also showcases the many clubs and special interest groups that form an essential part of the OLLI experience. These clubs provide opportunities for members to pursue hobbies, share expertise, and build friendships in a collaborative and welcoming environment. By highlighting these activities, the festival demonstrates



BACK AT Falls Church's popular Sfizi Cafe after an absence is chef Mario and manager Wafa. (Photo: Falls Church News-Press)

how OLLI fosters not only learning but also a strong sense of community among its members.

More broadly, the OLLI Ideas Festival reflects a growing recognition of the importance of lifelong learning. As part of a national network of Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes, OLLI Mason offers hundreds of courses each year, encouraging older adults to remain intellectually active and socially connected.

Spanberger Signs 'Click to Cancel' Law in Richmond

This Monday, Virginia Governor Spanberger signed Click to Cancel legislation, SB493, patroned by Senator Stella Pekarsky (D-Fairfax) and HB1022, patroned by Delegate Atoosa Reaser (D-Sterling), into law.

The law, known as Click to Cancel, will ensure that Virginia consumers have easy, accessible ways to end certain services, memberships and subscriptions. Click to Cancel will protect Virginia consumers from subscription traps and allow them to keep more of what they earn by canceling when and how they want.

This innovative state policy is modeled off Federal Trade Commission regulations enacted during the Biden administration that were overturned last year when a federal court agreed with corporate opponents, and now puts Virginia at the forefront of state national consumer protection.

Sen. Salim Objects to Spanberger Revisions

Virginia Gov. Abigail Spanberger this week inserted changes to bills on immigration enforcement from Falls Church's State Sen. Saddam Salim.

Sen. Salim introduced Senate versions of the bills to restrict federal immigration enforcement in certain places, prevent law enforcement from wearing masks and ban state and local law enforcement agreements with federal immigration enforcement.

The bills, SB351 (and companion bill HB650) would restrict federal immigration enforcement in areas like polling places, hospitals, health care facilities and schools, unless an officer has a valid judicial warrant. The bill passed by the General Assembly specifically: barred civil arrests, including for immigration purposes, in a courthouse unless the officer presents identification, a judicial warrant authorized by a court or judge, and a reason why they need to enter the courthouse to make the arrest, prohibited police or other security personnel assigned to the courthouse from letting someone in without meeting those requirements, defined a violation of the ban on civil arrests without a warrant in courthouses as contempt of court, which can be punished in Virginia with a fine of \$250 or up to 10 days in jail, and allowed Virginia's attorney general to bring civil charges against violators.

Spanberger's changes, however, narrow the scope of the restrictions around civil arrests at courthouses. Her amendment adds state and local courthouses to a list of protected locations that also includes health care facilities, schools, commonwealth's attorney offices and polling places without any additional limitations other than a judicial warrant.

It also drops the section specifying how prohibited arrests should be penalized, stating only that the law "shall [not] be construed" to nullify claims of qualified



Community members gathered to celebrate local history and pride at the unveiling of a new DAR garden plaque in front of the Cherry Hill Farmhouse. (Photo: Gary Mester)

immunity and setting a two-year limit for civil lawsuits to be brought for violations.

SB352 (and HB1482) would ban law enforcement from wearing face masks, except for health and safety exemptions granted under the legislation. The governor’s substitute removes a Class 1 misdemeanor for a mask-wearing violation, as well as a requirement for law enforcement to wear identifying information and the name of the agency when performing duties.

Salim shared his opposition to Spanberger’s amendments on SB351 and SB352, saying, “I am deeply concerned about the amendments to SB351 and SB352 because they fall short of the urgent need to protect immigrant communities and uphold basic principles of fairness, dignity, and public safety. These bills were meant to draw a clear line against abuse, fear, and unnecessary cruelty. The amendments would make the bills toothless, a right without a remedy.”

Sen. Warner Presses Mullin To Focus on Real Threats

Virginia’s U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner, having formally launched his bid for reelection last week, this week pressed newly-confirmed Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Markwayne Mullin to carry out sincere efforts to repair the immense damage done to DHS by his predecessor by prioritizing real threats to the country, halting interference with or obstruction of Congressional oversight efforts, and earning back the trust and confidence of the American people.

In a letter, Sen. Warner demanded the continuation of ongoing investigations, writing, “Over the past year, I have undertaken extensive oversight efforts of

DHS and your predecessor’s actions. At my urging, the Department of Homeland Security Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is investigating DHS data practices in response to allegations of abuses by ICE and others under your command. DHS Inspector General Cuffari reported that Secretary Noem ‘systematically obstructed’ investigations, including a criminal probe. It is imperative that during your tenure at DHS, you and your subordinates do not interfere or obstruct with lawful investigations by OIG and Congress.”

Warner concluded by calling out DHS’s previous failure to substantively respond to Congressional oversight efforts and demanding responses to four of his past requests for information by this April 24.

Falls Church Arts Day Set for April 18 at Cherry Hill Farmhouse

FALLS CHURCH — The City of Falls Church will host its annual Arts Day on Saturday, April 18, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Cherry Hill Farmhouse, located at 312 Park Ave.

Sponsored by the Falls Church Arts and Humanities Council, the Village Preservation and Improvement Society, and ArtWorks, the event will feature more than 40 visual artists along with dance and musical performances.

The family-friendly event offers residents an opportunity to experience a wide range of local artistic talent in a historic outdoor setting. Attendees can enjoy live demonstrations, browse artwork, and take in performances throughout the morning. In the event of rain, the program will be held on April 25.



Victorian Voices in 1900: America Faces the 20th Century — Mary Riley Styles Library hosted members of the Victorian Society at Falls Church in period attire during a program reflecting on a nation at the dawn of a new century. (Photo: Gary Mester)




Roxanne Kaylor prepares the Cherry Hill Park for the City’s Art Day, planned for Saturday April 18, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. featuring artists and performances. All are welcomed, free. (Photo - Ari Autor)

Falls Church News-Press

Your Paper Without the Paper

See the News-Press Online
Just Like you See it in
Print With our *E-Issue*

www.fcnp.com




**A hot bowl of pho at Eden Center.
Voted best shopping center in the DMV!**

This Week Around Falls Church

Thursday, April 16

Arts & Humanities

Council Meeting

9:30 – 11 a.m.
Dogwood Room A & B,
City Hall

Tennis: Girls

Varsity
4:30 p.m.
Meridian at Skyline High
School

Tennis: Boys

Varsity
4:30 p.m.
Meridian High School
Tennis Courts

Lacrosse: Girls

Varsity
6 p.m.
Meridian at Kettle Run High
School

Soccer: Girls JV

6 p.m.
Meridian at Alexandria City
High School

Soccer: Boys JV

6 p.m.
Meridian High School,
Stadium Turf Field

Author

Talk: Melanie

Rigney

6:30 p.m.
One More Page Books

Baseball: Varsity

6:30 p.m.
Meridian High School
Baseball Field

Softball: Varsity

6:30 p.m.
Meridian High School
Softball Field

Human Services Advisory Council

Meeting

6:30 – 8 p.m.
Dogwood Room A & B,
City Hall

Soccer: Boys Varsity

7:30 p.m.
Meridian High School,
Stadium Turf Field

Environmental Sustainability

Council

7:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Council Chambers

Friday, April 17

Military History Forum

10 a.m. – noon
Falls Church Senior Center

Lacrosse: Girls JV

6 p.m.
Meridian High School

Lacrosse: Girls

Varsity
7:30 p.m.
Meridian High School

Saturday, April 18

Falls Church Farmers Market

8 a.m. – noon
City Hall Parking Lot

Falls Church Arts

Day

9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Cherry Hill Farmhouse
Annual arts celebration with
student and regional artists,
live performances, and com-
munity engagement.

Fitness Pop-Up: Balanced Female

Fitness

9 – 9:45 a.m.
Big Chimneys Park

Baseball & Softball JV Games

10 a.m. & 11:30 a.m.
Meridian High School Fields

Fitness Pop-Up: STRIKELAB

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Berman Park

“250 and Counting” Exhibition

April 18 – May 31
Falls Church Arts Gallery
Juried exhibition exploring
American life, culture,
and identity.

Meet-the-Artists Reception

7 – 9 p.m.
Falls Church Arts Gallery

Sounds of Home at 250

7:30 p.m.
The Falls Church Episcopal
Concert exploring belonging
through diverse American
voices. Proceeds benefit
Second Story.

Sunday, April 19

Stories from Our Federal Workers

2 – 3 p.m.
Mary Riley Styles Public
Library

Monday, April 20

Lacrosse: Girls JV

6 p.m.
Meridian High School

Softball: JV (Rescheduled)

6 p.m.
Meridian High School

Lacrosse: Girls Varsity

7:30 p.m.
Meridian High School

City Council Work Session

7:30 – 11 p.m.
Dogwood Room A & B, City
Hall

Tuesday, April 21

Community Mending Circle

(Adults 18+)

10 a.m. – noon
Mary Riley Styles Public
Library

Mindfulness Meditation (Adults 18+)

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Mary Riley Styles Public
Library

Tennis Matches

4:30 p.m.
Meridian / Skyline

Wednesday, April 22

City Council Agenda Meeting

8:30 – 9 a.m.
City Hall

Government Operations

Committee
9 – 10 a.m.
City Hall

Electoral Board

Canvass
10 a.m.
City Hall

Fitness Pop-Up: Orange Theory

5 – 6 p.m.
Cherry Hill Park

Have Events?

Send an
email to:

calendar@fcnp.com

Falls Church Arts Day, '250 and Counting' Exhibition Open April 18

BY FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

Falls Church will celebrate the arts in a big way on Saturday, April 18, with the City's annual Arts Day coinciding with the opening of Falls Church Arts' new exhibition, "250 and Counting."

Arts Day, sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Council of Falls Church City, will take place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the grounds of the Cherry Hill Farmhouse next to City Hall. The event will feature artwork from Meridian High School IB Art students, along with regional artists, public art displays, and live musical performances throughout the day. Held alongside the popular Falls Church Farmers Market, the event is expected to draw visitors from across the region.

Later that evening, Falls Church Arts will open "250 and Counting," a juried exhibition exploring the American experience, with a free "meet-the-artists" reception from 7 to

9 p.m. at the gallery, 700-B W. Broad St.

The exhibition features 66 works that reflect "the heart of America," with artists examining the nation's history, culture, ideals, struggles, and future. Participating artists include Gretchen D'Amore, Alexa Hanisch, Brian Kent, David Moss, Andrea Salzman, Michele Sheedy, and Suzanne Updike, among others.

The show was selected by local artist and curator Pamela Huffman, who described the collection as embodying e pluribus unum—"out of many,

one." "It is such an honor and a responsibility to jury a show about art that represents America at this moment in history," Huffman said, noting the artists' "deep thought and willingness to engage with America as it was in the past, is in the present, and may evolve into in the future."

Works on display span a wide range of media and styles, including eggshells, silverware, thread, Sculpey clay, denim, photography, and traditional painting.

The exhibition runs through May 31. Gallery hours are

11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Admission is free, and all works are available for purchase.



VISITORS BROWSED ARTWORK and enjoyed live performances during Falls Church Arts Day 2025 at the Cherry Hill Farmhouse. The annual event brings together local artists, musicians and the community to celebrate the arts. (Photos: Gary Mester)

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THERE TO BE THERE
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THERE TO BE THERE
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THERE TO BE THERE
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THERE TO BE THERE
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THERE TO BE THERE
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THERE TO BE THERE
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THERE TO BE THERE
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THERE TO BE THERE
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THERE TO BE THERE
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THERE TO BE THERE

You good?

Reach out to a friend about their mental health.

Find more ways to help at SeizeTheAwkward.org

SEIZE THE AWKWARD

State
www.thestatetheatre.com

COMING SOON

APR 17	5 DOLLAR COMEDY NIGHT
APR 18	POLICE CARS TRIBUTE TO THE POLICE & THE CARS
APR 24	ALMOST QUEEN TRIBUTE TO QUEEN
APR 25	SHOT THRU THE HEART BON JOVI TRIBUTE
MAY 01	ABACAB TRIBUTE TO GENESIS & PHIL COLLINS
MAY 15	LIVE SALSA NIGHT
MAY 16	SUPER 70S ROCK SHOW 70S ARENA ROCK
MAY 22	MISIL STEREO TRIBUTE TO SODA STEREO
MAY 29	EYES OF THE NILE TRIBUTE TO IRON MAIDEN
MAY 30	BOSTYX TRIBUTE TO BOSTON & STYX
JUN 05	HERE COME THE MUMMIES
JUN 12	CRACKER

statetheatreva 703-237-0300 statetheatredc
220 N WASHINGTON ST FALLS CHURCH, VA 22046

CLASSIFIEDS

LEGAL NOTICE

**North Carolina
Cumberland County
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division
File No.:25SP001056-250
IN RE ADOPTION OF:
Victor Guerrero, Jr., Adoptee
Alfredo Crespo, Petitioner
Vs.
Victor Guerrero, Respondent**

TO: VICTOR GUERRERO, the above-named Respondent, the biological father of Victor Guerrero, Jr. Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you in the above referenced court and file. The Petitioner is seeking to adopt VICTOR GUERRERO, JR., an adult male, born November 11, 2000, in Kentucky. You are required to make a defense to such pleading not later than 40 days from the first publication date of this notice in accordance with N.C.G.S. 48-2-401(f) in order to participate in and to receive further notice of the proceeding, including notice of the time and location of any hearing in this matter. A copy of your written response must be served on Plaintiff's attorney at the address below by hand delivery or by first-class mail, postage prepaid and filed with the Clerk of Superior Court. Upon your failure to respond, the Plaintiff seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought.

**North Carolina
Cumberland County
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division
File No.:25SP001057-250
IN RE ADOPTION OF:
Victoria Susana Guerrero, Adoptee
Alfredo Crespo, Petitioner
Vs.
Victor Guerrero, Respondent**

TO: VICTOR GUERRERO, the above-named Respondent, the biological father of Victoria Susana Guerrero. Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you in the above referenced court and file. The Petitioner is seeking to adopt VICTORIA SUSANA GUERRERO, an adult female, born November 10, 1998, in Tennessee. You are required to make a defense to such pleading not later than 40 days from the first publication date of this notice in accordance with N.C.G.S. 48-2-401(f) in order to participate in and to receive further notice of the proceeding, including notice of the time and location of any hearing in this matter. A copy of your written response must be served on Plaintiff's attorney at the address below by hand delivery or by first-class mail, postage prepaid and filed with the Clerk of Superior Court. Upon your failure to respond, the Plaintiff seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF FALLS CHURCH,
VIRGINIA**

The ordinances referenced below were given first reading on April 13, 2026. Public hearings are scheduled for Monday, April 27, 2026 and Monday, May 11, 2026, with second reading and Council action scheduled for Monday, May 11, 2026. All meetings begin at 7:30 p.m.; public hearings will be held as soon thereafter as the matters may be heard.

(TO26-03) ORDINANCE FIXING AND DETERMINING THE BUDGET OF EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR EXPENDITURE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027 ACROSS THE FOLLOWING FUNDS: GENERAL FUND; SEWER FUND; STORMWATER FUND; CABLE ACCESS FUND; AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUND; SCHOOL OPERATING FUND; SCHOOL COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND; SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE FUND; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY; AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FUNDS; AND ADOPTING THE FY2027-FY2032 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

The FY2027 proposed budget and Capital Improvements Program (CIP) includes: \$134,334,059 for the General Fund revenues and expenditures. \$11,133,259 for the Sewer Fund revenues and expenditures. \$2,839,324 for the Stormwater Fund revenues and expenditures. \$290,815 for the Cable Access Fund revenues and expenditures. \$3,853,412 for the Affordable Housing Fund revenues and expenditures. \$71,591,629 for the School Operating Fund revenues and expenditures. \$3,058,845 School Community Service Fund revenues and expenditures. \$1,789,008 for the School Food Service Fund revenues and expenditures.

The proposed FY2027 budget and appropriation for the CIP includes \$1,969,000 for the General Government and Schools, \$9,435,208 for the Special Transportation Fund, \$6,183,259 for the Sewer Fund, and \$1,332,935 for the Stormwater Fund for a total of \$18,920,402. The FY2027 CIP is funded with \$8,704,909 in grants, \$2,404,000 of General Fund revenues, \$985,000 of General Fund Capital Reserves, and \$6,183,259 of Sewer Fund revenues and fund balance; and \$643,234 of Stormwater Fund revenues and fund balance.

The proposed FY2027-2032 CIP includes \$19,916,000 for the General Government and Schools, \$100,650,158 for the Special Transportation Fund, \$33,465,330 for the Sewer Fund, and \$8,694,035 for the Stormwater Fund for a total of \$162,717,523 to be funded with \$94,856,409 in grants, \$13,940,000 of General Fund revenues, \$4,860,000 of General Fund Capital Reserves, \$13,673,259 of Sewer Fund revenues and fund balance, \$2,084,734 of Stormwater Fund revenues and fund balance, and \$27,281,121 of debt proceeds; \$6,022,000 is unfunded.

The FY2027 budget and appropriation for the West Falls Community Development Authority Fund includes \$885,057 in expenditures and revenues and revenues from prior year surplus of \$10,917 and special assessments of \$874,140 which will be levied and collected by the City in accordance with the request from the West Falls Community Development Authority (CDA) pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding dated July 1, 2022 between the City, CDA, and other parties.

(TO26-04) ORDINANCE SETTING THE RATE OF TAX LEVY ON REAL ESTATE FOR TAX YEAR 2027 AND ON PERSONAL PROPERTY, MACHINERY AND TOOLS AND ALL OTHER PROPERTY SEGREGATED BY LAW FOR LOCAL TAXATION IN THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH VIRGINIA FOR TAX YEAR 2026

The proposed real estate tax rate for the tax year beginning July 1, 2026 is:
 • \$1.185 upon each \$100.00 of assessed value of real estate in the City of Falls Church, which is no change from the current rate. (See display ad in this newspaper for more details.)

The proposed tax rate for tangible personal property, and machinery and tools, and all other property segregated by law for the tax year beginning January 1, 2026 are:
 • \$5.00 upon each \$100.00 of assessed value on tangible personal property, and machinery and tools, and all other property segregated by law for local taxation within the City, including the property separately classified by § 58.1-3500 et seq. of the Code of Virginia, which is no change from the current rate;
 • \$5.00 upon each \$100 of assessed value for vehicles classified under § 58.1-3506.A.48.a through 58.1-3506.A.48.d, which is an increase of \$0.20 (4.2%) from the current rate;
 • and pursuant to § 58.1-2606 of the Code of Virginia, a portion of assessed value of tangible personal property of public service corporations shall be taxed at the real estate rate.

(TO26-05) ORDINANCE SETTING THE STORMWATER UTILITY BILLING UNIT RATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER 42, ARTICLE VII OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA AS OF JULY 1, 2026

Under the legal authority granted by VA §

15-2-2114, an increase to the City stormwater utility unit billing rate from \$21.83 per 200 square feet of impervious surface (billing unit) to \$23.36 per billing unit annually is proposed, effective July 1, 2026, which would constitute an increase of 7% per billing unit, resulting in an approximately \$23.00 annual increase to the stormwater fee for the average homeowner

(TO26-06) ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH, CHAPTER 42, "UTILITIES," ARTICLE III, "SEWERS," SECTION 42-172, "AVAILABILITY CHARGE," TO INCREASE SEWER SERVICE AND AVAILABILITY CHARGES

Under the legal authority granted by VA §15-2-2119, sewer rates and fees are proposed as follows:

an increase to the sewer commodity rate from \$11.15 per thousand gallons of water billed (billing unit) to \$11.71 is proposed, effective July 1, 2026, which would constitute an increase of 5% per billing unit.
 A 5% increase to sewer availability charges from \$10,009 to \$10,509 for single-family dwellings and detached and semi-detached duplexes or townhouses; from \$8,008.00 to \$8,408 for apartment or condominium buildings; from \$2,503 to \$2,628 for motel, hotel units; and from \$500 to \$525 for each drainage fixture unit for commercial, industrial, and other uses.

(TO26-07) ORDINANCE SETTING THE SOLID WASTE COLLECTION FEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER 34 "SOLID WASTE," SECTION 34-3 "RESIDENTIAL SOLID WASTE COLLECTION," OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA, TO BE EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026

Under the legal authority granted by VA §15-2-928(A)(vi) solid waste fees are proposed as follows:

A \$10 increase to the solid waste fee from \$236 to \$246 per year for a small (35-gallon) refuse cart; and
 A \$12 increase to the solid waste fee from \$336 to \$348 per year for a large (64/65-gallon) refuse cart.

(TO26-12) ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 15, "FEES;" ARTICLE I "IN GENERAL;" ARTICLE II, "DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES;" AND ARTICLE III, "DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS" OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH, TO ADJUST DEVELOPMENT-RELATED FEES; TO REMOVE REFERENCE TO COPY FEES; AND ADJUST THE FEE FOR RETURNED CHECKS

Under the legal authority granted by Virginia law to establish and adjust fees related to development, fees are proposed to be increased to recover the reasonable costs associated with administering, reviewing, and enforcing applicable building, fire, and zoning regulations.

All public hearings will be held in the Council Chambers, 300 Park Avenue, Falls Church, Virginia. Remote participation information at www.fallschurchva.gov/publiccomment. Comments may also be sent to cityclerk@fallschurchva.gov. For copies of legislation, contact the City Clerk's office at (703-248-5014) or cityclerk@fallschurchva.gov or visit www.fallschurchva.gov/councilmeetings. The City of Falls Church is committed to the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. To request a reasonable accommodation for any type of disability, call 703-248-5014 (TTY 711).

CELESTE HEATH, CITY CLERK

classads@fcnp.com

ABC NOTICE

Peking Gourmet Inn Inc. trading as Peking Gourmet Inn, 6029 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041 is applying to the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Authority for a Restaurant with Caterer license, for wine and beer on and off premises and mixed beverage, to sell alcoholic beverages. Vicky Wang Tsui, President/Owner. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of 2 required newspaper legal notice. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

First Published

DMV Wild Yeti Brews LLC, Beer Wholesaler, Trading As DMV Wild Yeti Brews, located at 2820 Dorr Ave Bay 3, Merrifield, Virginia 22031. The above establishment is applying to the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Authority for a Industry Wholesaler Beer license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Sa-fal Baniya, Owner of the corporation. Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200

AUCTIONS

ATTN. AUCTIONEERS: Promote your upcoming auctions statewide! Affordable Print and Digital Solutions reaching your target audience. Call this paper or Commonwealth Media Solutions 804-521-7580, advertising@commonwealthmediasolutions.com

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Prepare for power outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 7-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-844-947-1479 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

No more cleaning out gutters. Guaranteed! Leaf Filter is backed by a no-clog guarantee and lifetime transferrable warranty. Call today 1-877-614-6667 to schedule a FREE inspection and no obligation estimate. Get 15% off your entire order. Plus, Military & Seniors get an additional 10% off. Limited time only. Restrictions apply, see representative for warranty and offer details.

fcnp.com

GUTTERWORKS

Gagnon's Gutterworks

**CLEANING/INSTALLATION/REPAIR
LICENSED & INSURED
POWER WASHING**

WWW.GAGNONSGUTTERWORKS.COM

- New Gutter Installation, Gutter Cleaning and more
- Lawn Care Services - Mowing, Weed Control, Seeding
- Power Washing - Whole House Roof Cleaning, Concrete, Siding and Decks
- Free Estimates - Licensed and Insured, ALL Work Guaranteed
- Senior Citizen Discount
- \$5.00 Off for First Time Customers (Mention This Ad)

703-716-0377 OR 571-421-3663

SERVING NORTHERN VIRGINIA TGGUTTERS@YAHOO.COM

ads@fcnp.com

Safe Step. North America's #1 Walk-In Tub. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and \$1600 Off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available. Call Safe Step 1-877-591-9950

The bathroom of your dreams in as little as 1 day. Limited Time Offer - \$1000 off or No Payments and No Interest for 18 months for customers who qualify. BCI Bath & Shower. Many options are available. Quality materials & professional installation. Senior & Military Discounts Available. Call Today! 1-844-945-1631

SunSetter. America's Number One Awning! Instant shade at the touch of a button. Transform your deck or patio into an outdoor oasis. Up to 10-year limited warranty. Call now and SAVE \$350 today! 1-844-746-2332

\$\$ SPRING INTO SAVINGS \$\$
 Be the envy of your neighbors!
 Premier Remodelers, LLC
 Professional, Licensed, Insured
 100% Financing Available, Military & Senior Discounts
 540-497-8567
<http://www.premierremodelers.com>

SERVICES

DIVORCE-Uncontested, \$525.00 + \$86.00 court cost. WILLIS-\$295.00. No court appearance. Estimated completion time twenty-one days. Hilton Oliver, Attorney (Facebook). 757-490-0126. Se Habla Espanol. BBB Member. <https://hiltonoliverattorneyva.com>

Portable Oxygen Concentrator May Be Covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 888-608-4974

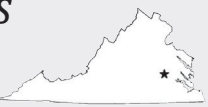
We Buy Houses for Cash AS IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Get your fair cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 1-844-216-5028

LIVESTOCK SALES

n/a

Visit us at
fcnp.com

Delegate Marcus Simon's Richmond Report



It's easy these days to feel like nothing is working.

Gas prices creep up again just when you thought they might stabilize. The news from overseas seems to get worse by the day. Congress feels permanently stuck — more interested in fighting than governing. Billionaires come and blow up the Federal Government, then get bored and move on, leaving destruction in their wake.

I've heard from many of you that it often feels like no matter how hard you work or how loudly you speak, it doesn't make much difference.

Let me shift your focus south, down to Richmond, where Democrats recently won control of both houses in the legislature and the Governor's mansion.

I love serving the people of Falls Church in the General Assembly, because that's where we can get things done. And this session shows us how much we can get done when we have free and fair elections that reflect the will of the people.

I picked three bills that started as ideas and are now law to illustrate my point.

The first is my bill banning unserialized ghost guns. These are untraceable firearms that can be assembled at home or purchased in parts, with no background check and no serial number. Law enforcement has been sounding the alarm about them for years. So have we.

But getting this bill across the finish line took time and not just because of partisan disagreement. Early on, some of my fellow Democrats were skeptical. The technology was new, the terminology was confusing, and there were real questions about how the bill would work. I spent years meeting with colleagues, law enforcement, prosecutors, and advocates — walking through what ghost guns actually are and why they posed a unique threat.

Eventually, we built consensus and passed the bill only to see it vetoed by a Republican governor who clearly understood the issue but didn't seem to share the urgency. So, we came back the next year. And the next.

I introduced this legislation six years running before we finally had the votes to pass it and a Governor willing to sign it. Now, it's the law in Virginia. In a few short months it will be illegal to buy, sell, manufacture, or possess these dangerous, untraceable weapons.

The second bill abolishes the common law crime of suicide. That may sound odd at first — after all, no one is prosecuting someone for attempting suicide. But the fact that it remained technically a crime creat-

ed real legal complications. It discouraged people from seeking help, complicated crisis response, and carried a stigma that belongs in another century.

This bill also took years for a different reason. When legislators first heard it, many assumed it must be about assisted suicide. Some worried there was a hidden agenda. Others thought it was part of a broader debate about end-of-life care.

This bill did one simple thing: remove an outdated common law crime that no longer made sense. But getting people comfortable with that required dozens of one-on-one conversations. I met with colleagues individually, explained the narrow scope, worked with stakeholders, and reassured people that the bill did exactly what it said. No more and no less.

Year after year, those conversations added up. And this year, with a Democratic trifecta and broad bipartisan support, we finally removed this outdated relic from Virginia law.

Two tough issues. Years of work. Real change.

But progress doesn't always have to take years.

The third bill the Governor signed came from a college student who reached out to me last summer. A thoughtful suggestion about how Virginia law could work better. We met, talked it through, drafted language, and introduced the bill in January. It passed both chambers. The Governor signed it. On July 1, 2026, it will be the law. One year from conversation to law.

That's the government working the way it's supposed to.

Slow when it needs to be careful. Persistent when the work is hard. And sometimes when the idea is right and the moment is right surprisingly fast.

At a time when the world feels unstable and Washington feels broken, Virginia showed that elections matter. Because voters chose a Democratic majority and a Democratic governor, we were able to finally get two long-stalled priorities across the finish line and still move quickly on new ideas.

If we want this kind of progress in Washington — if we want a Congress that can actually govern — the first step is leveling the playing field for the 2026 midterms. Here in Virginia, that starts with voting YES by April 21.

Because elections matter. They always have. And if this past week is any indication, they still do.

Our Man In Arlington

BILL FOGARTY

This month's history column takes us back to April 1961. A review of the stories from the local newspapers supports an ongoing theme in my mind: that we are always "living in interesting times" (a phrase that has been used to reflect a time of danger and uncertainty). The danger and uncertainty are reflected in stories about the failed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba on April 17, 1961. At that time, the news reports referred to a "failed rebellion by Cuban exiles." Eventually the involvement of the CIA, and the authorization of the invasion by President Kennedy, came to light.

The fear of the Soviet Union, and of communism in general, can be seen in international news and local news. On April 16 the Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human in space, and the first to orbit Earth, a scientific advancement that would be matched a year later by Arlington resident John Glenn (who lived on North Harrison Street from 1958 until 1963). Locally, concerns about communism are evident in the "Religion News" section of the Northern Virginia Sun, which included notices of upcoming services. Walker Chapel had a notice headlined by the phrase "Communists and the World Revolution." The title for their Sunday service was "Karl Marx's Challenge to Christianity." St. George's Episcopal Church advertised an upcoming talk by Dr. Charles Lowry, the author of the book, "Communism and Christ."

There was a National Civil War Centennial Celebration Commission in 1961, with representatives of many states participating in a meeting in Charleston, South Carolina, on April 12, the 100th anniversary of the firing upon Fort Sumter. The New Jersey delegation created a stir by objecting to segregated seating at the meeting (South Carolina still had segregated seating laws). A second Civil War was averted when the group moved its meeting to a naval base. The Northern Virginia Sun had a number of Civil War articles published that April, including a long summary of the "anguish" of Robert E. Lee in resigning his commission from the U.S. Army

on April 20, 1861.

The *Washington Afro-American* provided plenty of coverage about the slow pace of desegregation in the Arlington public schools. But the story that got my attention involved a vote held by the Arlington Education Association, which represented 982 Arlington schoolteachers. This was a whites-only group. A separate group, the Arlington Teachers Association, with 84 Black teachers as members, had asked for a merger of the groups. The request was approved by the Arlington Education Association, by a vote of 519 to 463. I am kind of shocked that 463 teachers wanted to retain its whites-only status. Meanwhile, in other school news, the combined 5th and 6th grade class at Fairlington Elementary School was praised for presenting a play about the United Nations entitled "A Better World." Hope was in the air for some of our youngsters!

If you think switching our clocks twice a year is a confusing mess, in 1961 there was "extreme confusion" year-round in Virginia. Governor Almond was considering a special session of the General Assembly, as 25 Virginia communities had switched to Daylight Saving Time, while the rest of the state remained on Eastern Standard Time. If you lived in Richmond and crossed into Hanover County, you would be in a different time zone. And I learned that for years there had been a one-hour time difference with the District of Columbia, which must have been a challenge for those commuting from Arlington.

On the lighter side, there was an editorial in the *Northern Virginia Sun* expressing joy and hope in the upcoming baseball season for the new expansion team, the Washington Senators (not to be confused with the Washington Senators who left town to play in Minnesota). Unfortunately, the team finished tied for the worst record in the American League. The final game at historic Griffith Stadium in September 1961 was played with 1,498 loyal fans in attendance. This second iteration of the Washington Senators also left town to go to Texas in 1971. Fortunately, in 2005, Major League Baseball agreed to move the bankrupt Montreal Expos to Washington. Hopefully the Nationals are here to stay!

Tested and proven gutter protection.

LeafFilter®

Common hood style

We install year-round - Exp. 6/30/26

Schedule your **free** inspection and estimate today!

1-877-614-6667 Promo Code: 285

Special offer - Save up to*

25% off

LeafFilter Gutter Protection

*Promotional offer includes 15% off plus an additional 10% off for qualified veterans and/or seniors. Cannot be combined with any other offers. One coupon per household. No obligation estimate valid for 1 year. See representative for full warranty details. AR 366920925, AZ ROC 344027, CA 1035795, CT HIC0671520, DC 420223E+11, FL OBC056678, IA C127230, ID RCE-51604, LA 559544, MA 213292, MD MHIC111225, HIC164488, MI 262300331, 262300330, 262300329, 262300328, 262300318, 262300173, MN IR810524, MT 2661922, ND 47304, NE 50145-24, 50145-23, NJ 13VH13285000, NM 409893, NV 86890, OR 212234, PA PAT79643, RI GC-41354, TN 10981, UT 10783658-5501, VA 2705169445, VT 174.0000871, WA LEAFLH-763PQ, WI No. 637-DCFRR WV WV056912.

FALLS CHURCH BUSINESS NEWS & NOTES

Continued from Page 2

Marvel Trivia at the Casual Pint

Casual Pint is hosting a special edition of trivia on April 21, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Tuesday Trivia will be focused on the Marvel cinematic universe (MCU, for those in the know). Enjoy a pint and some food and show off your or your team's superhero knowledge. First round of questions starts at 7:00 pm.

Federal Government Contracting 101

Here is a free webinar for those considering selling products and services to the federal government. Learn how government contracting works, if it's a good fit for your business, and how to find the opportunities. The webinar is provided by the Women's Business Center of Northern Virginia on Tuesday, April 21, 12:00 – 1:30 pm and the link will be shared upon registration. <https://wbcnova.centerdynamics.com/workshop.aspx?ekey=10460033>

► *Business News & Notes is compiled by Elise Neil Bengtson, Executive Director of the Greater Falls Church Chamber of Commerce. She may be emailed at elise@fallschurchchamber.org.*

Critter Corner

SEND US YOUR PICTURES!

See your Pets in the News-Press
CritterCorner@fcnp.com



CRITTER CORNER



BROTHER KITTEN LOVES TO CLIMB!

Meridian Sports Recap: 4/7 - 4/13

BY DINOS SIMCOX

Meridian sports have enjoyed a successful week with several impressive victories among the pile of games played. The teams had a combined total of 13 wins to just six losses.

Baseball holds claim to Meridian's most dominant victory of the week, a 26-1 blow-out over Manassas Park. A few days later, the Mustangs suffered a close 8-6 loss to Brentsville. This puts the team at 3-5 on the year. The young team has shown lots of potential this season and should continue to improve as the season progresses.

Boys lacrosse has continued to be perfect this season. The team built on their superb 4-0 start this week by winning three more games, bringing their record to 7-0. Their most recent win against Forest Park was their most dominant yet, a 16-8 rout

that solidified the Mustangs as one of the best in the district.

Girls lacrosse suffered their first loss of the season this week, falling to 6A opponent Robinson 12-7. This brings their overall record to 3-1. However, the Mustangs enjoyed a nonconference victory over 6A Alexandria City. Their next game on April 16 will be against a very strong opponent in Kettle Run, who boasts an undefeated record of 6-0.

Softball has been unable to find their footing in the still-young campaign. They've yet to emerge victorious in any of their matchups this season. Despite the challenging start, the team has plenty of games to improve upon their rocky start.

Boys and girls tennis have been two of the most impressive Mustang teams this season, with neither having suffered a loss thus far. Both squads played two

matches this week, winning all of them by a long margin. The boys beat both Warren County and Brentsville by a score of 9-0, while the girls beat the same two schools 8-1 and 9-0 respectively.

Boys soccer played three games this week and won them all, improving their overall record to 5-1. Aside from their lone loss, the Mustangs haven't allowed more than one goal all season. This excellent defense coupled with the team's experienced and explosive offense makes a strong case for them to defend their state title this year.

Girls soccer has also played three games this week, emerging victorious in two of them. Their record now sits at 5-2, with multiple dominant wins. In the Mustangs' most recent game, against 5A Falls Church, they steamrolled the competition, winning 7-0.



The Meridian boys soccer team mentally prepares for the upcoming contest. (Photo: Paul Meade)

NORTHERN VIRGINIA GAY NEWS

Equality Arlington Unveils Trans Youth Quilt

Equality Arlington unveiled the Arlington Trans Youth Quilt at a community celebration last week at Arlington Central Library.

The standing-room only event in the library's auditorium, co-sponsored with Arlington Public Libraries, provided an opportunity for attendees to interact with the 10' by 7.5' quilt with 88 squares made by transgender and nonbinary young people in Arlington as well as allies.

Speakers representing Equality Arlington, Arlington Public Schools, Arlington Public Libraries, ACLU-VA, and Congressman Don Beyer celebrated the bravery and joy stitched throughout the quilt and the young Arlingtonians represented by each square. Equality Arlington also screened a short video about the making of the quilt.

Kellen MacBeth, president of Equality Arlington, said "I am so incredibly proud of all of the young trans and nonbinary young people who gave up their time to share a little bit about who they are with the Arlington community through this quilt. Today's unveiling event is an important step in giving voice to these young people but it is not the last step. We need to continue fighting to address the unacceptably high rates of poor mental health, sexual violence, and bullying that are plaguing trans, nonbinary, and many LGBTQ+ youth in Arlington Public Schools. Today is a happy day but it is also a call to action—we need to do more for our young people."

Equality Arlington launched the Arlington Trans Youth Quilt Project in February 2026 and partnered with trans and nonbinary young people between the ages of 5 and 19 and their families to gather 54 squares made to answer: "What does 'Freedom to Be' mean to me?" The outer squares were made by allies and parents.

The quilt harkens back to the legacy of the AIDS quilt of the 1980s and 1990s and seeks to tell the story of trans and nonbinary joy, bravery, and struggle using a medium familiar to the LGBTQ+ rights movement. Through the quilt, trans and nonbinary youth assert their right to celebrate their identity and their right to live openly as their true selves. While the AIDS quilt was a memorial to lost lives, this quilt is a celebration of joy and the rich diversity of our youth.

Review of Classic New Book By Don Bachardy

By Matthew Rettunmund, Boyculture

I'm a slow reader, but that's no excuse for waiting so long to heartily recommend the engrossing book, "Don Bachardy: An Artist's Life — An Oral History" by Michael Schreiber (Citadel, \$29).

Out since late last year, this indispensable work — just nominated for the Randy Shilts Award for Gay Nonfiction by the Publishing Triangle — is actually a joy to read, organized by lively, expertly edited interviews between Schreiber and his nonagenarian subject. It feels like you're sitting in a room with Bachardy, and can almost hear him telling his tales. (Take it from me, you don't just speak with someone and poop it out onto the page.)

Bachardy is a uniquely fascinating man and is finally featured in a book that captures the totality of his persona and his artistic output.

Born in L.A. in 1934, his earliest years interest me almost more than his later years because he spent them crashing Hollywood premieres to get autographs and to pose for selfies with movie stars. I'm in love with that mentality, and am working on a longer piece on that topic in which I will refer more to Bachardy's (and Schreiber's) experiences, but suffice it to say it's so infectiously exciting to read Bachardy's accounts of "getting" pre-superfame Marilyn Monroe, Bette Davis, Joan Crawford and a who's-who of who-was in Hollywood in the '40s and '50s with help from his big brother.

Bizarrely, within months of his being a fanboy who was probably a bit of a lovable pest to these famous faces, he was dining with many of them. That's because, at around 18, he met and fell in love with the artist Christopher Isherwood, who was 30 years his senior. Theirs was an unbreakable bond that virtually no one predicted would last — and last it did, and last it has.

To this day, in this book, Bachardy is still keeping his partner's legacy alive, even as he speaks proudly of his own accomplishments.

The way Bachardy came into his own and avoided settling into seeming like a kept boy is he developed his skills as an artist, drawing many of Isherwood's famous friends. Rather than creating fawning likenesses, Bachardy's images drip sadness, rendering glamour in an undeniably human, often vulnerable way.

One of the gems of this book is getting to read Bachardy's thoughts on how he developed his vision as an artist. He was just a teen when he was introduced to Carl Van Vechtern, whose photographs of Isherwood he immediately determined to be lacking. But on the same trip, he was introduced to Lincoln Kirstein's (he really did know everyone) collection of Paul Cadmus's "Seven Deadly Sins."

He says, "I was 19 when I first saw them, and I'd never heard of Paul Cadmus. I didn't know anything about other artists. But his work was so of interest to me because he was such a good draftsman ... He must have been one of the last draftsmen, because it doesn't seem to me like anybody nowadays has that kind of skill ... And also, his subject matter: illustrating each of the sins, and finding some grotesque or horrific way of expressing it. For instance, Lust: I just couldn't stop looking at it."

He would chalk up that experience, as well as his absorption of the work of Bernard Perlin, George Platt Lynes and George Tooker, as being instrumental in his development as an artist whose works reside in many museums — and this book provides the rare opportunity of "hearing" an artist walk us through the birth of his artistry.

Bachardy's drawings and paintings are, of course, extremely accomplished, but there is also plenty of gossip in the book, or rather just his unguarded commentary about the vast array of important 20th-century figures he knew, some well.

Because of the interview style of the book, we get to read in Bachardy's own words how he persuaded Marlene Dietrich to sit for him, and how she responded to the final product (he drew several, she signed two).

Schreiber's book is a monumental monument to Don Bachardy, who did something almost impossible — he became the lover of an indelible talent known the world over, and he never, ever got lost in that shadow, instead becoming an impressive creator of his own. Bachardy's work has cast a long shadow over the work of so many others who have come after him, and Schreiber has documented it beautifully.

No. Virginia Gay Community Prepares for Luncheon

The local LGBTQ+ community is gearing up for a spring luncheon at 1 p.m. on Sunday, April 19, at Federico Ristorante Italiano, 519 23rd St. S, Arlington, Virginia, 22202. The event is a monthly activity hosted by Go Gay DC - Metro DC's LGBTQ+ community, that promises to blend Crystal City's rich history with a modern, inclusive social atmosphere.

Formerly known as the beloved Café Italia, which served the community for over four decades, the venue was revitalized under the leadership of the co-owners, including gay community advocate Freddie Lutz (who also owns Freddie's Beach Bar & Restaurant). Today, the restaurant stands as a testament to Arlington's heritage, featuring photos of past guests above the doorway, and a warm, inviting environment where every guest is treated like family.

Patrons can expect a menu rooted in authentic Italian tradition, enhanced by fresh herbs grown in the garden of one of the co-owners.

TJ Flavell, the founder and leader of Go Gay DC, expressed his enthusiasm for the upcoming gathering. "These events are much more than just great food; they are the heart of our community building efforts," said Flavell. "Federico provides the perfect backdrop for meaningful conversation, where the history of our neighborhood meets the vibrant energy of our future. Everyone is welcome."

The luncheon is expected to attract a diverse group of local professionals and gay community advocates, including Nicholas F. Benton, the founder, owner, and editor of the Falls Church News-Press and author of numerous books. Those interested in attending can find more details on the events link on gogaydc.com.



EQUALITY ARLINGTON unveiled a quilt with trans youth contributions at the Arlington central library last weekend. (Photo: Courtesy)

The **SMILE** you want.
The attention you deserve.

Currently accepting new patients



BESTOFFCC.COM



200
LITTLE FALLS STREET

703.532.3300 | www.doughertyDDS.com
200 Little Falls Street #506, Falls Church VA 22046



Diener & Associates
Certified Public Accountants



Local CPAs
you can trust
for all your
business &
personal
financial
needs

Ana Letona
Greenway Downs Neighbor &
COO of Diener & Associates



GovCon Consulting • Outsourced Accounting
Tax Services • Advisory

125 Rowell Ct | 703.241.8807
Falls Church, VA | diener.cpa

Just Listed!

601 N VIEW TERRACE | ALEXANDRIA, VA
\$1,599,900



6
Beds



3.5
Baths



1920's
Bungalow



Detached
Studio



SUNDAY | APRIL 19, 2026
2 - 4 PM



Tori McKinney | CEO & Realtor®

📞 703-867-8674

✉️ Tori@ROCKSTARrealtygroup.com



realty group

