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Falls Church News-Press

Northern Virginia's Newspaper

'Democracy Thrives In Sunshine'

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F.C. Schools' Budget Ask Is Within 'Guidance'

School Board Votes 7-0 to Advance Annual Request

BY NICHOLAS F. BENTON
FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

The Falls Church City School Board voted unanimously Tuesday night to approve its Fiscal Year 2026-27 advertised budget, a \$71,591,629 operational spending plan that asks for less than originally projected in January but as such comes within the overall Falls Church City "guidance" while achieving "maintenance" goals for the schools.

That budget now moves to the City of Falls Church City manager and City Council for consideration as part of upcoming deliberations on the City's next fiscal year overall budget.

The vote capped months of collaborative budget development between Superintendent Terry Dade, Chief Operating Officer Alicia Prince, the School Board, and City government partners — a process that had to deal with rising costs, updated revenue projections, and difficult tradeoffs.

"We are not an OK district. We're a district of excellence, and

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Arts &
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STEPPING OUT



THE FALLS CHURCH CONCERT BAND held a rousing concert at the Meridian High School auditorium on March 7, 2026 titled, "Global Rhythms in Concert." It featured music inspired by different cultures and regions around the world. Special guests included the Washington Balalaika Ensemble, trumpet soloist Ryan Fuhrman, and a talented young dancer (shown here) from the O'Neill-James School of Irish Dance. The program theme was a musical journey through international styles—with selections influenced by places such as Spain, Italy, Japan, Russia, and Ireland. (Photo: FCNP)

'No Kings' Rallies Set for F.C., Referendum Voting Begins

BY NICHOLAS F. BENTON
FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

The political environment has heated up dramatically this month, with voting already underway for the statewide referendum in Virginia that would temporarily redraw U.S. congressional districts, with prospective candidates announcing their runs for what would be a new 7th District if the referendum passes, and with

anti-war sentiment peaking in the wake of Trump's bombing campaign against Iran.

In Falls Church, voting on the referendum that began just last Friday drew 242 early in-person voters at the Registrar's office at City Hall, and another 141 ballots received by mail as of midday this Wednesday (March 11). The voting will continue through April 14.

Meanwhile, Indivisible

group organizers of the No Kings demonstrations that drew huge turnouts last year are well into building for this month's major day of national demonstrations on Saturday, March 28. The effort will include a rally next Saturday (March 21) at the intersection of Little Falls and Park Avenue across from City Hall and the weekly Falls Church Farmers Market in downtown Falls Church where the public is urged to show up and make

No Kings signs or buttons from 10 a.m. to noon.

Then from 11 to 12:30 p.m. the group will host a car decorating event and contest, followed by an informal car parade around Falls Church to advertise the following weekend's major No Kings rally. Location of that event can be found on the Falls Church Indivisible website.

Continued on Page 19

FALLS CHURCH NEWS BRIEFS

Fairfax Co. Planners Mull Plan For Wilson Blvd. Development

Last night (Wednesday, Mar. 11) the Fairfax County Planning Commission was due to deliberate on a plan to allow a mix of uses at the Cavalier Club site on Wilson Blvd. adjacent to the BJ's in Falls Church, just across the county line in Fairfax.

The Mason Cavalier Club at 6200 Wilson Blvd. would, under a new proposal, be allowed to add up to 300 new multifamily units on top of 220 existing units there, together with 20,000 square feet of ground-floor retail. A second eight-story building would be added to the existing 12-story building there.

The area would be designated as an "Opportunity Area." The pro-affordable housing YIMBY's organization of Northern Virginia has stated its support for this move because it adds 300 new homes in a high-opportunity area near transit, jobs, and services, the proposal includes 1:1 replacement of existing affordable units, 23 units at or below 60 percent area median income (AMI) and requires 10 percent of new units to be affordable (up to 80 percent AMI), per Fairfax County policy.

The plan requires a road diet on Wilson Blvd (one lane each direction), a shared-use path with buffers and trees, undergrounding power lines where feasible, and improved bus stop access. It requires a new street connection through the site to McKinley Rd (Arlington) and the BJ's signal (Falls Church), improving regional connectivity.

The existing 12-story building already exceeds current height guidance. The new 8-story building is compatible with the 10-story maximum planned along Wilson Blvd. The Fairfax County planning staff supported approval of the measure, deemed critical to allow for sewer improvements that will enable thousands of future housing units in the broader land unit.

According to YIMBY Northern Virginia, the applicant is generating 29 ADUs by-right but is offering an option for up to 140 units affordable up to 60 percent AMI by leveraging creative financing. "This is the type of innovation we need," it said in a statement. Also included in the plan are major transportation upgrades. It would reduce the crossing distance at Waples Mill Rd and Pender Dr. by 30 feet, add high-visibility crosswalks, push-activated signals, a raised median, and multiple bus stops with shelters. It improves the intersection while maintaining traffic flow (balancing car movement with pedestrian safety), includes an open space network of more than 5.5 acres, featuring a common green for residents of the broader area to gather.



THE WASHINGTON BALALAIKA ENSEMBLE performed as part of the program of the Falls Church Concert Band's offering at the Meridian High auditorium last Saturday night. (Photo: News-Press)

F.C. Chamber Prepares for March 19 'Stars & Stripes' Gala

The annual awards gala of the Falls Church Chamber of Commerce this year will be held at the State Theater on Thursday, March 19, that will highlight business award announcements in five categories.

The theme of this year's event will be "Stars and Stripes"

Benton Book Discussion & Signing Tonight at One More Page Books

A public presentation and book signing of the Falls Church News-Press' founder, owner and editor Nicholas F. Benton will be held at the One More Page bookstore at 2200 N. Westmoreland St., a few steps outside the Falls Church city limits in N. Arlington tonight (Thursday, Mar. 12) starting at 7 p.m. Benton's eighth book, "Please Don't Eat Your Children," was published in January by BCI Books of Falls Church. It is a collection of Benton's weekly columns from the period of Trump's second term, and includes a set of essays on the subject of "Cult Century."

Benton will deliver remarks in response to questions from Lou Chibarro, the veteran news reporter for the Washington Blade, and sign copies of his latest book. Admission is free.

Del. Lopez' Bill Requiring Biosolid Testing Passes

Wednesday, legislation from Del. Alfonso Lopez of Northern Virginia passed out of the Virginia General Assembly. The bill requires regular sampling of biosolids for PFAS "forever" chemicals. It was previously passed with a vote of 67-29 in the House of Delegates and a vote of 40-0 in the Senate.

"PFAS chemicals are becoming increasingly common in our waterways and surrounding areas, as well as in the biosolids used as fertilizer on our farms. They have also been linked to serious health concerns like cancer and liver damage," said Lopez. "With this in mind, I am especially proud of the work we have done with the wastewater treatment industry, the environmental community, and the Administration over the past several months to pass this important legislation."

HB 1443 would require sewage distributors to collect regular samples for PFAS analysis by the Department of Environmental Quality, prohibiting land application of biosolids if concentrations surpass 50 micrograms per kilogram on a rolling 12-month basis. Additionally, it will require notification of landowners before land application of these biosolids, providing much-needed transparency.



KIMBERLY STOBO (left), long time Falls Church resident who is spearheading efforts to revive the City's annual New Year's Eve Watch Night celebration, briefed the City's Economic Development Authority on her progress Tuesday night. (Photo: News-Press)

The Kensington Falls Church Presents

Scan QR Code to RSVP:



Nourishing the Mind: The Powerful Connection Between Brain Health & Nutrition

Saturday, March 21st, 11am - 12pm at The Kensington

Led by **Melissa J. Long**, the program will highlight practical, everyday strategies to support cognitive wellness, energy, and overall vitality through healthy lifestyle choices as we age.

This event is free and open to the public. Guests are invited to enjoy light bites and refreshments prepared by Chef Daniel in a welcoming, supportive setting.



Melissa J. Long, Certified Recreational Therapist & Certified Dementia Practitioner with over 20 years of experience.

Our expert will discuss:

- Tips & insights on how to support cognitive wellness, energy, and overall vitality as we age.
- Nutritional & lifestyle approaches to strengthen both heart health and cognitive wellness.



RSVP Today!

For questions, please email Kayla Hulbert at khulbert@kensingtonsl.com



700 West Broad Street, Falls Church, VA 22046 | TheKensingtonFallsChurch.com

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FCCPS Board Budget Request Falls Within City Hall 'Guidance'

Continued from Page 1

we know that we need to continue to add to our programming and enhancements to keep us the number one district in the Commonwealth," said Dr. Dade at Tuesday's School Board meeting. "These cuts were not easy. So while we are remaining calm and we know that things will be OK, I just wanted that reflection as we end tonight."

The approved operating budget represents a 3.1 percent overall increase over the current fiscal year and requires a local govern-

ment transfer of \$57,680,284. The board also approved a Food Services budget of \$1,789,008 and a Community Services budget of \$3,058,845.

All the votes were unanimous voice votes.

The path to Tuesday's vote was not a straight line. Since the budget process formally launched in December, the district has absorbed more than \$620,000 in additional cost pressures — including a \$500,000 reduction in projected city revenue and a \$120,000 increase in health insurance costs when rates came in at 13 percent, well above the 10

percent that had been budgeted. To offset those pressures, the district identified savings through attrition, and modest reductions to operational and contractual line items — all without touching compensation or benefits.

The approved budget funds the district at 4.1 percent above last year's transfer — below the 5.02 percent "maintenance-of-effort" the district originally identified as the minimum needed to sustain current services. A list of additional priorities — including expanded support for struggling readers and math learners, enhancements to district operations, and investments in early learners — remains unfunded pending further clarity in the city's broader budget process.

Board Chair Kathleen Tysse acknowledged both the work behind the numbers and the challenges ahead. "I am proud of the work that we have done and the integrity that this budget represents," she said. "But I want to be really clear — we are very far from our maintenance of effort. That \$600,000 feels very far away. The budget is extremely lean, and that feels especially challenging in such uncertain times."

Tysse also emphasized the district's reliance on the revenue sharing agreement with the City of Falls Church — a structural part-

nership that determines how local tax revenue is distributed between the city government and the schools. "We don't set the tax rate. We don't approve funding transfers. We rely very deeply on the predictability and transparency of our revenue share so that we can budget responsibly."

Updated revenue projections shared at the meeting suggest the district could receive up to an additional \$182,450 if tax revenue reaches \$7 million, as projected. That potential additional revenue was not incorporated into Tuesday's approved budget but could be applied to maintenance-of-effort or high-priority needs as the city's budget process concludes.

The advertised budget will be presented jointly to the Falls Church City Council by Board Chair Tysse, and city leadership on March 23 in connection with the overall City budget for the coming year (that begins July 1) as recommended by City Manager Wyatt Shields.

Falls Church City Public Schools serve approximately 2,700 students across five schools and is one of only nine school districts in the United States to offer the full International Baccalaureate continuum, Pre-K through 12th grade.



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

Join the biggest block party ever in Falls Church!



2,500 lined Broad Street in October to protest our would-be king. Let's double that - Will you be there?

We'll start the party on **March 21st**:

- Sign & button-making workshops (10 - 12)
- A car contest / parade (11 - 1)

And on **March 28th** from 10 - 12:

- Hands Across Falls Church on route 7
- Contests for costumes, signs, & cars



We're committed to non-violent, peaceful protest
<https://fallschurchindivisible.org>



2026 RainSmart Grants



The Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) announces 2026 grants to conserve water, reduce stormwater runoff, and protect local streams in the City of Falls Church.

- Rain Barrels: \$50 for each of up to 2 barrels
- Rain Gardens: NEW grant increase; \$3,000 or 50% of cost whichever is less



See the VPIS website for information:
vpis.org/environment/rainsmart-program

This 'War,' This Unspeakable Inhumanity

NICHOLAS F.
BENTON

FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

As a pointless exercise undertaken because he can, the cavalier Trumpian "war" on Iran will, hopefully, go down in the history books as one of the most inept and foolish undertakings by a major world power in a century.

Lost, as always, in all the narratives about such things, dignified by the term "war," are the true victims. How dull to talk about loss of life among the ordinary people, after all. How boring to show lives and neighborhoods maimed and destroyed.

As a journalist who has focused his local newspaper on the efforts from week to week for the last three dozen years on the elements that it takes to build and grow a prosperous community, I have seen replayed over and over the time and effort put in by people on all sides of a given project to see it from start to finish: To build a new school, to construct an assisted living facility, to bring to pass vital improvements to streets and parks, to maintain them all, to find ways to pay for them all.

And then comes a bomb. Whoosh! Boom! In an instant, all that effort is turned to twisted rubble and pain.

This hasn't happened in my community, but it might as well be mine as it is a neighborhood or suburb of Teheran, or Gaza City, or Odessa.

It is not the heads of state or military leaders who suffer any of this, even though the stated purpose of the bombs are to punish them. No, it is the children, maimed, bloodied, killed, and their little brothers and sisters, and innocent parents and teachers and household pets, and their homes and playgrounds that are obliterated.

War is such a heinous mass murderous act. It can only be justified as the last resort against an undeniable evil, and even then cause for great remorse and repentance.

It is an unspeakable travesty that the American people have allowed such a dirty gang of miscreants into their governing leadership as we now have. War is sin. War is evil.

Sin and evil are now named where the term "defense" once stood. Department of War! Who is the slaughterhouse manager responsible for that name, and for the unprovoked wanton destruction that agency has been commanded to commit?

But let's not limit this concern to bombs and assault weapons. The most recent issue of the respected science journal *Lancet Global Health* has documented even more insidious ways that our nation, and others, have destroyed the lives of innocent people: economic sanctions, levied ostensibly to, again, punish leaders of regimes deemed deserving of the pain they are intended to inflict, have instead taken the lives of no less than 564,258 human beings every single year between 1971 and 2021. Where these sanctions targeted development assistance in low-income countries, an annual increase of infant mortality by 3.1 percent and in maternal mortality of 6.4 percent has occurred between 1990 and 2019.

Lancet reports, "Sanctions are restrictive foreign policy tools that are commonly applied to broad economic transactions, with the punitive aim of coercing behaviour change, such as stopping human rights violations or promoting democracy. According to the *Global Sanctions Database*, the frequency and duration of sanctions have consistently grown since 1950, while their success rate of achieving the stated aim remains at about 30 percent."

It adds, "All economic sanctions ultimately function as sanctions on health. Through their direct effects on access to medical products, provision of health-care services, and civilian mental health, as well as their indirect effects on determinants of health such as food security and socioeconomic development, sanctions inevitably or even intentionally undermine people's right to health. Moreover, the adverse effects of sanctions on health are most pronounced among children, women (versus men), and the most marginalised populations. With a low efficacy rate and a significant and uneven impact on health, it is questionable whether economic sanctions meaningfully reduce the number of deaths relative to military aggression."

More lives lost due to sanctions than even to war, itself. Ah, the inhumanity.



A Penny for Your Thoughts

By Penny Gross

Former Fairfax County Supervisor

Two days before Donald Trump ordered a military attack on Iran, unleaded regular gas was \$2.67 per gallon at my regular Shell station in Annandale. The following Saturday, that same station was selling the same gas for \$3.29, an increase of 62 cents in nine days, or 23 percent. Trump still thinks affordability is a hoax, but he doesn't have to whip out a credit card to fill "The Beast" limousine, or pay a jet fuel surcharge on Air Force One which, by some estimates, costs \$200,000 an hour each time Mr. Trump decides to fly to one of his golf resorts or other exotic locale away from the White House.

The cost of Operation Epic Fury (who comes up with these names?) is yet to be determined but, at an estimated billion dollars a day so far, it easily could outstrip the estimated \$168 billion cost of the Vietnam War. That action was nearly 20 years in length, so the cost spread over time was about \$23 million per day, but America also suffered almost 57,000 combat fatalities, and thousands of veterans have been battling

PTSD and other war-related issues ever since. As Presidents Kennedy and Johnson discovered, the cost of war has multiple ramifications for the American people and society, not just for the military. Rarely is aggression "one and done" although Mr. Trump's comments so far appear to focus on the massive use of American weapons, dismissing potential deaths as "the bad parts of war." American troops are on alert but have yet to be deployed as of this writing.

That situation may not last long. In his several press briefings about Iran last week, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth appeared to have two favorite words: warriors and lethality. His demeanor was positively bouncy as he described the massive use of force, the kinds of missiles and drones used, and he delighted in announcing that an American submarine had torpedoed and sunk an Iranian vessel in the Indian Ocean. Hegseth's aggression obsession is in overdrive. This is not a video game; has anyone told that to Trump, Vance, and Hegseth?

Few in the West are mourning the death of Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, whose iron rule of Iran continued the despotism of the earlier Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khomeini. Mr. Trump may have thought that a quick hit on Iran would effect regime change, but Middle East experts understand that thousands of years of religious and political strife will not be settled by Western aggression. In a January 8 column, I asserted that Trump's invasion of Venezuela and removal of President Nicolas Maduro was all about oil, not regime change, free and fair elections, or drug interdiction. It shouldn't be a surprise if Trump's attack on Iran also is all about oil, not regime change, not about helping the Iranian people take back their government, even though he has encouraged them to do so. Except for a brief tenuous democracy in the early 1950s, Iran's government has been an autocratic monarchy or a religious regime so building a new democratic structure will require societal assets that simply do not exist now.

In this country, gasoline prices likely will continue to rise, along with prices of most other goods and services that come by air, rail, or land, further strangling household budgets. Affordability a hoax? Not for most Americans!

CITY OF FALLS CHURCH CRIME REPORT

The City of Falls Church has not submitted a crime report this week.

2026 Issues Coming Soon:

3/26: Spring Home & Real Estate Edition

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Falls Church News-Press

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

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EDITORIAL

Why Print?

The latest expert market analysis of the value of print newspapers suggests a fresh set of parameters that reflect a pronounced change in just the past two years. Up until very recently, the overwhelming sentiment has been that print is dead, and the future of information was solely in the hands of the digital realm. Not so fast, experts are now saying.

Here's what the best among the pros are now identifying as the particular value of good old fashioned print newspapers (like ours): Print conveys permanence and authority. Readers often trust physical newspapers more than digital-only outlets, which are perceived as transient.

Independent regional print media builds a brand reputation that carries over to digital platforms, sponsorships, and events. Research shows that print readers are more engaged and retain more content than those who only consume digital news. Trust and credibility translate into loyal subscribers, repeat advertisers, and a defensible market position.

Tangible brand presence: Physical newspapers are visible in homes, offices, cafes, and community hubs, reinforcing brand awareness every week. Print editions act as a constant marketing tool, even for digital products, newsletters, podcasts, and events. For regional businesses and institutions, having ads in print adds perceived legitimacy and local reach. Print isn't just content; it's a physical brand asset that strengthens community recognition.

Revenue diversity and premium pricing: Print allows premium advertising rates compared with online-only display ads. Businesses often value print placements for local prestige and visibility, tangible engagement (people pick up and read the paper), event sponsorship tie-ins, and multi-channel offerings (print + digital + events + newsletters) that increase revenue per advertiser. Print supports a diversified revenue model, reducing reliance on low-margin digital-only ads.

Audience engagement and loyalty: Print readers tend to be older, affluent, and engaged—the demographics advertisers highly value. Readers are more likely to spend time with print versus scrolling online, increasing exposure to ads and sponsored content. Print subscribers are often cross-promoted to digital newsletters and event programs, enhancing lifetime customer value. Print readership is sticky and monetizable across multiple platforms.

Competitive differentiation: Digital-only outlets dominate the web, but many lack regional investigative coverage, in-depth analysis, or credibility. A print presence communicates stability, independence, and journalistic rigor, differentiating the brand from ephemeral blogs, social media news, and aggregator sites. Print also enables special editions, local inserts, and sponsorship opportunities not easily replicated online. Print provides a defensible competitive advantage in an otherwise crowded digital media space.

Synergy with local communities: Print is a gateway to informed citizens. A physical paper can drive civic engagement. Print also legitimizes events and forums, as sponsors trust an organization with a physical publication backing its brand. Print amplifies the entire business ecosystem, events, and partnerships.

Tangible asset for long-term value: Unlike digital-only platforms, which can be quickly replicated or displaced, print builds a lasting asset: a physical product with archives, brand history, and collector or institutional value.

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BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING

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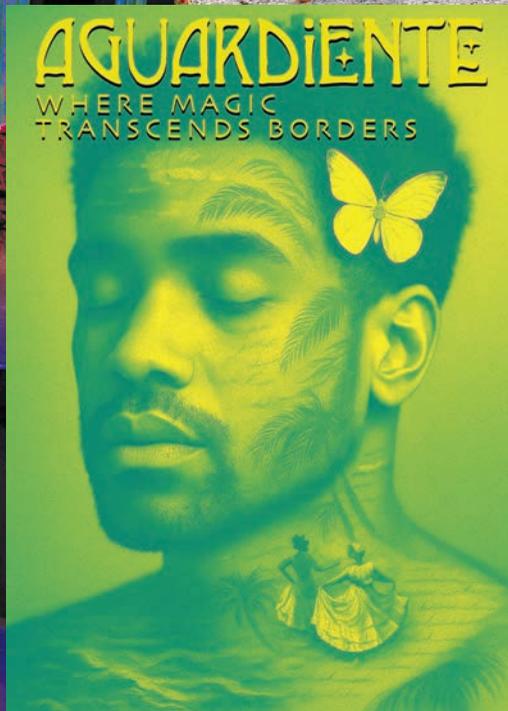
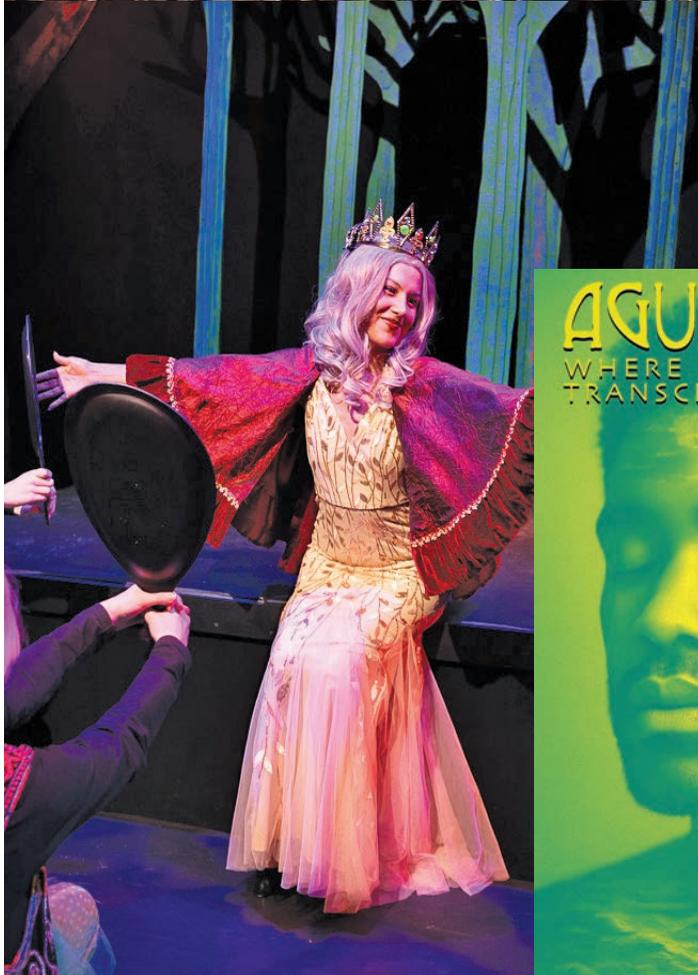
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Spring Arts & Entertainment Preview

Pages 7-17



National Building Museum Hosts Free ‘Big Draw’ Saturday

BY PATRICIA LESLIE

Everyone is invited to come one, come all Saturday to the big free day at the National Building Museum for the “Big Draw” for children of all ages to learn more about drawing to (adults hope) better understand our world today.

It’s a great way to spend a spring day with the family at the museum which hosts its third annual “Big Draw” with new exhibitions upstairs on specialized schools of the 1930s and the rebuilding of a university chapel.

The Building Museum is hosting the event with other D.C. museums and institutions in sessions of interactive storytelling, songs, drawing and more.

Tomasz Wiktor, a multi-media artist from Paris and native son of Poland will demonstrate his techniques of virtual reality drawings, while illustrator Trap Bob will show off her new four-foot-tall coloring book.

David Macaulay, the Caldecott Medal-winning author and illustrator of the classic, *The Way Things Work*, will demonstrate how he works and he will lead small workshops. (Sign up at nbm.

[org/event/the-big-draw/](https://www.nbm.org/event/the-big-draw/))

And, as long as they last, free copies of his *Rome Antics* (1997) will be given out.

The grownups in the crowd can truck on upstairs to see “A Better Life for Their Children: Julius Rosenwald, Booker. T Washington and the 4,978 Schools that Changed America,” and “The Tuskegee Chapel,” which was destroyed by fire in 1957.

In 1912 philanthropist Julius Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington, the founder and president of Tuskegee University, joined interests and money to begin building schools for Black children in 15 Southern and border states.

To avoid drawing attention and possibly arson from surrounding communities, the schools were designed in modest, plain styles with lots of windows for natural heating in winter and air flow in hot summers. Heat, supplied by the communities which agreed to “buy in,” was not always affordable.

A short video runs adjacent to a portion of a recreated Rosenwald classroom



Continued on Page 10 After the 1957 fire at the Tuskegee Chapel. (Photo:Prentice H. Polk)

FALLS CHURCH
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

2026 GALA

You are invited to celebrate the business community with the Falls Church Chamber of Commerce for
the 2026 Annual Business Awards Gala

The Stars and Stripes Ball

On Thursday, March 19th, 6:30-10:00 pm at the State Theatre

Scan the QR code to purchase tickets,
shop the auction, and more!



FCNP, KiPS, Stylish Patina, Eden Center, Chesterbrook Residences, Falls Church Arts, Hope for Grieving Families, NOVA ScriptsCentral, The Arc of Northern Virginia, MtoM Consulting

And for Pillar of the Community:
Jody Acosta and Phil Duncan

Thank you to our 2026 Gala Sponsors:

The Reserve	CJ Hair Salon
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VFW	Founders Eyecare
Veterinary Emergency Group	The Toy Nest
New Edge Awards	Paragon Theater
The Kensington	Levine Music

For more information, contact the Greater Falls Church Chamber of Commerce at 703-532-1050 or elise@fallschurchchamber.org

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The Case for Shadows, Highlights and the Human Hand

Continued from Page 8

with desks of the period, a lunch tray, a globe and copies of books which were later distributed to high schools, too, including White schools.

An interactive map shows original school locations, photographs and their uses today, some which still stand in Maryland and Virginia. (D.C. had no Rosenwald schools.)

Photographer and curator Andrew Feiler traveled more than 25,000 miles, visited 105 schools and interviewed dozens of former students, teachers, preservationists, and community leaders to document and tell this story of the schools which made a difference in the lives of Black school children like Maya Angelou, John Lewis and Medgar Evers and many more who are listed.

Some 500 of the schools still remain and have been renovated as community centers, senior centers, churches, private residences and even a truck rental sales office.

But some are near collapse and a movement to create a national historical park to commemorate the Rosenwald schools is underway.

The schools and chapel exhibitions are

presented jointly in a series of photographs, artifacts, models and drawings.

The cause of the fire at the Tuskegee Chapel was originally thought to be lightning, but recent debate has focused on arson, according to the exhibition. After it burned, Tuskegee students built it back from 1967-1969 using 1.2 million bricks of Alabama clay.

For the "Big Draw," visitors may bring their own materials or use those at the Building Museum. Other museums and institutions participating in the festival are the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the Postal Museum, the Maryland Institute College of Art, the D.C. Public Library, and the Embassy of Poland whose representatives will present stories of culture, history, and international connections to Poland.

The National Building Museum, 401 F St., NW, Washington, DC 20001, on the Red Line at Judiciary Square, four blocks from the National Mall with one of the best gift shops in all of D.C. Open 10 am - 5 pm, Thursday - Monday. Info@nbm.org; 202-272-2448. Regular admission is \$10, adults; \$7, seniors and students, but free all day this Saturday for all.



IN THE TUSKEGEE Chapel gallery at the National Building Museum. (Photo: Patricia Leslie)



THE 1957 FIRE at the Tuskegee Chapel (Photo:Prentice H. Polk)

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 Music by Daniel A. Gutiérrez (Colombia)
 Lyrics by Daniel A. Gutiérrez & Luis Salgado
 Direction & Choreography by Luis Salgado
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80 Years, 80 Works Highlight Women Artists Worldwide

BY PATRICIA LESLIE

Eighty years and 80 works by 68 women artists from around the globe are on display in the newest exhibition at the National Museum of Women in the Arts, “Making Their Mark: Works from the Shah Garg Collection.”

The San Francisco-based collection is a large, dynamic show, established by collectors who are among “the most influential in the United States,” NMWA says.

Komal Shah and her husband Gaurav Garg began their joint collection in 2014 to extol contemporary female artists through paintings, sculpture, installations, textiles, beadwork, ceramics and more.

Featured are underrepresented artists and others who are better known, like Joan Mitchell (1925, Chicago – 1992, France), Barbara Chase-Riboud (b. 1939, Philadelphia) and Judy Chicago (b.1930, Chicago).

Intrigue and conversation are triggered by these mostly abstract expressionists who help kick off March’s Women’s History Month at the museum. (I can’t wait to go back and take in more!)

At the entrance to the exhibition, visitors are invited to take a “Political Ribbon (Fondazione Furla/GAM Milan),” 2022 made

by Andrea Bowers (b. 1965, Wilmington, Ohio) who applied silkscreen ink on satin with phrases like “Sexism Sucks” and “It Is Not Enough to Be Compassionate.”

Barbara Chase-Riboud’s 2016 sculpture “Malcolm X #17,” is a tall, treelike structure with bark of gold patina in recognition of an “historical icon whose life radiated far beyond the politics of the temporal,” she wrote. It celebrates “light, movement, and material union,” according to the label.

Judy Chicago used acrylic spray lacquer on acrylic with a base of glass and plexiglass for her 1968 “Dark Red, Blue, Green Domes (small).”

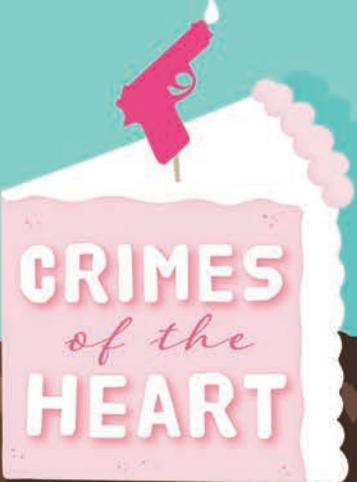
Uman is a self-taught artist born in 1980 in Mogadishu, Somalia which her family left for Kenya during the Somali Civil War. Later, Uman moved to Denmark and lived with her aunt and then going to New York City where she sold art on the street.

Now she lives in upstate New York where she combines art history with her own experiences and love of South African music to produce art like “Amapiano Dance,” 2022-23 on view.

An artist who uses a “hole puncher” is



Continued on Page 12 Barbara Chase-Riboud, “Malcolm X #17,” 2016. (Photo: Patricia Leslie)



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of the
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March 13–28

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Center Theater
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Falls Church, VA 22042

ProvidencePlayers.org



Shah Garg Collection Anchors Major NMWA Exhibition

Continued from Page 11

Howardena Pindell (b.1943, Philadelphia) who began punching “chads” around 1970, long before they became synonymous with the 2000 presidential election. She spray paints and applies acrylics through stencils on fixed canvases for her chads. Her “Untitled #7 Bahia, Brazil,” 2023 is a mixed media on canvas.

Some unusual materials Pindell uses are talcum powder and perfume.

Joyce J. Scott is an artist born in Baltimore in 1948, who, with the help of others, finished making “Harriet’s Quilt” in 2022 in honor of abolitionist Harriet Tubman (1822-1913). Scott used glass and found plastic beads, yarn and fabric knotted by her late mother (below).

Elizabeth Talford Scott (1916-2011) was born on Blackstock Plantation in

Enoree, S.C. where her family lived as sharecroppers and handed down sewing and needlework techniques from generation to generation.

Scott’s intricate 1992 piece, “Save the Babies” loosely follows the shape of a shield for “protection and healing,” the wall label says. Cotton, synthetics, metallic and embroidery threads, bead, shells, sequins and buttons are some of the items Scott used.

Olga de Amaral (b.1932, Bogota, Columbia) was an important figure in the 1960s development of Latin American abstraction whose 1995 “Alquimia Plata 6 (B)” shows her talents. Using gesso, acrylic paint, and gold and silver leaf, she made a thousand woven linen tiles evoking Bogota’s roof tops.

One of my favorite pieces in the galleries was “Sisters,” 2021 by Tschabalala Self (b. 1990, New York City), a large

mixed media of two figures whom the artist calls “avatars” which permits her to reclaim “interpretative authority” over Black women’s bodies, she says. Velvet, felt, tulle, marbled cotton and craft paper are some of the materials she used.

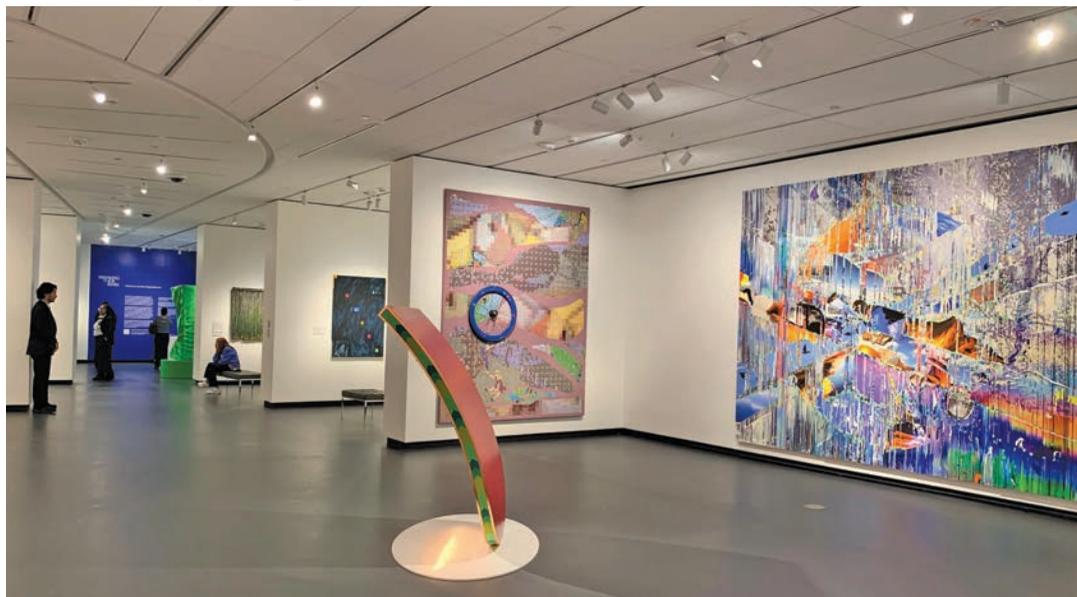
The Shah Garg artists ques-

tion male dominance in the art world and “envision art history as an interconnected web of influences and affinities among artists who subvert traditional narrative and hierarchies in a historically patriarchal field,” according to a statement.

Indeed, NMWA continues

its promotion of the Guerrilla Girls’ mantra, asking: “Do women have to be naked to get in the Met. Museum?” Three percent of the artists in the Modern Met section are women; 83 percent of the

Continued on Page 14



WORKS IN the galleries. (Photo: Patricia Leslie)



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'The Bride' Review

BY LISA SINROD

This movie surprised me. I am not a fan of anything Frankenstein, and yet the originality and creative quirks of this jam-packed two-hour ride directed by Maggie Gyllenhaal gave me an exciting and enjoyable experience. The best way to describe the genre of this film is to call it a horror-thriller with feminist undertones. The R-rated film opened nationally on March 6, and is not something I would suggest taking young teens to see based on all of the reasons for its rating.

The plot revolves around a newly created companion (the Bride) for Frankenstein's monster in this reimagining of the classic "Bride of Frankenstein" story written by Mary Shelley. For the uninitiated, Mary Shelley visited Lord Byron's villa in Switzerland along with her partner in 1816. Lord Byron, who was a famous poet, proposed a contest in which those visiting would each write a ghost story. Shelley wrote of a gifted scientist named Victor Frankenstein who uses his lab equipment to create a life (the monster) and then is horrified by what he has created. Shelley expanded her short story (the ghost story) into a novel which was published anonymously in 1818 with the title "Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus." All derivations of the Frankenstein franchise stem from this long-ago story written by a young British woman on holiday.

This film is set in 1930s Chicago, where Frankenstein's monster (soulfully portrayed by Christian Bale) seeks the help of a scientist to create a companion to become his bride. The monster has been knocking around since his creation early in the last century and is profoundly lonely. Annette Bening is terrific in the role of Dr. Leonora Whittle, the scientist who revives a murdered young woman named Ida to become the monster's bride. The elaborate equipment she assembles for this undertaking is strange-

ly fascinating. Jessie Buckley plays multiple roles in the film, which are a showcase for her talent. She portrays the original Frankenstein author, Mary Shelley, providing a narrative anchor to the plot. She appears as Ida, the murdered woman who is revived to become the Bride, and she also portrays the Bride. She brings great energy to all three interconnected roles. Buckley carries the film at times when the script seems a bit too chaotic. This past year has been big for Buckley, who is currently nominated in the Best Actress (Academy Awards) category for her role in "Hamnet". The Irish actress was also directed by Maggie Gyllenhaal in "The Lost Daughter" in 2021.

As Frankenstein's monster gets to know the Bride, things don't go exactly as he had envisioned. This Bride is very independent and refuses to be controlled by men. Unlike the docile Bride seen as a silent figure in the 1935 film "The Bride of Frankenstein", this Bride expresses anger about exploitation and doesn't exist just to serve the monster. Despite this, the Bride and the monster form a strong connection which sets up the underlying themes of the movie. There are some rebellious punk and "riot grrl" vibes mid-way through the movie, which seem completely out of context and yet are oddly charming. Bale's solid performance humanizes the monster, who seems to be a deep thinker with good intentions.

This movie is not for everyone. It is raw and raucous and engages in sardonic innuendo. It's a difficult film to describe and even harder to say who will enjoy its unusual approach and who won't. Since the film's release, audience reaction has been decidedly mixed, so you may fall on either side of that equation. If you decide to see it, be prepared for some violent content and coarse language, which seems to be reflective of the environment of its characters.



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A Mason Arts Venue

Women Artists Across Eight Decades Fill NMWA Galleries

Continued from Page 12

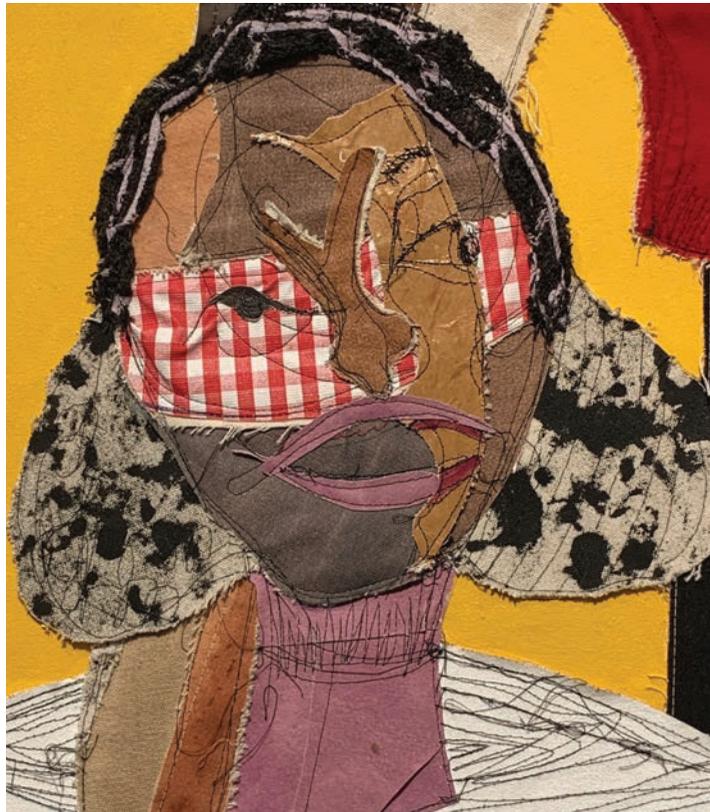
nudes are female.

A 400-plus page Shah Garg color hardback catalogue is available in the museum shop for \$65. The exhibition has already traveled to several venues in the U.S. and heads next to Arizona State after NMWA.

NMWA is open Tuesday - Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 1250 New York Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20005. 202-783-5000, nmwa.org.

Adults, \$16; DC residents and seniors, \$13; free to members, those 21 and under, those with disabilities and to all who visit the museum on the first Sunday and second Wednesday of every month.

NMWA joins the National Building Museum for its free "Big Draw" day for all ages this coming Saturday, March 14.



DETAIL OF SELF'S "SISTERS." (Photo: Patricia Leslie)



TSCHABALALA SELF, "SISTERS." (Photo: Patricia Leslie)

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Spring Arts Season Brings Music, Theater, and Family Shows

BY FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

Northern Virginia and the greater Washington, D.C., region are home to one of the richest performing arts communities in the country. From professional theaters and internationally renowned concert halls to grassroots arts organizations and chamber ensembles, the area offers a remarkable range of cultural experiences year-round. Institutions such as Signature Theatre, Arena Stage, GALA Theatre, Creative Cauldron, and the Center for the Arts at George Mason University, along with organizations including Falls Church Arts, the Falls Church Chamber of Commerce, Little City Concerts, Amadeus Concerts, Providence Players of Fairfax, Little Theatre of Alexandria, Vocal Arts Fairfax, Orla Conway Music, and the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C., collectively shape a vibrant arts ecosystem that serves audiences of all ages.

These organizations span the full spectrum of performing and visual

arts—professional musicals, classical concerts, community theater productions, children's programming, vocal ensembles, and visual arts exhibitions—demonstrating how deeply the arts are woven into the cultural life of Northern Virginia and the nation's capital.

A Regional Hub for Performing Arts

At the heart of this cultural landscape is the Center for the Arts at George Mason University, a premier performing arts venue that has hosted world-class musicians, theater companies, dance ensembles, and family programming for more than three decades. Located on the George Mason University campus in Fairfax, the Center draws artists from across the globe while also serving as an educational resource and performance hub for the university and the surrounding community.

The Center's programming spans classical music, jazz, interna-

tional ensembles, dance, and family-friendly performances, reflecting the diversity of the region itself. The 2026 season continues that tradition with events ranging from internationally acclaimed Irish musicians to beloved children's entertainment.

One such event is the appearance of Danú, one of today's most celebrated traditional Irish music ensembles. The group performs Friday, March 20 at 8 p.m., bringing the vibrant sounds of Ireland to Northern Virginia audiences.

Widely praised as a "compellingly original" ensemble by the Los Angeles Times, Danú has spent more than two decades captivating listeners with a rich blend of ancient Irish melodies and contemporary compositions. The group's instrumentation—featuring flute, tin whistle, fiddle, button accordion, bouzouki, and vocals—captures the spirit of traditional Irish music while allowing for dynamic interpretation and innovation.

Danú's musicians are internationally recognized virtuosos whose

performances have taken them to prestigious venues including the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles and Symphony Space in New York City. Their music has been broadcast live on major networks such as NPR, the BBC, and the CBC, and their seven critically acclaimed albums have earned numerous honors from BBC Music and Irish Music Magazine.

Audiences attending the Fairfax performance can expect an immersive evening of music that blends spirited dance tunes, lyrical ballads, and dazzling instrumental interplay. As Strings Magazine described the ensemble, Danú offers a performance that is "impressive, immersive and uniquely and unmistakably Irish."

The concert runs approximately 90 minutes with intermission and is appropriate for audiences of all ages. Ticket prices range from \$38 to \$60, with half-price tickets available for youth through Grade 12, making the event accessible to families and students interested in

exploring traditional music.

Introducing Young Audiences to the Orchestra

The Center for the Arts also emphasizes family programming designed to inspire the next generation of arts lovers. One highlight of the spring season is Peppa Pig — My First Concert, scheduled for Saturday, April 11 at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.

This lively and interactive performance introduces children as young as 18 months to the world of orchestral music. Peppa Pig, along with Mummy Pig, Daddy Pig, and George, takes young audiences on a musical adventure featuring live performances by the Southbank Sinfonia.

During the show, Peppa and George learn about the different sounds instruments make when played together, exploring musical themes and pieces drawn both from the popular children's television series and from the broader orches-

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Cultural Programs Take Center Stage

Continued from Page 15

tral repertoire. Children are encouraged to participate by clapping, moving, and engaging with the music, transforming the concert into an interactive learning experience.

Critics have praised the program as “a fun and interactive introduction to a live orchestra that will take Peppa Pig fans on a magical musical journey,” according to The Live Review.

Recommended for children ages two and older, the performance runs approximately 55 minutes with no intermission—a length designed specifically for younger audiences. Ticket prices range from \$41 to \$65, and the 4 p.m. performance will include audio description and sign interpretation, reflecting the Center’s commitment to accessibility and inclusive programming.

Celebrating Latin American Culture at GALA Theatre

While the Center for the Arts brings global performers to Northern Virginia, Washington,

D.C.’s GALA Theatre highlights the vibrant artistic traditions of the Latino community. Located in the historic Tivoli Theatre in Columbia Heights, GALA has spent decades producing bilingual productions that celebrate Latin American heritage and storytelling.

This spring, GALA presents the world premiere of *Aguardiente: Where Magic Transcends Borders*, running April 30 through May 24. Commissioned by GALA, the production is a new musical conceived by Luis Salgado of Puerto Rico and Daniel A. Gutiérrez of Colombia.

Salgado, who also directs and choreographs the production, collaborated with Gutiérrez to create a work that blends Caribbean rhythms, theatrical storytelling, and the literary tradition of magical realism associated with Nobel Prize-winning author Gabriel García Márquez.

The musical follows two New York-based writers from Colombia and Puerto Rico who return to their ancestral roots. Through music and

storytelling, they rediscover their cultural heritage and explore the emotional ties that connect diaspora communities to their homelands.

The score incorporates traditional and contemporary rhythms including cumbia, bomba, and curulao, creating a vibrant musical landscape that reflects the cultural diversity of the Caribbean and Latin America. As the characters reconnect with their heritage, the narrative explores themes of identity, migration, and artistic inspiration.

Presented bilingually with subtitles in English and Spanish, the production reflects GALA Theatre’s longstanding commitment to making Latino stories accessible to audiences from diverse backgrounds.

The Broader Arts Community

These performances exist within a larger network of arts organizations that collectively sustain the region’s cultural vitality.

Signature Theatre, based in Arlington, is widely regarded as

one of the country’s leading regional theaters, particularly known for its inventive productions of contemporary musicals and bold reinterpretations of classic works. The theater has received numerous Tony Awards and nominations, and its intimate performance spaces allow audiences to experience musical theater at close range.

Nearby in Washington, D.C., Arena Stage stands as one of the nation’s most influential regional theaters. Founded in 1950, Arena Stage helped pioneer the regional theater movement and continues to premiere new American plays while presenting innovative revivals. Its campus along the Southwest Waterfront includes the iconic Fichandler Stage, the Kreeger Theater, and the Arlene and Robert Kogod Cradle.

Community theater also plays an important role in the region’s cultural life. The Providence Players of Fairfax and the Little Theatre of Alexandria provide opportunities for local actors, directors, and designers to participate in high-quality productions. These organizations not

only entertain audiences but also foster artistic development among community members.

The Falls Church Chamber of Commerce supports many of these cultural initiatives by helping connect local businesses, arts organizations, and residents. Through partnerships and events, the Chamber helps strengthen the local creative economy and ensures that arts programming remains a visible and valued part of community life.

Music and Visual Arts in Falls Church

Falls Church itself has become a hub for smaller but highly influential arts groups. Creative Cauldron, located in the heart of the city, produces professional theater, concerts, and arts education programs. Known for its innovative musical productions and intimate venue, Creative Cauldron offers audiences a close-up experience with performers while nurturing emerging artists.

Continued on Page 17

THE LITTLE THEATRE OF ALEXANDRIA





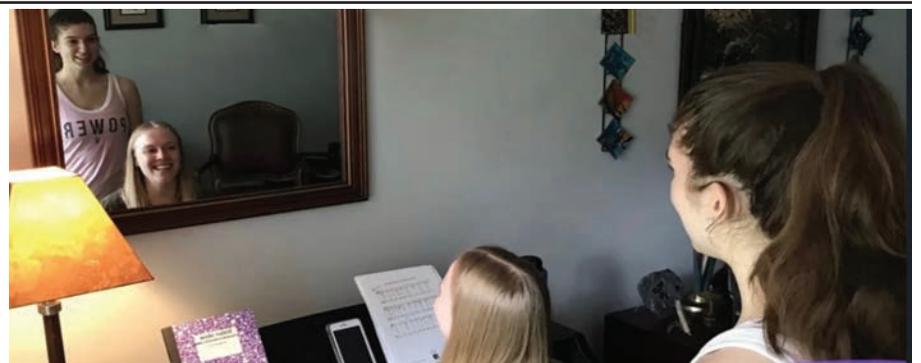
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Area Arts Groups Present Variety

Continued from Page 16

The visual arts are represented by Falls Church Arts, a nonprofit organization that showcases local artists through rotating exhibitions and community programming. The gallery provides opportunities for both established and emerging artists to display their work, contributing to the city's growing reputation as an arts destination.

Classical and chamber music lovers can find exceptional programming through organizations such as Amadeus Concerts and Little City Concerts. These groups present performances by professional musicians in intimate settings, often highlighting lesser-known repertoire alongside beloved classical works.

Orla Conway Music contributes to the region's musical

landscape through educational initiatives and performances that celebrate traditional and folk music traditions. Meanwhile, Vocal Arts Fairfax offers opportunities for singers of all ages to participate in choral performances, helping cultivate a vibrant vocal music community.

Another beloved ensemble, the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C., combines artistic excellence with advocacy. Known for its powerful performances and community outreach, the chorus performs a wide range of repertoire—from Broadway standards to contemporary choral works—while promoting inclusivity and equality through music.

A Cultural Ecosystem

Together, these organizations illustrate how the per-

forming and visual arts function as a collaborative ecosystem across Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C. Large institutions such as the Center for the Arts at George Mason University and Arena Stage bring internationally recognized performers and major productions to the region, while smaller groups and community theaters create opportunities for local participation and artistic experimentation.

This ecosystem benefits audiences by offering an extraordinary diversity of cultural experiences. On any given weekend, residents can attend a professional musical in Arlington, a chamber concert in Falls Church, a community theater production in Fairfax, or an international dance performance in Washington.

Educational initiatives further expand the impact of these

organizations. Many theaters and music groups provide workshops, youth performances, and school partnerships designed to inspire young artists and cultivate future audiences.

Family-friendly programming—such as Peppa Pig — My First Concert—demonstrates how arts institutions are actively working to introduce children to live performance at an early age. At the same time, concerts like Danú and innovative productions such as Aguardiente offer adult audiences the opportunity to experience music and storytelling from around the world.

The Importance of the Arts

Beyond entertainment, the arts play a crucial role in strengthening community identity and economic vitality. Cultural organizations attract visitors, support local businesses, and provide employment for artists and creative professionals. They also serve as spaces where communities gather, share

stories, and explore diverse perspectives.

In Northern Virginia and Washington, the performing arts reflect the region's global character. Irish traditional music, Caribbean musical theater, American drama, and children's orchestral programs all coexist within the same cultural landscape.

As institutions like the Center for the Arts at George Mason University, GALA Theatre, Signature Theatre, Arena Stage, and numerous local organizations continue to collaborate and innovate, the region's arts scene remains dynamic and ever evolving.

For residents and visitors alike, the message is clear: whether through a lively Irish concert, a child's first encounter with orchestral music, or a groundbreaking bilingual musical celebrating Caribbean heritage, the performing arts continue to bring communities together and enrich the cultural life of the entire region.

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This Week Around Falls Church

Thurs, March 12

Board of Zoning Appeals (Cancelled)
7:30 p.m.
300 Park Ave.
Council Chambers/Court Room

Clare & Don's Thursday

Night District Trivia
7 - 9 p.m.
Clare & Don's Beach Shack

Meridian Boys Tennis Scrimmage vs. Alexandria City
4 p.m.
Meridian High School

Meridian Softball Scrimmage at John Champe
6:30 p.m.
John Champe High School

Meridian Girls Soccer Scrimmage at Freedom (South Riding)
7:15 p.m.
Freedom High School

Meridian Boys Lacrosse Scrimmage vs. George Marshall
7:15 p.m.
Meridian High School

Fri, March 13 Maria & Marco
5 p.m.
Clare & Don's Beach Shack

\$5 Comedy Night
Doors 7 p.m.; Show 8:30 p.m.
The State Theatre, 220 N. Washington St.

Sat, March 14

Falls Church Farmers Market
9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
City Hall Parking Lot

Saved By The 90's: A 90s Dance Party with The Bayside Tigers
Doors 8 p.m.; Show 9 p.m.
The State Theatre, 220 N. Washington St.

Sun, March 15

FC250 Talk: Standing Up for Change: African American Women in the Civil Rights Movement
2 - 4 p.m.
Mary Riley Styles Public Library, 120 N. Virginia Ave.
Main Level Conference Room

Mon, March 16

City Council Work Session
7:30 - 11 p.m.
300 Park Ave.
Dogwood Room A and B

Meridian Boys Tennis vs. Kettle Run
4 p.m.
Meridian High School

Meridian Softball vs. Kettle Run
6 p.m.
Meridian High School

Meridian Boys Lacrosse vs. John Champe
7:15 p.m.
Meridian High School

Tues, March 17

Democracy Falls Church Meeting
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Mary Riley Styles Public Library, 120 N. Virginia Ave.

FC250 Reading Group:

We the Readers
6:30 - 8 p.m.
Mary Riley Styles Public Library, 120 N. Virginia Ave.
Main Level Conference Room

Meridian Girls Soccer vs. North Stafford
7 p.m.
Meridian High School

Meridian Girls Lacrosse at John Champe
7:30 p.m.
John Champe High School

Weds, March 18

Council Agenda Meeting with Staff
8:30 - 9 a.m.
300 Park Ave.
Oak Room

Library Board of Trustees Meeting
6 - 8 p.m.
Mary Riley Styles Public Library, 120 N. Virginia Ave.
Main Level Conference Room

Listening Room Show: Music Benefit for Food for Others with Big Tow
Doors 6:30 p.m.; Show 7 p.m.
Clare & Don's Beach Shack

Meridian Softball vs. Jackson-Reed
6 p.m.
Meridian High School

Urban Forestry Commission Meeting
7 - 9:30 p.m.
300 Park Ave.
Dogwood Room A and B

Planning Commission Meeting
7:30 - 10:30 p.m.
300 Park Ave.
Council Chambers/Court Room

Meridian Girls Lacrosse vs. Broad Run
7:30 p.m.
Meridian High School

Thurs, March 19

Falls Church Chamber of Commerce Gala
6:30 - 10 p.m.
The State Theatre, 220 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA

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- MAR 21** THE STRANGER BILLY JOEL TRIBUTE
- MAR 26** LOVESONG THE CURE TRIBUTE
- MAR 27** WARPED TOUR BAND EMO POP PUNK NIGHT
- MAR 28** SELENA QUINTANILLA TRIBUTE
- APR 03** CHRISTOPHER TITUS
- APR 10** SOUTHERN ACCENTS TOM PETTY TRIBUTE

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For Breaking news

'No Kings' Rally Next Weekend, Referendum Voting Begins

Continued from Page 1

All this is in advance of the major March 28 "Hands Across Falls Church" rally that will bring out people lining Broad Street (Rt. 7) its full length in Falls Church from Haycock Road in the West to Roosevelt Street in the East. Contests will be held for the best signs, best costumes (for people and dogs) and best decorated cars.

As the early voting began last Friday on the Virginia statewide referendum to allow redistricted boundaries for U.S. Congressional districts in response to Trump moves in that direction around the U.S., members of Virginia's congressional delegation issued a statement this week condemning deceptive mailers targeting Black voters on the issue.

The Joint Statement from Members of Virginia's Congressional Delegation

Condemning Deceptive Mailers Targeting Black came in response to offensive and deceptive advertising being distributed by a MAGA-aligned group targeting Black voters, Representatives Bobby Scott, Don Beyer, Jennifer McClellan, Suhas Subramanyam, Eugene Vindman, and James Walkinshaw released the following joint statement:

"We strongly condemn the deceptive and offensive mailers being sent to Black voters across Virginia by a MAGA-aligned group opposing the April 21 referendum.

These mailers misuse imagery from the Civil Rights Movement and even invoke Jim Crow — weaponizing one of the darkest chapters in our nation's history in an attempt to scare voters and manipulate the outcome of this election. This kind of tactic is shameful and has no place in Virginia.

"Across the country, Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans are pushing a national power grab to tilt the 2026 midterm elections and secure a House majority that would allow them to continue rolling back the progress generations fought for during the Civil Rights Movement. Virginia's referendum is a direct response to those efforts — giving voters the power to push back and ensure the 2026 midterms are decided by voters, not politicians manipulating our elections."

Should the referendum pass next month, the redrawn districts include the 7th District that would include the City of Falls Church and be the only one the 11 districts in the state without an incumbent congressman.

In the wake of that, there have already been a number of individuals who have announced their intentions to run in a Democratic primary in August,

should the referendum pass.

The latest entry who announced this week is Dorothy McAuliffe, a former Biden State Department official and first lady of Virginia. State Del. Dan Helmer, D-Fairfax, and former federal prosecutor J.P. Cooney have announced their campaigns, as well, and others are expected to announce in the

coming weeks.

Meanwhile, with the annual legislative session wrapping up in Richmond, Falls Church's two representatives there, State Del. Marcus Simon and State Sen. Saddam Salim, are slated to appear at the monthly luncheon of the Falls Church Chamber of Commerce next Tuesday, March 17, at the Italian Cafe.

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONTEMPORARY HISTORY



Nicholas F. Benton

FOUNDER & EDITOR OF FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS



Nicholas F. Benton

Editor-in-Chief of Falls Church News-Press

with Lou Chibbaro Jr. Senior Reporter for The Washington Blade



One More Page BOOKS



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March 12th at 7pm

2200 N Westmoreland St, Arlington, VA 22213

CLASSIFIEDS

LEGAL NOTICE

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

City Council will hold a public hearing on the following on Monday, March 23, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard.

(TR26-05) RESOLUTION NAMING THE CITY OWNED PARKLAND LOCATED AT THE PROPERTY FORMERLY KNOWN AS 604 SOUTH OAK STREET, CURRENTLY KNOWN AS: 310 FELLOWS COURT; 306 PARKER AVENUE; 304 PARKER AVENUE; 302 PARKER AVENUE; 502 S. OAK STREET; 302 FELLOWS COURT; AND 304 FELLOWS COURT (REAL PROPERTY CODE NUMBERS 52-206-090, 52-206-091, 52-206-092, 52-206-093, 52-206-094, 52-206-095, 52-206-096) AND ANTICIPATED TO BE CONSOLIDATED TO THE ADDRESS 500 SOUTH OAK STREET (RPC #TBD)

The proposed action would name a park to be located at 500 South Oak Street (commonly known as 604 S. Oak Street.)

All public hearings will be held in the Council Chambers, 300 Park Avenue, Falls Church, Virginia. All persons desiring to present their views on the items will be heard. Comments may also be sent to cityclerk@fallschurchva.gov. Remote participation information at www.fallschurchva.gov/publiccomment. For copies of legislation and other information, 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) or e-mail cityclerk@fallschurchva.gov.

CELESTE HEATH,
CITY CLERK

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 Beer, Wine and Mixed Beverages Restaurant and Caterer On and Off Premises, to sell alcoholic beverages. Vicky 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.

CEMETERY PLOTS FOR SALE

1-4 cemetery plots in National Memorial Park in Falls Church Virginia. Beautiful cemetery with a serene, quiet location for these plots. \$5995 each. Contact information: Richard Honaker 214-532-1420 Honaker@aol.com

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Two double depth lawn crypts in National Memorial Park in Falls Church Virginia. Located in beautiful Garden of Belvedere row South lots A,B@C,D. \$15,000 per double depth crypt. call 540-222-4205

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SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

Nikki C DeVore, an energetic DC newcomer experienced in data entry, kitchen work, caretaking, and more. Will do odd jobs, temp work, part time, and night shifts. Contact me at: nikkidevorebusiness@gmail.com 918-424-9792 linkedin.com/in/nikki-devore-ba26601b3

HELP WANTED

Tourism Counselor
(Part-Time)
Clear Brook, VA

The Virginia Tourism Corporation is seeking a Tourism Counselor for its Virginia Welcome Center at Clear Brook who is willing to work a minimum of 5 days per month to include holidays and weekends. The center is open 7 days per week from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. This individual will provide travel information and assistance to the traveling public, stock brochure racks, assist the welcome center manager with daily operations and perform general office duties.

Skills:
Ability to work independently in a heavy volume customer service environment
Ability to lift up to 40 pounds, including extensive walking and standing
Excellent customer service skills
Ability to interact with the public
Basic math and computer skills

Requirements:
Holiday and weekend work is required
Knowledge of Virginia's travel product, roads and highway systems preferred
Travel industry experience preferred

All candidates must apply through our website https://www.vatc.org/about/employment/. Salary Minimum: \$15.00/hour. Application deadline: March 23, 2026.

VTC is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, veteran status, political affiliation, genetics, or against otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities. It is VTC's intent that its employment and personnel policies and practices conform to all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action. Applicants requiring more information or requiring assistance may contact VTC Human Resources at 1-804-545-5634 or vtchr@VEDP.org. TDD 1-800-828-1120.

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF THE APPLICATION OF TOLL ROAD INVESTORS PARTNERSHIP II, L.P., FOR AUTHORIZATION FOR AN INCREASE IN THE MAXIMUM LEVEL OF TOLLS ON THE DULLES GREENWAY CASE NO. PUR-2025-00191

On December 16, 2025, Toll Road Investors Partnership II, L.P. ("TRIP II" or "Company"), the owner and operator of the Dulles Greenway, filed an application ("Application") with the State Corporation Commission ("Commission") to increase the maximum level of tolls pursuant to § 56-542 D of the Code of Virginia ("Code"). On December 16, 2025, TRIP II also filed a Motion for Entry of a Protective Ruling and a proposed protective ruling concerning confidential information in this proceeding.

Section 56-542 D of the Code provides that, upon application and after investigation, the Commission has the duty and authority to approve or revise toll rates charged by TRIP II that: (i) are "reasonable to the user in relation to the benefit obtained[.]" (ii) "will not materially discourage use of the roadway by the public[.]" and (iii) "will provide the operator no more than a reasonable return as determined by the Commission." Code § 56-542 D further provides that "the Commission shall not approve more than one year of toll rate increases proposed by the operator."

In addition, Code § 56-542 D requires the Company to include with its Application a forward-looking analysis. Specifically, Code § 56-542 D states that:

Any application to increase toll rates shall include a forwardlooking analysis that demonstrates that the proposed toll rates will be reasonable to the user in relation to the benefit obtained, not likely to materially discourage use of the roadway, and provide the operator no more than a reasonable return. Such forward-looking analysis shall include reasonable projections of anticipated traffic levels, including the impact of social and economic conditions anticipated during the time period that the proposed toll rates would be in effect.

The Code further requires the Virginia Department of Transportation to "review and provide comments upon the [Company's forward-looking] analysis to the Commission."

Through its Application, TRIP II requests approval of increases in the maximum peak (i.e., congestion pricing) and off-peak tolls to be effective upon issuance of a final order in this case, as follows:

Primary Proposed Maximum Peak Tolls					
Hours: 6:30 AM – 9:00 AM Eastbound 4:00 PM – 6:30 PM Westbound					
2-Axle	3-Axle	4-Axle	5-Axle	6-Axle or More	
\$6.75	\$13.50	\$16.90	\$20.25	\$20.25	

Primary Proposed Off-Peak, Maximum Base Toll					
2-Axle	3-Axle	4-Axle	5-Axle	6-Axle or More	
\$5.60	\$11.20	\$14.00	\$16.80	\$16.80	

The Company additionally proposes Secondary Proposed Tolls, should the Commission determine a more gradual increase is appropriate. The Secondary Proposed Tolls are as follows:

Secondary Proposed Maximum Peak Tolls					
Hours: 6:30 AM – 9:00 AM Eastbound 4:00 PM – 6:30 PM Westbound					
2-Axle	3-Axle	4-Axle	5-Axle	6-Axle or More	
\$6.50	\$13.00	\$16.25	\$19.50	\$19.50	

Secondary Proposed Off-Peak, Maximum Base Toll					
2-Axle	3-Axle	4-Axle	5-Axle	6-Axle or More	
\$5.65	\$11.30	\$14.15	\$16.95	\$16.95	

The Company asserts that the proposed tolls would put TRIP II in a more stable financial position. The Company further represents that while neither the Primary nor Secondary Proposed Tolls would allow the Company to meet its operating costs, debt service, and capital expenditures, nor allow for a return on investment, such tolls would reduce the amount TRIP II would need to draw from its operating reserves, would comply with the statutory directives that tolls be reasonable to the user in relation to the benefit received, would not materially discourage use of the toll road, and would provide no more than a reasonable return.

Lastly, TRIP II sets forth Alternative Proposed Tolls, which the Company contends would allow it to meet its operating expenses. The Company maintains, however, that these tolls would materially discourage use of the roadway as interpreted by the Commission in the Company's previous rate case, PUR-2023-00089, and the Commission would have to reconsider its interpretation of the statute, or the constitutional minimum for tolls, in order to approve these rates. The Alternative Proposed Tolls are as follows:

Alternative Proposed Maximum Peak Tolls					
Hours: 6:30 AM – 9:00 AM Eastbound 4:00 PM – 6:30 PM Westbound					
2-Axle	3-Axle	4-Axle	5-Axle	6-Axle or More	
\$7.25	\$14.50	\$18.15	\$21.75	\$21.75	

Alternative Proposed Off-Peak, Maximum Base Toll					
2-Axle	3-Axle	4-Axle	5-Axle	6-Axle or More	
\$6.10	\$12.20	\$15.25	\$18.30	\$18.30	

TAKE NOTICE that the final toll rates approved by the Commission in this proceeding may be different from those proposed by the Company.

To promote administrative efficiency and timely service of filings upon participants, the Commission has directed the electronic filing of testimony and pleadings, unless they contain confidential information, and has required electronic service on parties to this proceeding.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing in this proceeding that, among other things, scheduled public hearings on TRIP II's Application. The public hearings in Loudoun County, Virginia and telephonically from Richmond, Virginia will be held for the purpose of receiving testimony of public witnesses. Pursuant to the Commission's Order, a local public hearing will be held in-person on June 29, 2026, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Rock Ridge High School, 43460 Loudoun Reserve Drive, Ashburn, Virginia 20148. Any person desiring to testify as a public witness in this matter should arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled hearing and register to testify with the Commission's Bailiff. To promote fairness for all public witnesses, each witness will be allotted approximately five minutes to provide testimony.

In addition, on July 1, 2026, at 10 a.m., the Commission has scheduled a telephonic hearing for the purpose of receiving the testimony of public witnesses. On or before June 30, 2026, any person desiring to offer testimony as a public witness at the telephonic public witness hearing shall provide to the Commission: (a) your name, and (b) the telephone number that you wish the Commission to call during the hearing to receive your testimony. This information may be provided to the Commission: (i) by filling out a form on the Commission's website at scc.virginia.gov/case-information/webcasting; or (ii) by calling (804) 371-9141.

Beginning at 10 a.m. on July 1, 2026, the Hearing Examiner assigned to this case will telephone sequentially each person who has signed up to testify, if any, as provided above. This public witness hearing will be webcast at scc.virginia.gov/case-information/webcasting.

On August 25, 2026, at 10 a.m., in the Commission's second floor courtroom located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, the Hearing Examiner will convene a hearing to receive testimony and evidence related to the Application from the Company, any respondents, and the Commission's Staff ("Staff").

An electronic copy of the public version of the Company's Application may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the Company: Elaine S. Ryan, Esquire, McGuireWoods, LLP, Gateway Plaza, 800 East Canal Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or eryan@mcguirewoods.com. Interested persons also may download unofficial copies from the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information.

On or before August 12, 2026, any interested person may submit comments on the Application electronically by following the instructions on the Commission's website: scc.virginia.gov/case-information/submit-public-comments. Those unable, as a practical matter, to submit comments electronically may file such comments by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2025-00191.

On or before April 30, 2026, any person or entity wishing to participate as a respondent in this proceeding may do so by filing a notice of participation with the Clerk of the Commission at: scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling. Those unable, as a practical matter, to file a notice of participation electronically may file such notice by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties or their counsel, if available. A copy of the notice of participation as a respondent also must be served on counsel for the Company, Staff, and any other respondents. Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, *Participation as a respondent, of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure*, 5 VAC 5-20-10 *et seq.* ("Rules of Practice"), any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any organization, corporation or government body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2025-00191.

On or before June 25, 2026, each respondent may file with the Clerk of the Commission, at scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling, any testimony and exhibits by which the respondent expects to establish its case. Any respondent unable, as a practical matter, to file testimony and exhibits electronically may file such by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Each witness's testimony shall include a summary not to exceed one page. All testimony and exhibits shall be served on the Staff, the Company, and all other respondents simultaneous with their filing. In all filings, the respondent shall comply with the Rules of Practice, including 5 VAC 5-20-140, *Filing and service*, and 5 VAC 5-20-240, *Prepared testimony and exhibits*. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2025-00191.

Any documents filed in paper form with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission in this docket may use both sides of the paper. In all other respects, except as modified by the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing, all filings shall comply fully with the requirements of 5 VAC 5-20-150, *Copies and format*, of the Commission's Rules of Practice.

The Commission's Rules of Practice, the public version of the Company's Application, the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing, and other documents filed in this case may be viewed on the Commission's website at: scc.virginia.gov/case-information.

IN MEMORIAM: ADRIENNE JENNY LOCKER

Adrienne “Jenny” Locker, 93, of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, passed away peacefully on January 3, 2026, surrounded by the love of her family. Born in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, on March 9, 1934, the youngest of three daughters to Johannes and Wilhelmina Mueewsen, Jenny’s early years were shaped both by the love of a large extended family, but also by the turbulence of World War II.

In 1953, after a year studying at The Sorbonne in Paris, Jenny jumped at the chance to travel to America eventually landing in Chicago where she became the au pair for the Arnold Johnson family, owners of baseball team, the Kansas City Athletics. Far from home, the Johnsons including their two children, soon became her second family. So beloved in fact, that she and daughter, Wendy, were to remain in touch until the very end of her life.

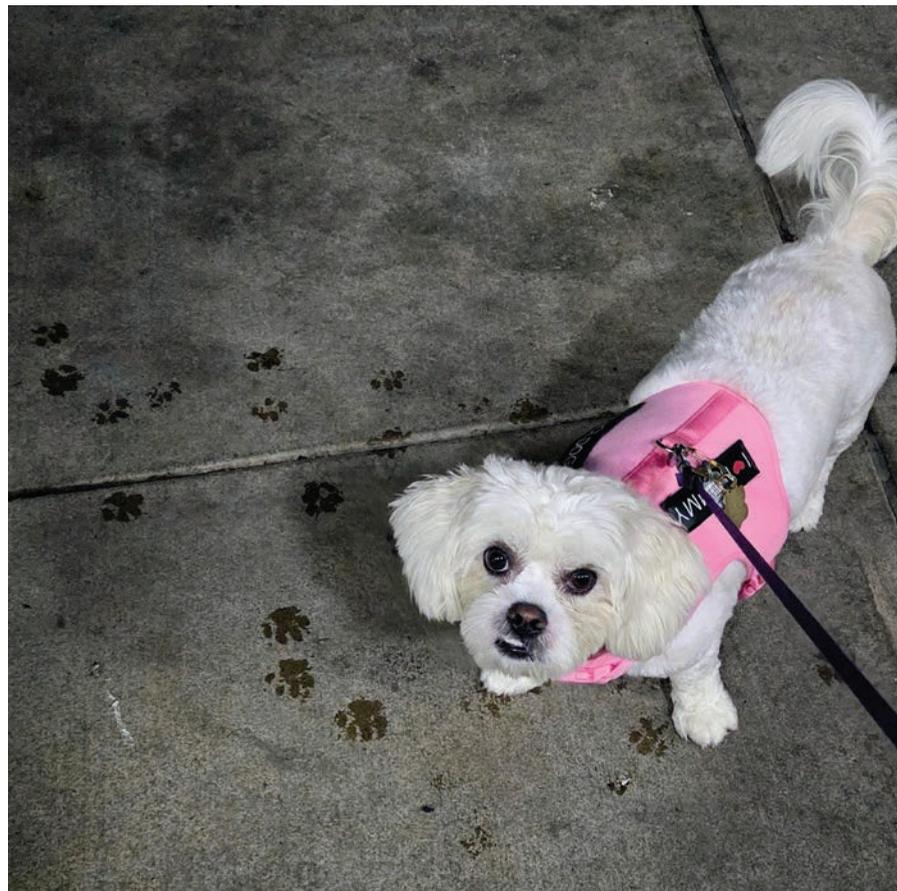
In Chicago, Jenny also met and married her first great love, Theodore “Ted” Greenleaf III, eventually settling down just outside of Washington DC in Falls Church, Virginia, where they raised their four children — Teddy, Cary, Robin and Susan. While Ted pursued a career in speech writing, Jenny balanced motherhood with work at The World Bank, Falls Church School Board and as host to a cadre of best girlfriends also raising families on Welcome Drive.

After twenty years in beloved Virginia, Jenny embarked on a new adventure with her second husband, Herb Locker, retiring to Florida in 1988, before easing into many more golden years closer to her children living in Chapel Hill. Wherever Jenny lived, she was and continued to be kind-hearted, helpful, curious, and always one quick to laugh at herself. Friendly and always interested in others, she continued to make instant friends out of strangers throughout her life as well as remain close to even friends of her own children — both groups often exclaiming, “Oh, I love your Mom!”. The best legacy of them all.

Jenny is survived by her beloved children and grandchildren — Andrew, Charlotte, Lachlan, Georgia, Jackson, Quinn and Hansen.



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FALLS CHURCH BUSINESS NEWS & NOTES

Civic Jam 250: Call for Civic Groups and Nonprofits

The city invites civic groups and nonprofits in the city to participate in Civic Jam as part of the country's 250th anniversary. This is created as an opportunity for these groups to recruit volunteers and members. If organizations weren't able to participate in the virtual information session, they may access the recording here: https://youtu.be/8HAIs13fr_s. Questions may be directed to Corey Payne at cpayne@fallschurchva.gov.

Substation Re-Opening

The Falls Church Chamber will host a grand re-opening of the police substation at Eden Center on Wednesday, March 18 at 11:00 am in the Saigon West Mall. This marks a partnership with the Falls Church Police Department. The public is invited to join City Council and Chamber Board Members for a ribbon cutting ceremony at 6795 Wilson Boulevard.

Marketing Leverage Program

The Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) has a reimbursable grant program to leverage existing marketing funds. This requires a research-based and measurable marketing plan designed to drive tourism to Virginia. The application period for travel industry partners and small businesses closes on March 19. Award tiers are up to \$30,000. Visit <https://www.vatc.org/grants/> and email questions to VTCMLPGrant@virginia.org.

Anatomy of an Entrepreneur's Journey

Entrepreneurs, business owners, founders and CEOs and their teams looking for a 'road map' from startup steps, through venture and growth, scaling and exit or sale, are invited to join a webinar for this guidance. George Siragusa of GMU and the Mason Small Business Development Center (SBDC) leads this session on Thursday, March 19, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. He has developed an entrepreneurial roadmap from insights and counseling sessions with CEOs, owners and founders over several years. The meeting link will be shared upon registration at: <https://clients.virginiasbdc.org/workshop.aspx?key=110460010>

Best Dish This Week

Eater DC editors share the meals they've enjoyed most on a weekly basis. In the latest report, last week one visited Nue Elegantly Vietnamese with a review that it was worth the drive. Among the dishes ordered were the wagyu-filled pho soup with wide rice noodles, the seafood chả giò appetizer and a vegetarian version.

Compass Coffee Founder Steps Down

Compass Coffee CEO Michael Haft stepped down from the company he co-founded 13 years ago as the chain was sold to Caffè Nero for \$4.76 million. The local coffee shop, a drive-through on Lee Highway in the West Falls Shops, was identified as underperforming and closed prior to the sale. The chain expanded to 25 and opened a larger roastery before mounting debts and lawsuits forced the Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing. His next step is addressing challenges he experienced while growing Compass through a new workforce technology company.

► *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.*

Our Man In Arlington

BILL FOGARTY

I suspect that the most difficult month for a County Board member might be March — it's budget time, and tough decisions are ahead for the County Board. I asked a former Board member if there was a particularly "hot item" that caused a groundswell of heated opposition in the 1970s or '80s, and he mentioned a budget proposal to install parking meters in the Central Library parking lot. Apparently that proposal was dead in the water, based on citizen opposition (and we still have free parking, both in the outdoor parking lot and in the garage — at least for the moment). This year, two of the most controversial proposals for cuts are related to youth gymnastics programs and the closure of the Cherrydale branch library. Both of those proposals have been met with passionate citizen opposition.

First, there is the proposed elimination of Arlington's competitive and recreational gymnastics programs at the Barcroft Sports & Fitness Center. If the proposal is adopted, the facility would close for at least one year, and the competitive gymnastics programs would be discontinued, effective May 16, 2026. The gymnastics supporters have created a remarkable website that provides their case for saving the gymnastics programs. You can check it out at savearlingtongymnastics.com. Part of their outreach is a request to sign an online petition. As of March 9, 5,101 people have signed the petition. Their goal is to obtain 10,000 signatures. I would note that their website is very media-savvy, including clips from stories on local TV news stations and on NPR. Their support is even national in scope, as their website includes a plug by USA Gymnastics.

The second controversy is the proposed closure of the Cherrydale Library branch. A strong response has been made by the neighborhood group known as Citizens for Cherrydale Library, self-described as a "nonpartisan grassroots group seeking since 1998 to promote and preserve our most important neigh-

borhood institution." This group has an ongoing website that states the county has considered eliminating the library three times before (in 1977, 1992 and 1998). The challenge now is to try to save it one more time. This group has its own media campaign that included a story with WUSA9. The clip provides an impassioned quote from longtime neighbor Greg Embree, who told WUSA9 that "civilized people don't close libraries." The neighborhood organization started its own petition drive to help its cause. As of March 9, 625 people have signed their petition. Their goal is to obtain 1,000 signatures.

Websites and petitions might be the way to proceed these days in dealing with governmental bodies. So allow me to take a short detour from the budget battles and follow the "petition road" over to a School Board issue. The School Board seems to be always facing a flood of issues. One current issue that should be of interest to all citizens highlights the role of technology in classrooms. Among other questions being raised, this one stood out to me: how much screen time is developmentally appropriate for students?

As one might expect in Arlington, there is an extremely well-organized civic organization that tracks school board issues, known as Arlington Parents for Education ("APE"). Like the other civic groups referenced above, APE has an excellent website and an ongoing petition drive. Their petition is related to the School Board's goal to take a fresh look at its approach to school-issued technology at its March 24 work session. The petition calls for the School Board to adopt two guiding principles, labeled as "Analog as the Default" and "Attention as Curriculum." More details can be found on their website (arlingtonparentsforeducation.org). APE is striving to get 500 signatures on its petition. As of March 9, it had 454 signatures.

These petition drives are, of course, only one part of an organization's strategy to effect change. Will change occur? Stay tuned.

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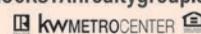
Cheers - Tori & Rob





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