

THE RESTON

LETTER

Residents Take Icy Plunge for Kids

Lake Anne Hosts Annual “Polar Dip”

By Jennifer Wolff, Guest Writer

On Feb. 1, the Kiwanis Club of Tysons hosted its 2nd Annual Kiwanis Polar Dip to raise funds for organizations that support children. Seventy-two participants braved the freezing waters of Lake Anne, all for a worthy cause.

“It was great to see so many familiar faces! The donations and support we’ve received mean a lot to the Kiwanis Club and our beneficiaries. We’re looking forward to 2026 and hope to see many repeat jumpers as well as first-timers,” said Chris Kozusko, the club’s president.

Previously known as the Virginia Polar Dip, the event has raised more than \$1 million in the past 15 years. This year, the Kiwanis Polar Dip brought in nearly \$20,000 (as of event day) to support Food for Neighbors and various Kiwanis Youth Programs in Fairfax County.

Food for Neighbors provides essential resources to children facing food insecurity, while a portion of the funds also benefits Camp Sunshine, a retreat for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families.

“It has been a great experience partnering with these charities,” said Kiwanis



Braving the icy waters of Lake Anne in Reston, participants take the plunge as the Fairfax County Cold Water Dive Team stands by. This year, 72 daring individuals jumped in, raising an impressive \$20,000 for Food for Neighbors and local youth programs. Photo by Isadora Guerreiro

Polar Dip chair Jeffrey Wolff. “Kiwanis is dedicated to serving children and improving communities, and our beneficiaries share that mission. It’s amazing to make an even bigger impact by working together.”

In addition to the plunge, participants, supporters, and spectators enjoyed the Winter Market, organized by the Lake Anne Washington Plaza Merchants

Association. Local businesses also got involved, forming teams and hosting events to contribute a portion of their proceeds to the Kiwanis Polar Dip.

It’s not too late to support the 2nd Annual Kiwanis Polar Dip; donations can be made at kiwanispolardip.org. Plans are already underway for the 3rd Annual Kiwanis Polar Dip in February 2026—stay tuned!

Reston, a Place But Not a Town

By Gene Powell, Staff Writer

Reston is many things, but it’s not a town or a city. Often described simply as a planned community, some maps label a wide swath of land containing Reston as “Upper Potomac Planning District.”

Despite its 60-year plus history, urban design awards aplenty, and dedicated zip codes, under Virginia law, Reston effectively is just a “wide spot in the road.” Still, it’s a “spot” with one of the nation’s largest homeowners associations and a booming center-city retail and housing development, crossed by a Metro subway line, the Washington and Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park, and a multi-lane toll road connecting Washington, D.C., with Dulles International Airport and other parts of Northern Virginia.

There have been multiple unsuccessful attempts to become a town in Reston’s history. State law now effectively prevents the formation of municipalities. Robert E. Simon, Reston’s namesake and founder, started with the town idea in 1964, but was turned down by Fairfax County. The idea resurfaced in the 1970s. In 1980, a proposed incorporation got all the way to a voter referendum; it failed by a 2-1 margin. Incorporation was raised again in 2005 and 2007, but did not advance.

In an email response to inquiries from The Letter about town status, Reston Citizens Association (RCA) director Connie Hartke said, “Despite the laws prohibiting formation of new cities or towns,

Reston enjoys a strong sense of community, and with Reston’s live, work, and play philosophy, residents enjoy shorter commutes, access to local businesses, and a closer connection to nature.”

Hartke also said, “With RCA carrying the voice of the citizens to the Board of Supervisors, Restonians are arguably some of the most civically engaged citizens in Fairfax County; however, the Hunter Mill District is still the only one of nine districts in Fairfax County with no REC Center.” (The eight county centers offer a wide variety of recreation and fitness opportunities, with annual fees ranging from \$700 for an individual to \$2,500 for four to eight people).

Reston is estimated to have about 68,000 residents today, and is expected to top 75,000 within three years. If it were to be incorporated today, it would be the twelfth largest municipality in the state, behind Lynchburg. Neighboring cities and towns include Leesburg (49,312), Fairfax (25,144), and Herndon (24,985).

Reston’s governance today revolves around three distinct areas and a special legal entity called Small Tax District 5.

- **The “Planned Residential Community” (PLC):** Reston’s neighborhoods and village centers, which some call “original Reston,” about 7,000 acres of homes and commercial centers, with common spaces that include four lakes, pools, recreation areas, and 56 miles of pedestrian trails. --- Reston Town Center (RTC): about 460 acres of medium- to high-rise



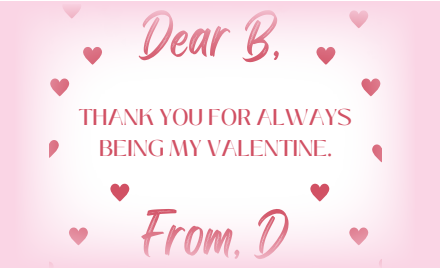
"Bronze Bob" named for Reston's founder, sits at Lake Anne, Reston's first village center
Photo by Isadora Guerriero

buildings and home to some 50 retailers, 35 restaurants, and a multi-screen cinema. Effectively controlled by the owners of Town Center, Boston Properties, with a focus on maintaining current development, new property development and programming, and entertainment for residents and visitors.

- **Transit Station Areas (TSAs):** Zones centered on the Silver Line Metro. The areas—also not part of RA--were created in 2014 with a focus on future growth around three Metrorail stations: Wiehle-Reston East, Reston Town Center, and Herndon. The goal in creating the TSAs was to transform “existing large, suburban business parks along the (transit) corridor into walkable, mixed-use communities.”
- **Small Tax District 5:** Created in 1975 by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, it supports Reston Community

Continued on page 3

the bulletin



Bricks By the Lake, N.E.E.D.S. Project at Dogwood Elementary, new eating disorders and wellness business, meet the owner, Valentines from readers to readers

sports



Get ready for spring ball- Reston Herndon Little League and Herndon Reston Youth Softball, HSL hockey team honors seniors, high school indoor track and field

education



Making an Impact, Broadway Night, spelling bee, South Lakes teacher wins Presidential Award, HHS robotics team wins award



Reston Rangers explore ice, crossword, art project, science experiment, super citizen feature

opinions

Taking care of our cellular cities, Dr. Sherwood's advice for dealing with collective trauma

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THE BULLETIN

Mission Statement:
The Reston Letter seeks to inform the Reston community of local events- upcoming and past- highlight local groups’ and individuals’ accomplishments, and, secondarily, to provide a platform for residents to weigh in on local topics relevant to the majority of readers.

From Wish to Impact: How NWFCU Foundation is Changing Communities

Contributed by NWFCU Foundation

Imagine a student arriving at school in the same soiled clothes as the day before—not by choice, but because their family lacks access to a washer and dryer. Now, picture a simple solution that not only provides clean clothes but also restores dignity, strengthens community connections, and removes barriers



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to learning. That’s exactly what happened when a single wish, granted by the Northwest Federal Credit Union Foundation, sparked something much bigger. As the foundation marks its 20th anniversary, it is launching The N.E.E.D.S. Project—an initiative dedicated to addressing often-overlooked challenges in schools and youth-serving organizations, ensuring every child has the support they need to thrive. The idea stemmed from a conversation between the foundation team and Kate Beckner, Principal of Dogwood Elementary School.

When Taralyn Kohler, the foundation’s Director, asked Beckner, “If the NWFCU Foundation could grant a wish, what would it be?” her response was unexpected: a washer and dryer. Beckner explained that many Dogwood families lack access to laundry facilities at home, and having one at school would not only ensure clean clothes, but also create opportunities to engage families and strengthen the community. That ‘aha’ moment led to the birth of The N.E.E.D.S. Project.

“The N.E.E.D.S. Project provides critical resources to schools and youth organizations in a unique way,” said Kohler. “We’re grateful for the collaboration with Dogwood Elementary, which inspired us to think outside the box. This program will shine a light on the hidden challenges schools face, bridging gaps, and amplifying their stories.”

Dogwood Elementary—where 97 percent of students rely on free and re-



Members of NWFCU Foundation with Dogwood Elementary principal Kate Beckner (second from left). Dogwood was selected as the first N.E.E.D.S Project recipient. Photo by NWFCU

duced-price meals and some experience homelessness—was recently surprised with the announcement that it would be The N.E.E.D.S. Project’s first recipient. “We are thrilled to bring Kate’s wish to life and help Dogwood build community, one load of laundry at a time,” said Kohler.

Principal Beckner expressed her gratitude: “Being the first recipient of The N.E.E.D.S. Project is a blessing. The foundation’s support sends a powerful message to our families: they are seen, valued, and supported. This gift goes far beyond a washer and dryer—it’s about breaking down barriers and showing

students and their families that their needs matter.”

To celebrate its 20th anniversary, the NWFCU Foundation has committed to funding 20 unmet needs for schools and nonprofits serving youth. Applications are now open, and the foundation is actively seeking corporate partners and businesses to help fund these essential initiatives. “Our business community has the potential to be a hero in the lives of students,” Kohler said.

To learn more about The N.E.E.D.S. Project or get involved, visit nwfcufoundation.org.

Become an Official Partner of The Reston Letter!

Get your business and phone number listed as an official partner for just \$25/month! We thank a generous Reston community for funding of The Letter.

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Bricks by the Lake Draws Crowds for Annual LEGO®-Building Competition

By Caroline Ayres, Staff Writer

Despite the cold weather on Jan. 25, RCC Lake Anne saw a large turnout for Bricks by the Lake, an annual LEGO®-building event that has grown steadily since its 2020 inception. Originally planned as a one-time event, public enthusiasm led to its establishment as a yearly tradition that serves as both a creative competition and a community gathering space.

The event’s centerpiece is a LEGO®-building competition, with

kits provided by Bricks and Minifigs, a local business with a storefront in Herndon. Participants were also allowed to bring their own bricks, provided they were unassembled. This year’s theme—nature—drew more than 20 teams, that spent four hours—between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.—constructing their designs before judging. Awards were presented not only to the overall winner, but also in categories such as Best Use of Parts.

In addition to the competition,



Kids build at Reston Community Center during Bricks by the Lake. Photo by Isadora Guerreiro

the Reston Museum hosted a free-build station where children could create their own LEGO® structures outside the contest setting.

The event also featured large-scale LEGO® displays by the Charm City LEGO® Users Group, a Baltimore-based organization officially recognized by LEGO®. Master builds included multi-colored skulls, towering structures nearly reaching the community center’s ceiling, and a globe made entirely of LEGO® bricks.

Lisa Watts of the Reston Museum highlighted the event’s broader community impact. “People tend to hibernate in the winter,” she said. “Events like this will hopefully encourage more people to come out.”



COMING SOON

The Reston Association Board of Directors Election will open Friday, Feb. 28 at 5 p.m.



Learn more at <https://www.reston.org/258/Board-of-Directors-Election>



Reston Association
Together we make Reston great

THE BULLETIN

Prosperity Eating Disorders & Wellness Center – A Supportive Force in our Community

By Sarah Golden, Staff Writer

A strong community is one that supports and uplifts its neighbors. This writer had the opportunity to interview one such force for good—Heather Baker, LCSW, CEDS, and founder of Prosperity Eating Disorder and Wellness Center. Her mission with Prosperity is to create programs that facilitate full recovery, helping individuals stay out of the hospital and live normal, fulfilling lives.

Baker said that Prosperity, along with its sister location in Norfolk, is one of the few independently owned and operated eating disorder treatment centers in the United States. Unlike large corporate-run facilities disconnected from local communities, Prosperity is deeply rooted in Reston. Baker, a Herndon resident, leads a dedicated team of therapists, dietitians, chefs, interns, and nurses who provide comprehensive support for individuals struggling with a range of eating disorders, including Anorexia, Bulimia, Binge Eating Disorder, Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID), Other Specified Eating Disorder (OSFED), and Orthorexia.

When asked about the inspiration behind Prosperity, Baker shared her personal experience with an eating disorder during her youth. At the time, she didn't realize she had an illness; many disordered eating conditions weren't even formally recognized until the 1980s.

Now, armed with scientific evidence and research, she has developed a variety of programs designed to help clients heal. Prosperity offers several treatment options, including Partial Hospitalization Programs (PHP), Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOP), and Virtual Outpatient Services. PHP, available for both adolescents and adults, provides a comprehensive approach to recovery through group counseling, nutrition therapy, and wellness activities like yoga and art therapy. Clients in the PHP program receive two meals and two snacks daily, all prepared by in-house chefs in collaboration with dietitians specializing in eating disorder care.

Baker emphasized that eating disorder dietitians differ significantly from conventional dietitians. Since dieting can be a major trigger for those struggling with eating disorders, the focus is not on weight loss, but on developing a healthy relationship with food. The goal is to foster a strong mind-body connection that promotes a lifetime of balanced, fear-free eating.

Creating this healthy relationship with food can be particularly challenging in today's social media-driven world. While awareness of eating disorders has increased, stigma still prevents many individuals from seeking help. In addition, societal trends that demonize certain foods and glorify dieting can make dis-



The Prosperity team. Photo by Benjamin Burgess

ordered eating behaviors seem normal. Prosperity offers hope and healing for those struggling with these issues and more.

For those seeking more information, the Prosperity website (www.prosperityed-well.com) provides details on available programs. Prosperity is a HIPAA-compliant center and accepts most major insurance providers. If you or a loved one may be struggling with an eating disorder, the website's "Resources" tab includes helpful articles and helplines. Prosperity also offers free family support groups for those assisting a loved one on the path to recovery.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, visit Crisis Text Line or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 for immediate support.



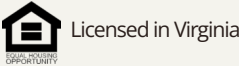
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Reston, cont'd from page 1

Center and its activities. It collects tax revenue from most Reston residential and commercial properties.

The 45-mile W&OD trail crosses through Reston, east-to-west. NOVA Parks manages the 100-foot-wide regional park. It runs from Shirlington through Reston to Purcellville.

For most residents, the closest thing to local "government" is Reston Association (RA). It is a not-for-profit corporation, with about 22,000 households as deed-mandated (must belong) members. RA's online site says that it provides "parks and recreation facilities and amenities like those of a city or town." The RA site says it maintains "15 pools, 54 tennis courts, 55 miles of paved pathways, ballfields, playgrounds, multipurpose courts, picnic areas, garden plots, and a variety of rental facilities for public meetings and

gatherings. In addition, it provides the membership with a wide variety of opportunities to participate in many educational and recreational leisure programs."

Reston neighborhood residents pay an annual RA assessment that now includes pool use, and access to all tennis and pickleball courts, and they pay annual county and state taxes. In return for its portion of tax payments, Fairfax County provides Reston residents with police, fire, water and sewage services, and the county also supports other civic services such as roads, schools and the Reston Library.

Residents of the Town Center zone pay a fee that goes to the Reston Town Center Association, which defines itself online as "a mixed-use, governing association" with a "mission including support of transit-oriented development, a strong commitment to the arts and community programming, and design review."

The Reston Land Use map, included in the 2022 comprehensive plan for Reston's development, is a speckled collection of green, yellow, orange, pink and purple areas – by design. Simon's original vision was a community with various kinds of commercial areas, office buildings, and varied housing with residents from a range of income levels and all races. Design would be rooted in multi-family housing surrounding village centers and office buildings, blending into single-family housing neighborhoods.

Regardless of Reston's legal status, the plan notes "we are at a new stage in our community's timeline. The plan recognizes that "the advent of the recent (transit area) development demands that Reston's commitment (to) equity be prioritized again. ... Reston has an opportunity to once again engage the radical thinking that made it a model community at its founding."



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THE BULLETIN

Whose Idea Was This, Anyway?

The Reston Letter has survived for over two full years under passionate leadership

By Holly Weatherwax, Staff Writer

For two years, The Reston Letter has provided local residents with information about high school and youth sports teams, community organizations, events, businesses, and the amazing people who make up our town. Since its first issue in January 2023, the paper has grown from a monthly distribution of 17,000 copies to 22,500. This growth has been made possible through community support, the efforts of volunteers and staff, and—above all—the sheer will and determination of its founder and editor, Dawn Crosson.

As the paper enters its third year, it's only fitting that the community gets to know Dawn and the story behind her ambitious project.

Originally from Idaho, Dawn grew up in a rural community where her family tended large gardens and raised sheep, goats, and chickens at various times. She spent much of her childhood riding her bicycle, reading, and writing.

When it was time for college, she chose Northwest Nazarene University, a small liberal arts school in Idaho, where she majored in English Education and minored in Professional Writing. During her time there, she worked on the school newspaper and spent a semester as an intern at a daily newspaper. She also had an interest in softball, but the school didn't have a team. Determined to change that, Dawn gathered signatures and petitioned the athletic director. Her efforts paid off—the school started a club team, which, by the time she graduated, had become an NCAA Division II team.

"I didn't know Dawn when I first accepted the position to coach at NNU, but I had heard of a student who consistently and fearlessly pushed to get a softball program start-



Dawn Crosson, owner, and her team consisting mostly of volunteers, have kept monthly newspapers in the hands of Restonians for over two full years in an age when many claim print media is dead. Photo by Isadora Guerreiro

ed," recalled Duane Miller, her former coach. "Her relentless desire and quiet leadership enabled hundreds of student-athletes to compete in a sport they loved."

After college, Dawn was eager for new experiences outside Idaho. A friend working for an Idaho senator encouraged her to come to Washington, D.C., so Dawn bought a one-way ticket and made the move. By the time her flight landed, she had secured a job as a middle school English teacher in Alexandria.

Today, Dawn teaches high school English while also owning and managing The Reston Letter. She is a married Reston mother of three boys. When her children were younger, she was fortunate to stay home for eight years—something for which she remains grateful. Now, she spends much of her time shuttling between practices and games. Her two oldest boys play ice hockey, while her youngest dabbles in band, baseball, wrestling, and basketball.

So, what prompted Dawn to start The Reston Letter? While teaching at Herndon High School, she noticed that the journalism program had dwindled. Determined to revive it, she took charge, and within four years, the program grew from six students to more than 30. She saw firsthand how the newspaper strengthened relationships between students and staff, and she learned the ins and outs of publishing—from meeting deadlines to distributing copies.

"Both at HHS and The Reston Letter, once Dawn

gets an idea in her head, she sees it through—no matter what challenges arise," said Dylan Murphy, a former student who worked on the Herndon High newspaper for four years under Dawn's guidance and now writes for The Reston Letter. "She's great at balancing a vision with incorporating other people's ideas. Her greatest strengths are her honesty and collaboration skills, both of which make her a great communicator."

During this time, Dawn realized that Reston lacked a dedicated publication highlighting the positive news and impactful work happening in the community. With her journalism experience and long-standing local connections, she decided to fill that gap. Leveraging her relationships as a nearly 20-year Reston resident, she found advertisers and content contributors willing to support her vision. She even called on former journalism students, both professionals and college students, to help launch the paper.

Now that The Reston Letter is more established, Dawn hopes to expand its reach to every home in Reston. Once that goal is met, she has plans for distribution in Herndon as well.

Long-term, Dawn aspires to share her experiences with other communities interested in starting a local newspaper. She also would love the opportunity to make her role as editor a full-time job.

The journey of publishing The Reston Letter has been a learning experience. Dawn had to navigate the complexities of publishing and advertising, often facing challenges along the way. Yet, she persevered. The paper's success is a testament to her resilience and determination—qualities she has demonstrated throughout her life.

If you are a local business interested in advertising with The Reston Letter, there are various opportunities available. If you are a local resident with skills to contribute, there are volunteer roles that may be a great fit for you. If you have a story or information to share with the community, we would love to hear from you.

The best way to reach Dawn is via email at info@therestonletter.com.



Photo by Isadora Guerreiro

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THE BULLETIN



Valentine's Day messages of love, friendship, and appreciation from Reston readers

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LOVE, LILY

Dear Sonia,

Thank you for always being you!
Can't wait to marry you 10/17!

Love, Vic

Dear JJ,

Happy Valentine's Day JJ!! We love you soo much!!

Love, Mommy and Daddy

Dear B,

THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS BEING MY VALENTINE.

From, D

Dear Katrenia,

Happy Valentines, Babe!!

Love, Benjamin

DEAR ARCHER & SHEPARD,

HAVE A BUSSIN' VALENTINE'S DAY, MY BRUHS! NO CAP, WE LOVE YOU!

Love, Mommy & Daddy

Dear Nolan,

Loving you is like achieving all of my dreams at once. Happy Valentine's Day!

Love, Kaydence

DEAR Love,

Every breath I take is in your loving name with one thought - us

Love, SeanZ

Dear CHRYSA,

HAPPY VALENTINES DAY MY SWEET GIRL! I LOVE YOU SOOOO MUCH!!

Love, Mommy

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<div>7FEB</div> <div>"When I'm Ready" Run time Feb. 7-13</div>	<div>8FEB</div> <div>Firoozeh Dumas Book Signing</div>	<div>12FEB</div> <div>Equity Matters Films: "Amazing Grace"</div>	<div>16FEB</div> <div>Paige in Full: A B-Girl's Visual Mixtape</div>
<div>19FEB</div> <div>Crafting Club</div>	<div>22FEB</div> <div>Storytime with Danielle Joseph</div>	<div>22FEB</div> <div>Lara Downes and Rita Dove: "Tomorrow I May Be Far Away"</div>	<div>23FEB</div> <div>Bird Walk</div>
<div>25FEB</div> <div>Artist Salon</div>	<div>26FEB</div> <div>Reston at the Forefront of Community Desegregation</div>	<div>1MAR</div> <div>Appraisal Roadshow</div>	<div>2MAR</div> <div>Lúnasa</div>
<div>5MAR</div> <div>The Wine Cabinet Presents: Piancornello Brunello Wine Dinner</div>	<div>6MAR</div> <div>Reston Letter Book Club</div>	<div>8MAR</div> <div>Storytime with Susan Stockdale</div>	<div>16MAR</div> <div>Lucky Leprechaun 5K</div>

<p>Friday, Feb. 7-13, "When I'm Ready" LOOK Dine-In Cinema Reston Town Center Drama featuring Reston Native, June Schreiner. See details in story below</p> <p>Saturday, Feb. 8, 3 p.m. Firoozeh Dumas Book Signing Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods Centerstage Reston Residents: \$15 Non-Reston Residents: \$20 Buy tickets here: https://reston-communitycenter.com/event/firoozeh-dumas-author/</p> <p>Wednesday, Feb. 12, 7:30 p.m. Equity Matters Films: "Amazing Grace" Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods Centerstage Free</p> <p>Sunday, Feb. 16, 3 p.m. Paige in Full: A B-Girl's Visual Mixtape Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods Centerstage Reston Residents: \$10 Non-Reston Residents: \$15 Buy tickets here: https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/94639134/paige-in-fulla-bgirls-visual-mix</p>	<p>tape-reston-the-centerstage-at-reston-community-center</p> <p>Wednesday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m. Crafting Club Scrawl Books</p> <p>Saturday, Feb. 22, 10:30 a.m. Storytime with Danielle Joseph Scrawl Books Join Danielle Joseph as she reads her new book "The Mitzvah Fairy."</p> <p>Saturday, Feb. 22, 8 p.m. Lara Downes and Rita Dove: "Tomorrow I May Be Far Away" Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods Centerstage Reston Residents: \$25 Non-Reston Residents: \$35 Buy tickets here: https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/99986138/lara-downes-rita-dovetomorrow-i-may-be-far-away-reston-the-centerstage-at-reston-community-center</p> <p>Sunday, Feb. 23, 8-11 a.m. Bird Walk Walker Nature Center Register by Feb. 20: https://va-restonhoaweb.myvscloud.com/</p>	<p>webtrac/web/iteminfo.html?Module=AR&FMID=57523115</p> <p>Tuesday, Feb. 25, 6:30-9 p.m. Artist Salon Reston Community Center, Lake Anne Plaza Reston artists: \$30 Non-Reston artists: \$50 Seniors: \$24 Register here: https://vareston-web.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/iteminfo.html?Module=AR&FMID=55398177</p> <p>Wednesday, Feb. 26, 7-8:30 p.m. Reston at the Forefront of Community Desegregation Reston Museum RSVP here: https://www.restonmuseum.org/events/reston-at-the-forefront-of-community-desegregation</p> <p>Saturday, Mar. 1, 10:45 a.m.-12 p.m. Appraisal Roadshow Reston Association Headquarters Bring a personal item (jewelry, coins, artwork) and get it appraised. Members: free Non-members: \$22 Register here: https://varestonhoaweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/iteminfo.html?Module=AR&FMID=42230033</p>	<p>Sunday, Mar. 2, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Lúnasa Reston Community Center Hunters Woods Centerstage Reston Residents: \$25 Non-residents: \$30 3 p.m. show tickets: https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/90145622/3pm-l%C3%BAAnasa-reston-the-center-stage-at-reston-community-center 7 p.m. show tickets: https://www.etix.com/ticket/p/70199911/7pm-l%C3%BAAnasa-reston-the-center-stage-at-reston-community-center</p> <p>Wednesday, Mar. 5, 6:30-9 p.m. The Wine Cabinet Presents: Piancornello Brunello Wine Dinner Gregorio's Trattoria Tickets: \$120 Buy tickets here: https://www.thewinecabinet.com/event/20830</p>	<p>inecabinet.com/event/20830</p> <p>Thursday, Mar. 6, 6:30 p.m. Reston Letter Book Club Elden Street Tea Shop Join us as we discuss John Gilstrap's "Crimson Phoenix" and meet the author.</p> <p>Saturday, Mar. 8, 10:30 a.m. Storytime with Susan Stockdale Scrawl Books Join Susan Stockdale as she reads her new book "Don't Eat the Cleaners: Tiny Fish With a Big Job."</p> <p>Sunday, Mar. 16, 8 a.m. Lucky Leprechaun 5K Reston Town Center Register here: https://www.prraces.com/luckyleprechaun/</p>
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Community Calendar

Scan the QR code to access The Reston Letter's "Upcoming Community Events" calendar submission form and share your event!



Reston’s Own June Schreiner Stars in Apocalyptic Drama

By Ellyn Wexler, Staff Writer

Reston native June Schreiner returns to her hometown in a big way with the local screening of her latest film, “When I’m Ready,” at LOOK Dine-In Cinema in Reston Town Center. The romantic thriller, set to run from Feb. 7 to 13, follows Rose (played by Schreiner) and Michael as they embark on a cross-country road trip while facing the impending destruction of Earth by a massive asteroid.

For local fans and theatergoers, “When I’m Ready” offers not only a gripping story, but also a heartfelt connection to Reston’s thriving artistic roots.

Schreiner, 30, got her start in acting with the Reston Community Players [RCP], which she fondly calls her “artistic home.” At age 10, she took on the role of Duckling in RCP’s 2005 production of “HONK!” As a seventh-grader Langston Hughes Middle School, she starred as JoJo in RCP’s production of “Seussical. At 15, she won the 2008 Washington Area Theatre Community Honors for Best Actress in a Musical, for her role as Little Sally in RCP’s “Urinetown.”

During her high school years at the Madeira School in McLean, Schreiner also performed locally with Synetic Theater, the McLean Community Players, and Arena Stage, where she dazzled audienc-

es as Ado Annie in “Oklahoma!” Adding an emotional layer to the film, Schreiner’s mother, actress Dana Andersen—known for “The Karate Kid,” “Outbreak,” and “American Playhouse”—also appears in the movie, aged to play June’s grandmother.

“Watching our final performance together is very emotional for me,” Schreiner said. The film also stars Dermot Mulroney, Andrew Ortenberg, Lauren Cohan, and Thalia Besson. Depending on its performance, the screening may extend beyond its initial one-week run.

For screen times and tickets, visit www.lookcinemas.com/movie/1016/22165.



June Schreiner stars in "When I'm Ready," playing at LOOK Cinemas from Feb. 7-13. Picture contributed by Briarcliff Entertainment

EDUCATION

Making an Impact

Reid Bauer Makes an Impact Outdoors

By Chuck Cascio, Author and Former South Lakes Teacher

Getting his first bicycle was a big deal for Reid Bauer because, he says, "Growing up in the '80s in Reston, a bike was the key that unlocked everything. You could get to your friends' houses, the tennis courts, the pools, the basketball courts, the woods. My friends and I would ride to Fritzbe's (rest in peace!), sit at the bar, and order Shirley Temples at two in the afternoon, and we were only 11 or 12 years old!"

Reid's love of the outdoors--with or without a bicycle--was fueled by various experiences. He recalls two events of particular impact: taking an overnight trip for sixth-graders to an outdoor program called Camp Hemlock while at Hunters Woods Elementary School and, during his senior year at South Lakes High School, a field trip to Wallops Island with his AP Biology class taught by Faye Cascio: "Both of these were outdoor science trips that I totally loved!"

A cross-country runner, Reid graduated from SLHS in 1996 and went to Grinnell College in Iowa where he continued to run cross-country and where, he says, "I also got into rock climbing. There are some great crags in and around Iowa, and I became the manager of the college's climbing wall and a trip leader for the outdoor program."

After graduating from Grinnell with a degree in biology, he took his love of the outdoors and the sciences to various places. "I was pleasantly surprised to learn that there were employers who would pay you to teach both ecology and rock climbing," Reid says. "I got my first job at Camp Campbell Gard, a YMCA camp in Ohio, where I taught science, rock climbing, cultural history, and outdoor skills."

From there, Reid's journey through the outdoors over the years led to jobs teaching environment education, joining ornithology field studies, and working with various nonprofits and universities in Ohio, New Hampshire, Michigan, and Australia before settling down in New York's Catskill Mountains for nearly a decade, after which a major change occurred: "I was trying to spend as much time as possible outside. And then I was

offered a job in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, with the Teton Science Schools. I accepted the offer, thinking it would be a fun short-term gig. I've been here 13 years."

Reid is now a database administrator at the school, a role that involves providing support for the teaching staff but, he says happily, "Every now and again, we'll be short-staffed for a program and I get pulled into the field to lead a hike or teach a group of kids about animal tracking."

Meanwhile, Reid continues his personal pursuit of outdoor activities. Last summer, his goal was to run the 40-mile Teton Crest Trail in Grand Teton National Park in just one day. "I didn't pull it off," Reid admits. "I bailed at the 30-mile mark. It was one of the toughest things I've ever done...but I am thinking about making another attempt next summer. If you want to pick a spot to set challenging personal goals, you could do a lot worse than Jackson Hole."

The relationship between the time he spent outdoors as a youth growing up in Reston and his personal and professional pursuits seems very clear to Reid. He now lives in Wyoming's Grand Teton National Park, a fact that he says "actually blows my mind. The independence and time outside that I enjoyed so much as a kid really steered me toward my career. Sure, the Teton Range is a far cry from running the Twin Branches Nature Trail or skiing at Bryce Resort, but I still get to run and ski like I used to...just on a bigger scale...and at a slower pace."



Ried Bauer

Crossword Corner

By Reston crossword constructor, Joe O'Neill

Joe O'Neill, a 40-year Reston resident, is a retired English professor and IT executive who recently began writing and submitting crossword puzzles to major U.S. daily newspapers.

Joe's puzzles have appeared in the New York Times and Wall Street Journal. This is O'Neill's 19th crossword puzzle creation, made specifically for The Reston Letter readers!

Bake Sales, Books, and Bread

- ACROSS
1. It helps you get a leg up

5. Office lackey

6. Copycat

8. Bake sales and book drives grp.
9. Dissenting vote

10. Occasion to get all gussied up

12. Picks up, as a bill

13. Set loose
- DOWN
1. Kind of cuff pitchers often injure

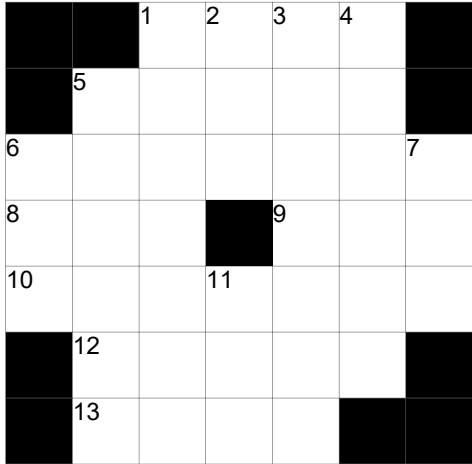
2. What an ET gets around in?

3. Newborn

4. Hall of Famers, say
5. Escape punishment

6. Jewish or marble type of bread

11. Fawn's mom



South Lakes Teacher Honored with Presidential Award for Excellence

By Ellyn Wexler, Staff Writer

South Lakes High School mathematics teacher Emily Burrell, a 23-year veteran educator, has received one of the highest honors in STEM education: the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST). Announced by President Joe Biden on Jan. 13, this national recognition celebrates outstanding educators who are shaping the next generation of innovators.

For Burrell, the award is both a personal and professional milestone. "This award uplifts the teaching profession and recognizes how mathematics and science teachers guide the next generation of innovators," she said. "It reflects the supportive families, communities, school systems, and enthusiastic students and colleagues with whom I've been privileged to work."

A Journey of Dedication

The application process for the PAEMST was extensive. Nominated by colleagues in the Instructional Services Department, Burrell embarked on a rigorous process that involved detailed writing and the creation of a lesson video. With the support of department chair Evan Millar, former principal Kim Retzer, and colleague Jen Allard,

she became a state finalist in spring 2023 and was later recognized by the Virginia Board of Education. It took months before she heard the decision, which came when President Biden announced the winners.

Burrell's recognition delighted her students. "They've been very supportive, congratulating me in class and in the hallway," she said. "I want them to understand that this award might have my name on it, but it also celebrates South Lakes High School and all the excellent work being done by our teachers and students."

Transforming Math Education

Burrell's teaching philosophy challenges the traditional model of passive learning. "Sitting, listening, and taking notes doesn't actually help students learn," she explained. "A lot of students like this routine because it's easy and gives a false sense of understanding. But real learning happens when students engage as active participants."

To foster this, she employs collaborative and interactive strategies, including "Building Thinking Classrooms," where students work at whiteboards in randomly assigned groups. This dynamic method encourages peer teaching and helps students develop confidence in problem-solving. She also



Emily Burrell

uses the jigsaw expert structure, where students become specialists in different topics before teaching their peers.

Her commitment to equity in education has been a driving force behind her success. In her Algebra, Functions, and Data Analysis course, she focuses on students who have been marginalized by traditional math instruction, using real-world applications and project-based assessments to make learning more accessible.

Continued on page 8

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RESTON

EDUCATION



Bingo Night at Aldrin Elementary was filled with laughs, prizes, and fun, thanks to the Aldrin PTA and participating families. #BingoNight #OneAldrin
Photo by AES



Langston Hughes Middle School hosted its first annual Spelling Bee on Jan. 28. Spelling Bee Champions were Heidi Gocong, first place; James Jordan, second, and Alyssa Nielsen, third. Gocong will represent Team Langston Hughes in the countywide Bee on Sunday, March 23 at Lake Braddock Secondary. Photo by LHMS



Hunters Woods Cooperative Preschool students enjoyed the January snow, impressing a passing high schooler who remarked, "They are so lucky!"
Photo by Dianne Rose- head teacher, HWCP



The South Lakes High School Theatre Program was named the 2025 Concorde District One-Act Play Champion.
Photo contributed by SLHS Theatre



Principal Wolfe enjoyed sledding with his granddaughter. Photo contributed by Aldrin Elementary School

Herndon High Robotics Team Wins Design Award

Contributed by HHS

The Herndon High School robotics team, Epsilon Delta, is off to a strong start this year, demonstrating talent, innovation, and teamwork in back-to-back competitions. In late January, the team traveled to West Virginia, where they secured first place for the Design Award and earned the title of Finalist Alliance Captain. These achievements build on their success from the previous weekend at the Harrisonburg tournament, where they won the pres-

tigious Think Award, recognizing their outstanding engineering process and documentation. Epsilon Delta, whose motto is "From Small Changes Come Big Differences," has earned a strong reputation for excellence in robotics. Composed of students who design, build, and program robots for the FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) and FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC), the team consistently showcases creativity and problem-solving skills under pressure. Beyond competition,



Photo contributed by HHS robotics team

Epsilon Delta is deeply committed to STEM outreach, running a summer camp and an afterschool program at Clearview Elementary School in Herndon.

Team Captain Ben Fox shared his excitement, saying, "I am proud of what we have accomplished and look forward to the rest of the season!"

Burrell, cont'd from page 7

Inspiring a Love for Math

Burrell knows that many students struggle with math anxiety, and she makes it her mission to change their mindset. "Some students have built a false narrative that they can't do math. By high school, the only way to convince them otherwise is to prove them wrong," she said. "I ask them to explain their reasoning because I want them to know that their understanding is a valid starting place." Her advice to students pursuing math or science? "Math isn't a race." She warns against rushing through mate-

rial just for acceleration, encouraging students instead to master fundamental concepts and explore fields like statistics and data science alongside traditional calculus tracks. A Lifelong Learner and Mentor Burrell's passion for education is rooted in strong mentorship. She credits Dr. Laurell Wiersma, her first mentor at Wakefield High School, with guiding her through the early years of teaching. Now, she passes that wisdom on to new educators. "Take care of yourself, take care of your loved ones, and take care of your students," she advises. "Collaborate with colleagues, keep learning, and refuse to give up on any student."

With a B.A. in Mathematics from the University of Virginia, an M.Ed. in Secondary Mathematics from George Mason University, and a Master's Certificate in Education Policy, Burrell continues to be an advocate for innovative teaching. At the heart of her work is a simple joy: seeing students succeed. "I love it when students celebrate their successes, big and small," she said. With her dedication to equity, engagement, and excellence, Emily Burrell is not just an award-winning teacher—she's a game-changer in math education.

Lake Anne Nursery Kindergarten to celebrate 60th Anniversary

Contributed by LANK

LANK, the first preschool in Reston, invites their current and alumni community for an unforgettable evening of mingling, reminiscing, and celebrating a milestone— 60 years of nurturing young minds and building a strong community at LANK. The event will be held Saturday, April 26 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. This event is a tribute to their rich history, and they would love for you to be part of it! Come enjoy an evening with fellow alumni and current families. Enjoy a variety of wines, craft beers, and a selection of delicious heavy appetizers all included with your ticket.

This celebration is for adults only, and LANK looks forward to reconnecting and reminiscing with you. They would love to include pictures from your time at LANK in a slideshow for the celebration. Feel free to send pictures to information@lank-school.com



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- Reminisce with alumni and current families!

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EDUCATION

South Lakes and Herndon High 'It's Academic' Competitions to Air on TV

Contributed by WETA

South Lakes and Herndon high schools will be featured in upcoming episodes of "It's Academic," airing on WETA this month. These episodes were recorded at WETA's new production studios in Shirlington, which opened this past summer.

Recognized by The Guinness Book of World Records as the world's longest-running TV quiz show, "It's Academic" was founded in 1961 by producer Sophie Altman in Washington, D.C. Over its 60-plus seasons, thousands of high school students from the D.C. Metro area have competed, celebrating a legacy of learning and achievement across generations.

This month, four new episodes featuring 12 local high schools will air, including two showcasing students from Reston and Herndon. On Feb. 15, Episode 17 will feature a matchup between South Lakes High School, Gaithersburg High School, and Thomas A. Edison High School. The following week, on Feb. 22, Episode 18 will highlight Herndon High School as they compete against Woodson High School and Quince Orchard High School.

Episodes air Saturdays at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. on WETA PBS and at 10 a.m., 7 p.m., and 11 p.m. on WETA Metro. Each episode encores the following Sunday and Monday at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. on WETA Metro. Episodes will also be available to stream on YouTube at WETA PBS - YouTube, on the PBS app and at weta.org. For more information, visit weta.org/itsacademic.

Broadway Night is Back With a Bang!

By Caroline Ayres, Staff Writer

South Lakes High School's Theater and Chorus program wrapped up in January with a show-stopping spectacular featuring laughs, tears, and outstanding choreography. Broadway Night 2025, "100 Years of Broadway," took audiences on an exciting and educational journey through a century of Broadway music, from "Oklahoma!" to "In the Heights."

Led by South Lakes teachers Emily Moser (chorus) and Michael Viola (theater), the show featured musical numbers spanning from the 1930s to the present day. Between each Broadway era, educational videos provided insight into the social and cultural shifts that influenced the shows of their time. The featured eras included Broadway Beginnings, The Golden Age, Changing Times, Contemporary, and The New Millennium.

The production had something for everyone, from high-energy numbers like "Today's the Day" from "Good News," "Anything You Can Do" from "Annie Get Your Gun," and the showstopping closer "Empire State of Mind" from "Hell's Kitchen," to emotionally powerful ballads like "I Dreamed a Dream" from "Les Misérables" and "Still Hurting" from

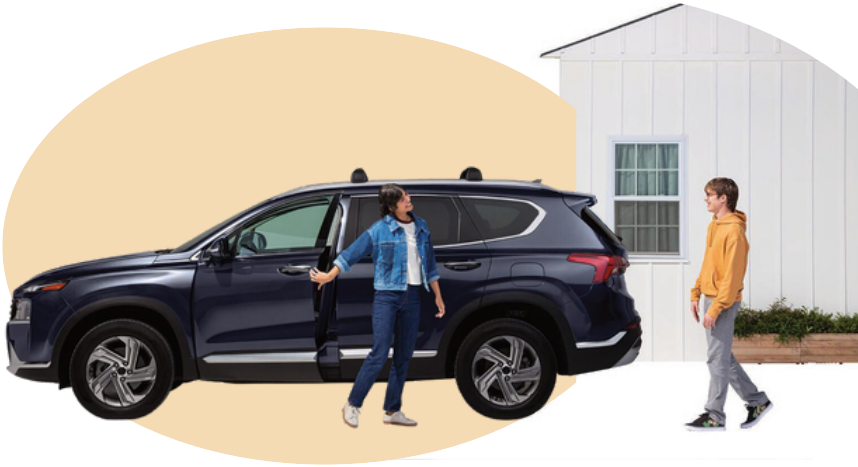


Theater and Chorus students at Broadway Night shared "100 Years of Broadway" music with viewers. Photo by Alejandro Molina-Cardona

"The Last Five Years."

Broadway Night brings kids of all ages together on and off of stage, with high school student leaders not just acting on stage, but off of it as well through directing, choreographing, building sets, and helping train younger participants from middle and elementary schools. Elementary students performed a "Beauty and the Beast" medley, while middle schoolers took the stage with "Pure Imagination" from "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," and "Revolt-ing Children," a teaser for Langston Hughes Middle School's upcoming production of "Matilda." Middle and elementary school students also joined the high school performers for the grand finale.

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SPORTS

Strrrrike up Excitement, Little League is Back!

By Kaydence Smith, Staff Writer

Reston Herndon Little League (RHLL), the area's largest and most established youth baseball league, is now open for spring registration. With divisions for players ages 3-1/2 to 12, there's a place for every child to learn and enjoy the game.

For children ages 4 and younger, RHLL offers a free program called Blastball, a simplified version of T-ball. In this fun and engaging division, kids hit the ball off a tee and run to first base—which squeaks when they step on it—before getting high-fives and returning to the dugout. Players learn fundamental skills such as field positioning using plastic markers, fielding a ball (with or without a glove), and hitting off a tee.

As players progress, they move into T-ball (ages 5-6) and then A-ball, the final division in the lower leagues. These divisions begin in late March and continue through the end of the school year.

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Players advance from hitting off a tee to coach-pitch and eventually kid-pitch, with rules like three-out or four-run innings keeping the pace of the game exciting.

The upper divisions include AA-ball (ages 8-9), AAA-ball, and Majors (ages 11-12). Majors is the most competitive level, culminating in playoffs at the end of the season. Players in these divisions must complete a skill evaluation to be placed on a team, as all teams are drafted. To ensure fair and balanced teams, coaches use SkillShark, an app that creates custom player profiles and evaluates skills in categories such as throwing/catching, ground balls, fly balls, and hitting. For the spring season, skill evaluations will take place on Feb. 9 and 23. RHLL encourages all upper-level players to register before the second evaluation. After evaluations, the draft begins in March, with practices and games starting in April and continuing through the end of the school year.

This season, RHLL has made key changes to its All-Star program. Previously, RHLL had two separate district teams—American and National—but this year, they have been combined to

create greater parity and stronger support among players.

Additionally, RHLL has introduced Local All-Stars, providing more players with an opportunity to compete. Any player not selected for the district All-Star team is eligible for the local All-Star team, which will have the same practice structure and uniforms but will compete in a local tournament.

District All-Star teams have the opportunity to advance to the Little League World Series if they continue winning. RHLL (formerly RLL) has a proud history, with its 12U All-Stars winning the Virginia State Championship in 2011.

Reston Herndon Little League wants your player to excel, no matter their age or status. For families that need support when it comes to registration fees, fill out the form on RHLL's website that will, when accepted, give your player a scholarship. "In the Reston Herndon Community, there are no kids out there that want to play baseball that aren't going to be able to do it," RHLL President Tim Jones said.

If your child is interested in playing for the Reston Herndon Little League, please go to RHbaseball.org under the



Little Leaguers high-five South Lakes High School baseball players at the opening day parade in 2024. Photo by Isadora Guerreiro

"Register Now" tab to sign-up. Parents or family interested in coaching can follow the same link and sign-up under the "Volunteer" tab. All potential coaches are required to complete a background check, and all upper-level coaches will be interviewed and voted on. Join RHLL and give your child the gift of teamwork, sportsmanship, and lifelong friendships.

Herndon-South Lakes Hockey Team Celebrates Its Four Seniors

By Matthew Reider, Staff Writer

The Herndon-South Lakes Varsity Hockey Club and Reston's SkateQuest welcomed more than 100 friends, family members, and supporters on Jan. 31. They were honoring four graduating seniors in their final home game of the 2024-25 season. They were also hosting Langley High School—the top team in the Adams division of the Northern Virginia Scholastic Hockey League. These teams are the top two in their division, and the game did not disappoint. Langley pulled out the win, 5-3, with the final goal being an empty netter with 51 seconds remaining. HSL led the shot tally 27-16, but Langley's goalie Harrison Smith (#55) continued to keep pucks out of the net as he has done all season.

Prior to the game, the Herndon South Lakes team introduced their senior class and honored their parents. The recognition included applause for #22, Drew Barbieri and #28 Hayden White (Alternate Captain) of South Lakes High School, #19 Ryan Jones (Alternate Captain), and #39 Kai Blevins - the starting goalie and Captain of the HSL team.

After the ceremonies, the two teams faced off for the game. The visitors struck first, with Langley's James Wu (#58) firing a backhand past Blevins to take the early lead 1:30 seconds into the first period. After a bit of back and forth play, HSL's Scotty Roland (#24) tied the match after Ryan Jones (#19) spotted him for a great backdoor assist.

Langley struck again early in the second period, with #14 Nicholas Samburg scoring his third goal of the regular season just 35 seconds after the puck drop. Herndon-South Lakes applied some



Family, coaches, and friends celebrated seniors Drew Barbieri, Hayden White, Kai Blevins, and Ryan Jones before their last regular-season game. Photo contributed by Matthew Reider

pressure, but the game threatened to get away from them when #60 Alexander Oehm scored twice in ten seconds - both goals in the 10th minute of the second period, and both assisted by #38 Owen Slamowitz. Oehm is Langley's leading scorer with nine goals in nine games. His first came from behind the net and bounced around the post, but the second was a result of some nice tic-tac-toe passing from #14 Nicholas Samburg to Slamowitz to Oehm. With the score now Langley 4 and HSL 1, the Herndon-South Lakes coaches used their only time out to impart some wisdom. It must have worked, as the next few minutes were evenly matched

At the end of the second period, a roughing minor with two seconds left setup a power play at the start of the third. 50 seconds into the third period, Noah White (#2) of the Herndon-South Lakes team scored, bringing HSL within two. Owen Slamowitz was called for interference with a little over 5 minutes left in the game, and the man advantage would once again help HSL close the gap.

Five seconds into the ensuing power play, defender Stephen Reider (#52) fired

a slapshot in from the blue line. It hit traffic in front of the net, and nestled home - bringing HSL within one goal. With the score Langley 4, and Herndon South Lakes 3, the final five minutes were a battle. With a little over one minute left, HSL pulled their goalie from the crease in hopes that the numerical advantage would allow them to tie it up. Instead, Langley grabbed control of the puck, and Ethan Zhao (#76) of Langley would cross the blue line and fire the puck into the undefended net, putting his team up two goals with 51 seconds left.

After the handshake line, the players could be seen chatting with each other and discussing the game. As with most NVSHL games, the players are part of a community - most of them have played with each other on various club or travel teams, and like to keep track of what's going on in the hockey community.

Although HSL is done with the regular season, there are still a few games scheduled from 7:45 - 10 p.m. on Feb. 7th at Skatequest to wrap-up the season. After that, the playoffs begin - with both Herndon-South Lakes and Langley expected to participate.

SPORTS

Diary of a Softball Mom: Creating Magical Memories at the Field

By Sarah Hickner, Staff Writer and HRYS Coach

A large part of my growing up years were spent at the ball field. My two older brothers played baseball, which meant most afternoons and Saturdays were spent in the dirt pile between fields.

At 9 years old, my parents signed me up to play softball. That first year my brand new cleats stayed squeaky clean. The bench had a designated spot on it just for me, and when I was invited out of the dugout it was to stand in the grass at the edge of the outfield. It was a slow start, but I'd seen my brothers earn their spots on the field, and I knew I could, too.

The next season, I was drafted to a new team. Coach Andy gave me a chance to play in the infield, and eventually I got pretty good at the sport. Jenny, Maggie, and Emily became some of my best friends, and somehow Coach rigged the system so we always played together.

When people ask me what growing up was like, some of my favorite

magical memories were my friends and the orange dirt of the softball field.

Two years ago, when my daughter was 7 years old, I heard about Herndon Reston Youth Softball. Similar to my own childhood, she'd been dragged along to her older brother's games. Now it was her turn. I found the HRYS website and signed her up, checking the box to be an assistant Coach.

That first practice was awkward. We met at Haley Smith Park in Herndon. The team had been together since they were five years old, and we were the newbies. There was confusion, frustration, and tears. I wondered if the magic of my childhood would be torture to her. What if I'd made the wrong choice? But we'd committed, so we kept showing up.

Midway through the season, the team of strangers became friends. My daughter laid out her softball clothes the day before practice or a game, because she couldn't wait. After games, we called grandparents to boast about a big hit or play.

It's been two years since I first signed up for softball with HRYS. I've watched my daughter strike out numerous times, and I've screamed my head off when she hit her first [in the park] homerun. She's missed easy plays and made hero catches. She's learned new skills, handled disappointment and victory, and taught new players the ropes.

For an hour and a half, we step on the field, and there is no TikTok or Youtube (although occasionally I catch the girls doing silly dances in the dugout or outfield). It's orange dirt and friends. Victories and disappointments and trying again next time. It's cheers from the dugout and hand slaps at home plate. Softball is the magic of our childhood that we can gift to our daughters.

Herndon Reston Youth Softball is a volunteer-run organization. Spring registration is open now for ages 6 and up. For more information, go to <https://hrysfastpitch.demosphere-secure.com/>



Herndon Reston Youth Softball players Essie Hickner (left) and Ruby Miller (right) Photo by Sarah Hickner



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HERNDON-RESTON YOUTH-SOFTBALL

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Track and Field Athletes Compete at Virginia Showcase




Herndon High senior Evelyn Cherry competes in the 100-meter hurdles at the Virginia Showcase Invitational with other VA athletes in Virginia Beach Jan. 17-19. Photo by Karl Majer



Herndon High senior Ryan Savage competes in the shot put. Photo by Karl Majer



South Lakes senior Ella Laban (top) achieved a PR the in the long jump, and South Lakes junior Caroline Elliot (bottom) competed in the 1000 and 1600 meter races, the 1 mile, and the 4x800 relay at the Virginia Showcase. Photos by Karl Majer



Senior Hornet Evelyn Cherry clears the high jump. Photo by Karl Majer



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OPINIONS

We want to hear from our readers! What local topics do you care about? Please pitch your opinion articles or article ideas to ezreston@gmail.com

GREENFARE

Maintaining our Cellular Cities

By Gwyn Whittaker

In our 21-Day Kickstart program, an entire class is dedicated to overcoming food addictions. One of the most harmful myths we challenge is the idea of a "cheat day." When I ask former chain smokers or recovering alcoholics if they ever "cheat," their response is always one of surprise—followed by a firm, emphatic "No." They understand that the adage "everything in moderation" does not exist for addiction.

Our brains are glucose-seeking engines that require a certain level in our blood to think, remember, and learn. Glucose is a form of sugar that is derived from food sources; the problem is when simple sugars (up to a magnitude higher than found in a whole food) are ingested. Sugar is the prevalent form of food addiction, driven by hyperpalatable foods. Think of a chocolate, nut-covered apple instead of just the fruit. Anything after that is a disappointment to our palate and brain.

I had an interesting epiphany around food a while ago that I wanted to share to reframe this issue. With electron microscopes and other technologies, we have a much different idea of cells than we did when I was in grade school where a cell was depicted with a nucleus, mitochondria, and DNA residing in a membrane. Today, the picture is more like a city, with some estimated 37 trillion cells (80 billion

in our high energy consumptive brain) and very complex processes and pathways we are only beginning to understand. Cells replicate, repair DNA, synthesize protein, and have the ability to move in the body. Aging and disease can be sped up by our own hand.

Imagine you are the mayor of a city and decide that one day a week, you will replace the water system with orange juice and provide only candy to eat. The surgeons that day wouldn't be very effective nor would the kids learn in school. Everything would be mayhem until the hyperactivity stopped. Crime would go unnoticed due to the major disruption of ordinary processes. The construction work would be shoddy, and garbage would pile up. Your cellular city would be in a major state of disfunction.

We constantly encounter environmental factors that challenge our immune system—radiation, chemicals, viruses, bacteria, fungi, and single-celled organisms. So why would we intentionally weaken our immunity, even temporarily? I now see myself as the CEO of my cellular city, and this awareness helps me avoid things that I know will cause my roads to become clogged or my bones to collapse. As Kim Williams, past President of the American College of Cardiology, wisely says, "We are all going to die; I just don't want it to be my fault."

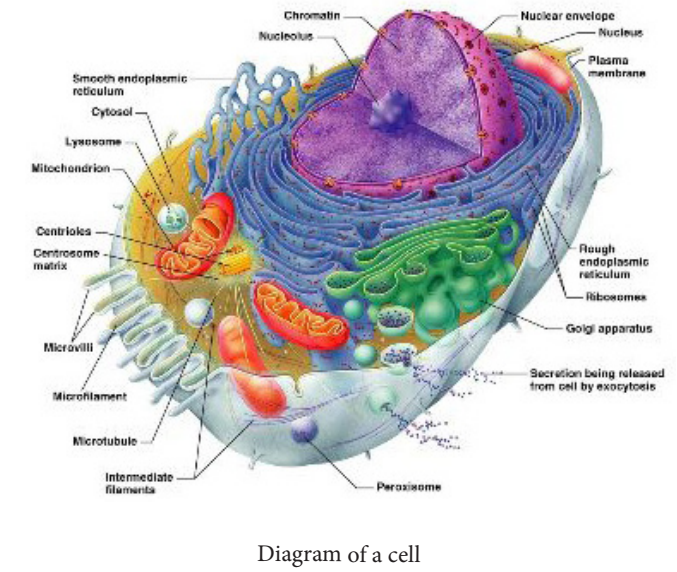
In the same way that we would never hurt our loved ones, let's love ourselves just a little more.



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Ask Doctor S.

Controlling What We Can Control: Ideas for Living Through Collective Trauma

I first learned about modern day collective trauma shortly after much of the world shut down in response to the COVID pandemic. People in our community were scared of getting sick and losing their jobs and scrambled to create new routines and maintain social connections. Marriages suffered with so much together-time, and parents were overwhelmed with trying to juggle their careers, manage their children's online academics, take care of their health, and run their households. Many lost loved ones. Others realized how views held by family and friends were contrary to their own. To this day, I frequently hear how familial and interpersonal relationships have been fractured as a result of different beliefs, values, and principles. In fact, I have spent many therapy sessions since then trying to help people make sense of these ruptures and accept what they can and cannot control.

According to American Psychological Association in their Culturally Informed Trauma and Grief Recovery Toolkit (on.apa.org/culturally-informed-trauma-toolkit), collective trauma refers to "traumas rooted in oppression or discrimination toward a minority group by a dominant group, in contrast to interpersonal trauma." In the past weeks, I have witnessed collective trauma on an entirely new level. In abusive relationships, emotionally and otherwise, the perpetrator is often highly skilled at gaslighting and using fear, threat, and intimidation tactics to scare the victim into secrecy, submission, and paralysis, often followed by some grand gesture of "love" and numer-

ous excuses for the abuse. Presently, all of our heads are spinning as we try to sort through overwhelming news bulletins, emails and social media posts, often followed the next day with more news "taking back" the previous days' messages. While I believe we all need to pay attention to the news in moderation, the constant chaos leaves many of us feeling confused, distracted, overwhelmed and on edge. So, how do we take care of ourselves and each other in the midst of it all?

It is important to control what we can control, for sure, but what does that mean in practice?

- 1) Pay attention to the dozens of actions and decisions that you make daily: what you wear, when you brush your teeth, which route to take for your run, what you pack for lunch, who you reach out to, and what you choose to listen to and watch.
- 2) Find your people and hold onto them, and, if you have not yet found your people, sign up to participate in something that interests you, a class, a workshop, or a cause.
- 3) Spend more time reading fiction, being creative, listening to music and podcasts, and having fun whenever possible.
- 4) Be sure you are breathing deeply, nourishing yourself properly, moving your body, and getting enough sleep.

Most importantly, during instability and uncertainty, please remember your humanity and show kindness to yourselves and others.



Psych'd to see you next month! – Dr. S.

Dr. Hayley B. Sherwood is a longtime Clinical Psychologist in Reston/Herndon. To learn more, please visit her website at www.oakhillpsychological.com. Read the About Us section to learn more about her team of therapists.

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KIDS

Reston Rangers

January brought freezing temperatures, snow, and ice! Join the Reston Rangers as we explore all about ice!

Strange But True!

Use the word bank below to answer these fun facts.

Word Bank:

standing, transparent, fresh, bubbles, Fahrenheit, molecules, Celsius, water, skate, size, glaciers, gas, frostbite

- Freezing point is the temperature at which _____ freezes.
- Celsius (C) is a way to measure temperature based on the freezing point of _____ water.
- Fahrenheit (F) is a way to measure temperature based on the freezing point of _____ water.
- While most of the world uses _____ to measure temperature, the U.S. uses _____.
- As water freezes, its _____ expand and move apart.
- An ocean iceberg can float because of air _____ trapped inside.
- The majority of Earth’s ice is in the form of _____.
- Reston lakes do not freeze well enough for us to walk or _____ on.
- The Antarctic Sheet is about the _____ of the U.S. and Mexico.
- Black ice is dangerous because it is _____ and can’t be seen easily.

Mr. Selner, Science Teacher at South Lakes High School, answers student questions about the salt used on the roads after the recent snowstorms.

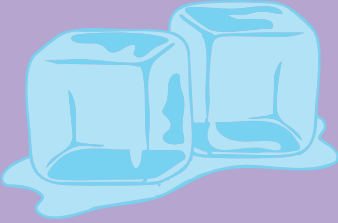
How does salt melt ice? Salt helps water freeze at a lower temperature. This is why people use salt and salty water on roads and parking lots when there’s snow or ice.

In my science class we talked about too much salt hurting our environment. Does that happen in Reston too? If so, how? Salt from snow and ice can harm streams, but it doesn't completely ruin them. When it rains or snow melts, the streams can have more salt in the water. This makes it harder for some types of insects and minnows to live there. Scientists found that Snakeden Branch, which flows into Lake Audubon, has fewer types of minnows and insects than The Glade, which flows into Difficult



JOKE CORNER!

Q: Why did the ice cube go to school?



A: To learn about molecules and stay cool under pressure!

- Dry Ice is frozen carbon dioxide and melts into a _____!
- Touching dry ice can cause _____.

Sources:
National Geographic. Education. (2025). National Geographic Society.
Reston Now. Online. Lawton (2014).

Kids' Art Magic



By Louise Seirmarco-Yale,
Reston Artist and Author

FEBRUARY MEANS ICE AND COLD SO WE STAY INSIDE - HERE’S A FUN FEBRUARY ART PROJECT.

DID YOU KNOW? YOU CAN USE ICE TO MAKE PAINTINGS!

Put some water in an ice cube tray. Ask permission to use an old ice cube tray, or buy a cheap one just for this.

See if there is some food coloring in the kitchen, and add it to each cube. It is in every grocery store in the baking section.

If you have some poster paint around, pick some vibrant colors and add one color to each cube.

WOW! You have made ‘PAINT STICKS’!
WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH THOSE?

Find some THICK PAPER. Maybe poster board, light colored cardboard, or an old manila file folder, and ‘draw’ or ‘paint’ with your ice cube paint stick. Watch the magic of colors flowing as the ice melts! You will see what happens when you PAINT WITH ICE! A great way to use ICE in February! What about March? What is next?



Simple Science

Explore more about ice by trying these two challenges!
(Remember to get an adult’s “A-okay!” before you begin.)

Ice Mummy

Challenge Level: ★★
Question: **Which material will keep an ice cube from melting?**

- Materials:
- Aluminum foil
 - Plastic wrap
 - Notebook paper
 - Sock
 - Container with lid
 - Cup
 - 5 rubber bands

- Steps:**
- Wrap an ice cube in each of the materials.
 - Wait 15 minutes
 - Unwrap each cube.
 - Compare each cube to the size of the cube in the cup.

Predict! I think _____ will work the best to keep the ice cube from melting.
Explain! Which one worked the best?
What happened here? Materials that trap air, like fabric, keep the cold inside. This means it takes longer for the heat from outside to melt the ice. Materials like aluminum are excellent at absorbing and keeping in heat, so they melt the ice faster.

Instant Water Freezing

Challenge Level: ★★★★★
Question: **How can I make instant ice?**

- Materials:
- Plastic water bottle
 - Purified water
 - Timer

- Steps:
- Fill a bottle or glass with water.
 - Put the bottle in the freezer.
 - Set the timer for two hours.
 - Take the water bottle out of the freezer.
 - Hit the bottom of it on the counter.

Predict! I think instant ice will be made when _____.
Explain! I think this happened because _____.
What happened here? Even a small event like a bump or dirty particles in the water can instantly start the formation of ice crystals, a process called nucleation.

Sources:
The Dad Lab (March 2020). How to Keep Ice for Longer?
ACS Chemistry for Life. (2025). I is for Ice.

KIDS

Celebrate Our Super Citizens

By Lisa Johnson, Staff Writer

Meet Morgan, an athlete, mental health supporter, and advocate for kindness and understanding in her community. Morgan is a senior at South Lakes High School and has been playing lacrosse since she was 9 years old. She recently received an athletic scholarship to attend West Chester University. Over the years, Morgan has noticed how athletes don't always get the mental health care that they need, so she became an ambassador at her school for Morgan's Message, a nationwide organization that supports the mental health of athletes.

Morgan finds that supporting athletes' mental health in particular is important because it is harder for other people to notice when something is wrong. "Athletes are used to having a lot of pressure," she states, "They're good communicators. They keep going when things are hard. They're used to pushing through. When other people see that, they think everything is fine when really it might not be."

To support athletes at her school, Morgan and her club members hold monthly meetings where players of all different sports

come together to decompress, play games, make connections, talk through any mental health struggles they are having, and get access to extra resources to help them with their mental health. "It really helps normalize what athletes are going through," Morgan explains, "Otherwise, when people struggle, they might think they're the only ones struggling."

Morgan prioritizes her mental health in her own life as well to help herself be the best athlete she can be. "On the field, I really have to have a clear mind since I already have the pressure not to mess up," she says. To help decompress from balancing athletics, work, clubs, and school work, she says that she prioritizes hanging out with her friends any chance she gets and talks with people when she needs to rather than keeping her emotions bottled inside.

When asked about the importance of kindness in a community, Morgan shared, "There's always a need to be kind in the world. Even if you're not getting something out of it, it's always important to be kind. Especially when there is so much stuff happening now. You never know what someone is going through."



Morgan is our Super Citizen for February.

Do you know someone in Reston who is under eighteen who has done something kind in their community? If so, scan the QR code below to nominate them to be featured as a super citizen in a future issue of The Reston Letter!



Inside Art

By Louise Seirmarco-Yale, Reston Artist



We may think that February inhibits finding art around us as it often seems like simply an extension of winter.

However, February offers a special opportunity for us--and here's why. This month is more than just a season of ice and cold; it is also a time of waiting—for winter's end and spring's beginning. When the world gets quiet and waits, it is easy to assume that nothing is happening. In fact, the opposite is true. I often think of 'unproductive' times as 'coiling up for the jump!'

There are preparation times in the cycles of life; February is one of them, and it generates art.

Twigs and branches that seem so lifeless and dull sparkle under ice in February. This is a natural art phenomenon, a treasured decoration, that we welcome silently every year. We open the drapes to find frost on our windows. Later, when exposed to a little sunshine, the magical forms are gone forever.

Try capturing these fleeting patterns using white pens on dark paper to draw the intricate forms you have just been given, before they vanish in the morning sun.

Ice always does its job: it protects life-giving activities going on within the stems of plants. Florida farmers spray their strawberry crops forming ice to protect the precious red crop from permanent frost damage. At the grocery store, we are the recipients of this wisdom that brings us shortcake every year. The fields themselves become magnificent art.

Meanwhile, twigs are doing their work under the ice, preparing to burst forth with buds in just a few weeks. Ice-covered plants transform their green and brown branches into shimmering glass. It is a breathtaking sight when the sun or night lights shine. Make your own ice-covered collage by collecting leaves, small branches, and flowers, and freezing them in layers in a large shallow container. What an unusual piece of artwork to place outside your front door to welcome visitors!

Valentine's Day often drives small 'love' projects of paper, doilies, paint, and hearts. Heart-shaped anything makes Valentine art! Art IS love.

As part of Black History Month, one can study how art was used. Beautiful quilts, often made of whatever scraps available, sometimes delivered a secret message of exactly how to use the Underground Railroad. "Follow the Bear's Trail through the woods" says a quilt square with bear-claw-like shapes revealing the clever language of beauty and practicality. Look at all art with your own expansive imagination as to what else it could mean. The language of art has no limits.

Expand your thoughts in quiet February to explore the art possibilities in your world. We are waiting for your ideas to bloom in the spring. Coil up for the jump! Is it the time to make stuff, or plan stuff? Whichever you like to do, put your creative self to work, since spring is just around the corner.

Louise Seirmarco-Yale is a Reston artist, speaker, teacher and author of "Art. You Be The Judge. Reawaken your Instincts and Enjoy Art On Your Own Terms," available on Amazon.

Learn more at www.peopleneedart.com, or email her at: hello@peopleneedart.com

Calm Corner

By Victoria Stacy, Staff Writer, Kids Section Editor

How can I practice being kind to myself? Why is this important?

February makes us think of hearts, chocolates, and showing love to others. But have you ever thought about showing love to yourself? One way to do this is by practicing Loving-Kindness Wishes. These are kind words you say for yourself and others to wish them good things. Scientists say that when we say these kind words, it can help us feel happier, calmer, and more positive. It's a simple way to feel better inside and spread kindness to everyone! "May I be happy; May I be healthy; May I be full of peace and free of worry."

Here's a few more tips to help make the most of your practice:

- Place your hand on your heart while making your wishes. It helps create positive feelings.
- Practice in a quiet spot where you can focus.
- Talk to yourself like you would to a friend or pet.
- It's okay if you don't feel positive right away. Changes take time, and there's no wrong way to do this. Keep your wishes general. For example, say, "May I find peace on my math test," instead of, "May I get an A."
- Say them silently or out loud. Which do you like best? Why?
- Use other 'wish words,' and say them for pets too!
- Loving-Kindness Wishes can help with difficult people too! Try saying them for someone who bothers you. What happens?

Keep practicing and stay curious!

Share your experience with this practice, or ask another question by email: vstacy.restonletter@gmail.com



Kids' Crossword

By Reston crossword constructor, Joe O'Neill

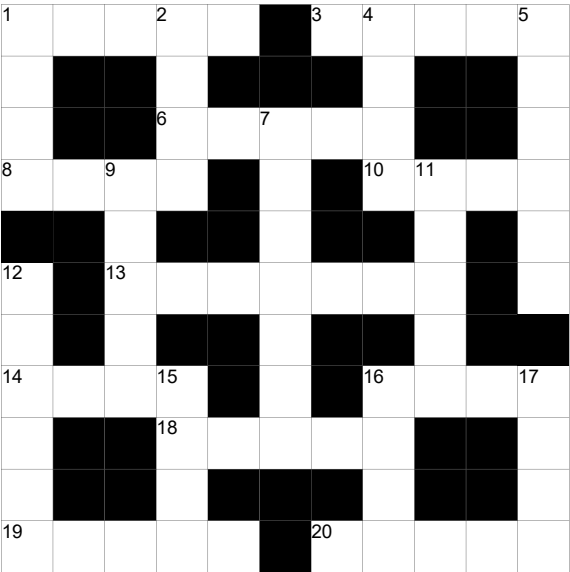
ACROSS

1. Loses water
3. Works of art that often rhyme
6. Avoid a tag at second base
8. Cries very loudly
10. Can't do without
13. Famous pop singer we only know by her first name
14. What Santa brings
16. Boats tie up to it
18. Bees make it
19. Popular Valentine's Day gift
20. Really love a lot

DOWN

1. Opposite of win
2. Smooch
4. Cookie cooker
5. What sat down beside Little Miss Muffet
7. Response to a knock on the door
9. Type of hairpin or London policeman
11. All-vowel refrain in the "Old MacDonald" song
12. A kid might send one to Santa
15. Croc, sneaker, or slipper
16. Like most Easter eggs and some hairdos
17. Toy used on a windy day
23. 16-oz units

Bees, Boats, and Some Kids Do it



LIFESTYLE

Love is in the Details: How to Host a Perfect Valentine’s Soirée

By Noelle Sharbaugh, High Heeled Hostess

This Valentine’s Day, celebrate love your way—ditch the clichés, shake up traditions, and do what fills your heart. Whether indulging in a cozy solo night, toasting friendship at a Galentine’s bash, or planning an intimate evening with your partner, make this day as unique as the love you’re celebrating.

Welcome to the third installment of my six-part series on mastering the art of hosting. Here are five ways to create an amazing Valentine’s celebration, no matter your plans.

1. Set the Mood

Ambiance is everything; tailor it to your vibe:

- **Flying Solo:** Create a self-care sanctuary. Snuggle up with a blanket, a favorite movie, and a drink of choice—or treat yourself to a bubble bath and face mask.
- **With Friends:** Bring the fun with heart-themed décor—think balloons, pops of red and pink, and festive table settings.
- **With Your Partner:** Dial up the romance with dim lighting, flowers, and candles. Add personal touches like handwritten notes or a playlist of your favorite tunes.

2. Food That Speaks to the Heart

Good food is the ultimate love language:

- **Solo:** Experiment with a new recipe, or indulge in decadent desserts like molten lava cake or chocolate-covered strawberries.
- **With Friends:** Serve a grazing board with cheeses, fruits, chocolates, and heart-shaped mini pizzas. Consider a

Wine and Cheese or Wine and Chocolate tasting for a fun activity.

- **With Your Partner:** Prepare or order a three-course meal, and finish with a dessert like crème brûlée or fondue.

3. Raise a Glass to Love

Toast to love with a signature drink:

- **Solo:** Sip on bubbly or a sparkling elderflower mocktail. Toast your magnificence.
- **With Friends:** Set up a DIY cocktail station with love-themed options like “Cupid’s Kiss” (prosecco, elderflower liqueur, and fresh raspberries).
- **With Your Partner:** Share a bottle of wine, champagne, or create a custom Valentine’s cocktail together.

4. Plan Activities with Heart

Thoughtful activities elevate any soirée:

- **Solo:** Enjoy a movie marathon, start that book you’ve wanted to read, or journal your thoughts.
- **With Friends:** Try a wine and cheese tasting, host a DIY bouquet-making station, or play lighthearted games.
- **With Your Partner:** Exchange love notes, cook together, or plan your dream getaway. Add fun with relationship trivia.

5. A Sweet Ending

Leave a lasting impression with a thoughtful touch:

- **Solo:** Treat yourself to something special, like a new book, jewelry, or a framed photo.
- **With Friends:** Send guests home with heart-shaped cookies or mini succulents.
- **With Your Partner:** End the evening with a heartfelt gift or a magical moment, like stargazing.

Love Is Worth Celebrating

Valentine’s Day is about creating moments that make you smile, laugh, and feel cherished—not about grand gestures. Hosting a personalized Valentine’s soirée is the perfect way to celebrate and make lasting memories, whether you’re raising a glass to yourself, your friends, or the one you love most.

Noelle Sharbaugh, the High Heeled Hostess, is a published and award-winning tablescapes designer dedicated to helping people transform dining experiences into unforgettable events. For more tips, tricks, and hosting inspiration, visit www.highheeledhostess.com, or email her at noelle@highheeledhostess.com



Photo by Andy Hoyle

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How to Improve the Air Quality in Your Home

Contributed by Reston Environmental Advisory Committee

The last few weeks in January were bitterly cold, so naturally, we’ve all been hunkering down indoors, keeping windows and doors shut to trap warmth inside. While this helps make our homes more energy-efficient, it also can create serious indoor air quality (IAQ) issues.

Did you know that indoor air can be two to five times more polluted than outdoor air, especially during the colder months? Given that we spend up to 90% of our time indoors—whether at home, work, school, or in vehicles—indoor air quality plays a crucial role in our overall health.

When homes are sealed tightly to conserve heat, fresh air doesn’t circulate properly, causing indoor air to become stale. Poor ventilation can lead to a build-up of pollutants such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), moisture, dust, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from sources like cooking, wood-burning fireplaces, and household products like cleaning agents, air fresheners, and scented candles. These contaminants can affect health and comfort, contributing to respiratory issues, headaches, and worsening allergies. In addition to CO₂ buildup, excess humidity can promote mold growth and increase

dust mite populations, both of which can aggravate respiratory problems.

Fortunately, there are simple steps you can take to reduce pollutants and improve indoor air quality:

- Eliminate or reduce sources of pollution (e.g., avoid burning candles or incense indoors, and vacuum surfaces and furniture regularly).
- Use exhaust fans in bathrooms while showering, and in the kitchen while cooking.
- Ventilate your home by opening windows or vents for short periods whenever possible to introduce fresh outdoor air.
- Use heat recovery ventilators (HRVs) or energy recovery ventilators (ERVs) during the winter. These systems exchange indoor air with outdoor air while transferring heat from outgoing air to incoming air, maintaining warmth while improving ventilation.
- Use a dehumidifier to maintain an ideal indoor humidity level between 30% and 50%.
- Regularly check and clean your HVAC system and filters.

Maintaining good indoor air quality not only promotes better health, but also enhances overall comfort. With the right approach, you can create a healthier living environment, even in the coldest months.

ELEVATE YOUR DINNER PARTIES
FROM ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY

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LIFESTYLE

North Italia at Town Center
I Went, I Ate, I Conquered (the Menu)

By Phantom Foodie

Reston Town Center's North Italia seamlessly blends traditional Italian flavors with a modern dining experience. It has long been a favorite gathering spot, particularly for happy hour and hearty appetizers—both among Town Center residents and, of course, the Phantom.

One standout is the \$42 Bottle & Board Happy Hour Special, which includes a bottle of the house-featured, easy-drinking red or white wine, along with your choice of a Margherita or Naples White pizza and either the Chef's Board or Farmers Market Board. It's the perfect shareable option for a special someone or a good friend. The Phantom's special someone, in particular, enjoys the charcuterie board's assortment of spreads, meats, cheeses, and breads. Also worth mentioning from the happy hour menu are the Italian Meatballs and the ever-popular bruschetta.

On this visit, it was time to experience the dining room. The spacious restaurant wraps around a lively open kitchen, cre-

ating an ambiance that's both chic and comfortable—although notably noisy. Fortunately, after requesting a quieter table, we were seated toward the back, where the volume was slightly more manageable.

The dinner menu offers a variety of enticing appetizers, small plates, and entrées. We started with the calamari, which was exactly as one would expect. For the main course, I opted for the Chicken Parmesan, served with a side of Parmesan rigatoni pasta. It was a satisfying dish, featuring a crispy exterior and juicy interior. Ms. Foodie chose the Italian Meatballs appetizer along with the Squid Ink Tonnarelli—tiger shrimp, wild fennel pollen, and mint in a spicy tomato sauce. Naturally, I had to sample it myself. The flavors were well-balanced with just the right spicy kick, and the portion was generous enough for a leftover lunch at the [home] office the next day—paired with water, of course, not the Edna Valley Chardonnay we enjoyed at the restaurant.

North Italia also boasts a robust beverage menu featuring local craft beers, cre-



North Italia is nestled by Mercury Fountain at Town Center. Photo by Isadora Guerreiro

ative cocktails, a diverse wine selection, as well as zero-proof mocktails and 0.0 Peroni beer.

Service was a mixed bag. Our server was polite and professional, and the food arrived almost too quickly. However, as the meal progressed, empty plates began stacking up, and it became apparent that our server had been triple- or quadruple-sat, leading to a noticeable drop in attention toward the end.

No meal at North Italia is complete without dessert. We shared the Dark Chocolate Budino—whipped crème fraîche, chocolate pearls, Amarena cherries, pine nuts, and a nut wedding cook-

ie—along with the Seasonal Butter Cake, which promises to be “sometimes sweet, maybe tart, for sure delicious!”

Portion sizes are generous, so be prepared to leave both satisfied and possibly with a to-go box.

While we enjoyed the dining experience, the noise level will likely send us back to the bar area next time.

Gift cards, group dining, takeout, and delivery are available.

Here's to good eating in 2025!

North Italia
11898 Market St. Reston, VA 20190
571.325.0823

Seize the Clay: Terri Cox Creates TLC Pottery

By Megan Schmid, Staff Writer

Originally from Mississippi, Terri Cox moved to Reston in 2003 for a short-term assignment with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. But her temporary residency turned into a permanent one after she met and married her husband John, a lifelong Restonian.

While still working as a technical writer and raising children, Terri decided to enroll in a pottery class at the Reston Community Center. “I took a ceramics class in high school and always wanted to learn how to throw on the wheel. It was a bucket list item! So when my daughter turned 4, I was ready,” she recalled.

Since her first class 15 years ago, Terri has managed an art studio and now teaches pottery classes at the Herndon Community Center. Additionally, she started TLC Pottery and sells her fun and whimsical pieces at the Walker Nature Center, Herndon's Holiday Arts and Crafts Show, and the annual Waterford Fair.

As a seasoned South Lakes High School pyramid mom and a member of the Reston Garden Club, Terri is well connected within Reston, and her pottery reflects her appreciation of our natural areas. Her fan favorite item are her Flower Pot Friends: worms with silly faces and hats

to adorn planters. She also creates other Reston critters (owls and cats), acorns, vases, mugs, dishes, piggy banks, and tea caddies.

Terri continues to learn. “Currently, I'm taking a Chinese brush painting class at RCC. I'm hoping it will help me to paint better on my pots,” she said. She embodies the idea that it's never too late to chase your dreams or learn something new. Seize the clay!

Stop by the Walker Nature Center to see some of her art for sale in the Nature House. To inquire about a commissioned piece, contact Tlpcox@cox.net.



TLC pottery includes whimsical Reston critters. Photo contributed by Terri Cox

Answer Key

Bees, Boats, and Some Kids Do it

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Answer Key

Bake Sales, Books, and Bread

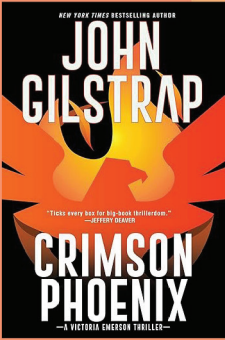
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R	E	O	O	T	E	M
	R	E	F	O	G	
	G	N	U	R		

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Come Join Our
BOOK CLUB!
March 6th @6:30PM



- **Location:** Elden Street Tea Shop (1633A Washington Plaza N, Reston VA)
- **Book:** Crimson Phoenix by John Gilstrap
- The book is available at all major book retailers.

For book club suggestions or to be added to our email list and receive book club updates, please email therestonletterbookclub@gmail.com.

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