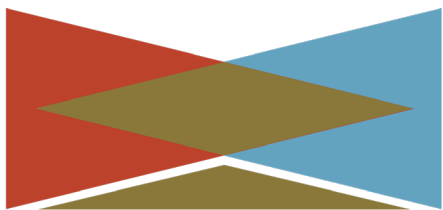


THE RESTON LETTER



High School Seniors Reach the Finish Line South Lakes and Herndon Classes of '24 Celebrate Graduation



South Lakes and Herndon High School seniors walked in their graduation commencement ceremonies on June 5 and June 7 at George Mason's Eagle Bank Arena. Top photo contributed by South Lakes counselors, bottom left by Walter Alcorn, bottom right by Aldrin Elementary

Caps Build Skating Rink at Lake Fairfax

By Dylan Murphy, Staff Writer

The Washington Capitals and the Fairfax County Park Authority's (FCPA) brand-new inline skate rink at Lake Fairfax Park has opened. In the wake of the Capitals' controversial attempt to establish a new arena in Alexandria, this project became a welcome endeavor that furthered the Caps' goal of promoting the game of hockey, and the FCPA's goal of providing community recreation opportunities.

Donated by the D.C.-based National Hockey League team, the 85-foot-by-185-foot roller rink is unlike any other facility in the county's park system, and is complete with bleachers, hockey goals, and penalty boxes. FCPA board member Benjamin Boxer describes the rink as a "new opportunity for adults and children of all ages to recreate, skate outdoors, and enjoy the game of hockey." Lake Fairfax was chosen for its available space as well as to appeal to a vocal community interest.

The project came about as a result of a community member's suggestion to FCPA. The NHL and the Caps were eager to collaborate with the FCPA to turn that idea into a reality, and bring the rink to Lake Fairfax.

The partnership between FCPA and the Capitals began in 2021, after the Fairfax County Public Schools joined the Caps' Hockey School Program. This program, offered in more than 1,600 schools, pro-



The new lighted hockey rink complete with team benches, penalty boxes, bleachers, nets, and boards, sits atop the hill at Lake Fairfax Park. Photo by Benjamin Burgess

vides floor hockey equipment, training, and P.E. curriculum to elementary and middle schools.

The installation, which cost the county about \$1.9 million, was a combined effort of FCPA, who organized the site preparation and supported the infrastructure, and the Caps, who donated the rink. The development involved clearing and grading, the construction of a paved rink and a new gravel parking area, LED lightning, and stormwater management facilities.

The rink will be open daily from 9 a.m. until dark; once the lights are programmed, the rink will stay open until 9:30 p.m., according to Boxer. Admission is free for the general public, and operates on a first-come, first-serve basis. The entire rink can be reserved for \$75 per hour. For availability and reservation information, contact the Park Authority's picnic department, at FCPApicnics@fairfax-county.gov.

the bulletin



Farmers market manager recognized, a new book about growing up in Reston, an artist among us, library closure details, Cathy Hudgins Community Center

sports



SLHS baseball team state run, banner sports season for South Lakes, Pitcher of the Year at Herndon, first HHS women's tennis player to districts

education



Graduation announcements, summer reading ideas, retiring teacher, principal award, Making an Impact column, crossword puzzle

lifestyle



Green tips for July, parents co-working club, book club info, new art column: "Inside Art"

opinions

Words of wisdom from Dr. Sherwood and Restonian's thoughts on a neighborhood social networking service

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THE BULLETIN

New Author Credits Solid Values to South Reston Childhood

By Ellyn Wexler, Staff Writer

Ellen R.B. Smith hasn’t always gotten in good trouble. The neophyte author is living proof that growing up in an affluent D.C. suburb like Reston does not ensure a perfect childhood. Fortunately, in her case, Smith maintains, her hometown’s founding principles shaped her values and influenced her development into responsible adulthood.

Smith’s book, “Memoirs of a Suburban Troublemaker,” documents how – mostly because of her parents’ divorce – “my childhood went from idyllic to completely chaotic, seemingly overnight,” she wrote. “I went from being a child who respected authority and followed the rules to someone who was in constant trouble – for misbehaving, for poor grades, for drinking, for using drugs, and for fighting.” It also describes how she turned her life around, and became a mature woman “on a lifelong quest to end racism and antisemitism.”

Writing the book, Smith said, “has served as both a cathartic outlet and a tool for self-discovery during a year of deep reflection on my purpose.”

Helping others with similar challenges was another goal. “I wanted to help kids and parents who might be going through something, or who didn’t always fit in, to feel less alone in the world,” she said. “My dream has been to write a book that takes

people on a journey, to learn, laugh, cry, and reflect on their own life.”

In addition, she said, “I want to make the world a better place for my children.”

Smith’s “penchant for journaling and preserving memories through photos and videos stems from a belief that nostalgia offers insights into life’s meaning,” she explained.

After leaving her job as a principal recruiting strategist at Amazon, she set out to write her book, devoting eight to 16 hours a day to the task. “I poured as much effort into this book as I did to my work at Amazon. I feel like if you are going to do or make something, that’s a reflection of who you are. To truly make it great, you must dedicate the attention it deserves,” she said.

Most of the writing took place in Smith’s home office, “Yet, I consistently took notes irrespective of my location — whether I was driving, watching TV or movies, listening to audiobooks, attending my children’s sports practices, during my art lessons, and notably, even in the stillness of the night, a practice that became especially prevalent.”

Smith thought big. She aspired to combine her story of growing up in South Reston with a history of “Virginia’s first open, integrated, and planned community,” she said. “I didn’t have confidence that my life story (alone) would be good enough, so I included Robert E. Simon

and Reston’s history,” she said.

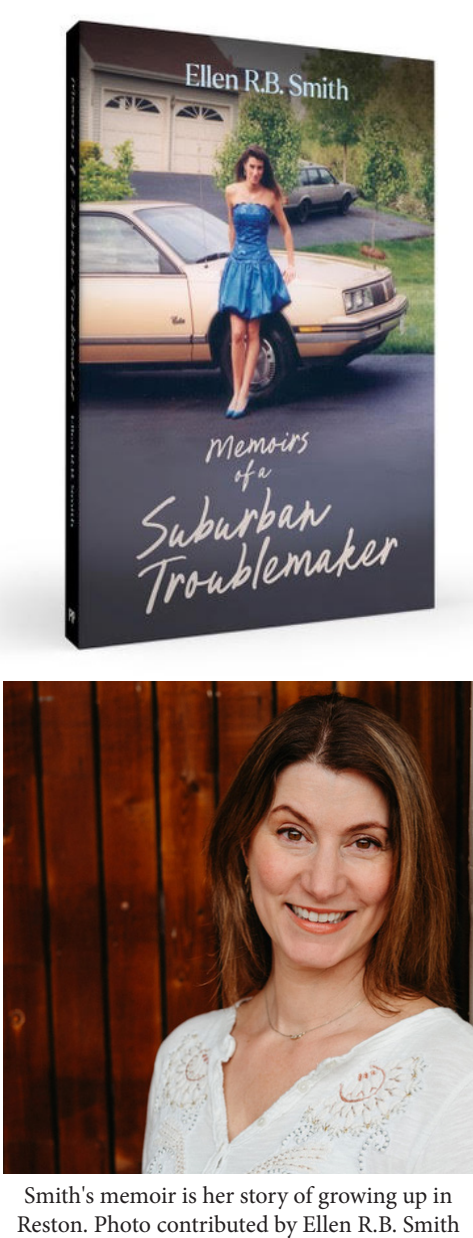
Her pre-readers disagreed. “After 175,000 words of this textbook-style writing, my pre-readers picked up on the fact that I’m not a historian, and they were skipping the parts about Reston and individual interview summaries, to get to my story.” An editor helped her streamline.

While Smith deleted the Reston history, she maintains the area’s values helped her become the person she is today. “I was fortunate to grow up in Reston, a town that was literally created as a place of inclusion for all,” she said. “I truly believed in the peaceful, egalitarian lessons taught at Terraset Elementary School.”

Smith remembers her kindergarten teacher playing the Marlo Thomas’ ‘Free to Be You and Me’ album for her class. “It fell directly in line with my view of Reston: where the ‘shining seas’ were manmade lakes, the ‘river running free’ was the creek behind our house, and the ‘green country’ was the 1,350 acres of open space that Reston’s founder and namesake Robert E. ‘Bob’ Simon had set aside for its residents.”

At the start of the book, the author noted, “This is a love letter to my family, friends, and hometown.”

Pre-order a signed copy of Ellen R.B. Smith’s “Memoirs of a Suburban Troublemaker” at ellenrbsmith.com.



Smith's memoir is her story of growing up in Reston. Photo contributed by Ellen R.B. Smith

Community Action Committee Links Local Police with Community

By Sarah Golden, Staff Writer

It’s no secret that local police were in their community’s metaphorical “hot seat” in the past few years. As a result, the Reston station, with the help of community leaders, brought back the Community Advisory Committee [CAC], a forum where Restonians can hear information about their community’s crime and safety levels, and police can take that “hot seat” to address community concerns.

A recent CAC meeting at the Reston Station kicked off with a few housekeeping items, a segment marketing

an upcoming event, and a brief overview of the Fairfax County Police Civilian Review Panel from its liaison Craig Miles. The well-presented information spoke to the committee’s commitment to transparency.

Police Major Mohammed Oluwa presented some recent crime statistics, including a mini crime spree that resulted in an arrest, and an update on the increase in motor vehicle larceny (Restonians, remember to lock your car doors!) Major Oluma opened the floor to community questions. For the next hour or so, citizens engaged in open conversations with local police leadership, sharing specific concerns about things going on in their community – like noisy mufflers and unsafe crosswalks. Major Oluwa appeared to be aware of these situations, and shared details of how he and his team are working behind the scenes to address

them.

The session also provided insight into some of the bureaucratic elements of police work – such as connecting with third parties like VDOT to coordinate speed limit adjustments.

Asked about topics he would welcome discussing at upcoming CAC meetings, Major Oluwa said that everything is on the table, and that what concerns the people of Reston concerns him as well.

The CAC provides an opportunity for Restonians to foster greater engagement with the men and women that keep them safe.

To get more information on the CAC or updates on future meetings, request to be added to the distribution list by emailing the CAC’s Vice Chairperson John Pinkman at CACvicechair2@gmail.com.



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On Saturday, May 18, John Lovaas received recognition for serving as manager of the Reston Farmers Market for 26 years. Lovaas started the market on a spring Saturday in 1998 when Reston’s founder Robert E. Simon and Del. Ken Plum joined him for the official opening. This year it was Supervisor Alcorn who officially honored Lovaas by reading a proclamation and presenting Lovaas with a plaque. The proclamation focused on all Lovaas has done over the years and ended with:

"Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on behalf of all Fairfax County residents, does hereby thank John Lovaas for his contributions to the community and outstanding stewardship of the Reston Farmers Market." Photo by Isadora Guerreiro



On Sunday, June 2, the CORE Foundation kicked off its race season with the 18th annual Reston Sprint Triathlon (RST). Nearly 1,000 athletes registered to swim, bike, and run for a charitable cause. RST is part of the Racing in Reston series, designed to create a fun and challenging experience for athletes while giving back to our community.

CORE Foundation, a Reston-based 501(c)3, uses funds from the Racing in Reston series of events for fundraising efforts. The foundation raised more than \$70,000 to support charitable projects that address societal needs, build community, and enable positive change. Photo by Patricia Kovacs

THE BULLETIN

Reston Artist Thrives on Art and Inspiration

By Ellyn Wexler, Staff Writer

Louise Seirmarco-Yale stands as a beacon in the world of visual arts, celebrated for her dedication to both creating and teaching art.

Seirmarco-Yale knew she wanted to be an artist since she was a child. She pursued her passion conscientiously, earning a bachelor of fine arts degree in studio art at Michigan State University and a master of fine arts in art history, with a minor in higher education, at Western Michigan University.

Her professional career as a painter began in 1976. “My paintings reflect my interest in people,” she said. “From single line drawings to 12-foot stretched canvases, I have portrayed attitudes of people and their place in our natural world all

my life. I like to express the 'feel' of things and communicate that to the viewer.”

Thirty years ago, from her Reston home studio, Seirmarco-Yale sold more than 1,000 paintings within a single decade. Her work is always evolving in terms of subject matter, technique, and materials. She may add texture with unlikely natural items – like a shed snakeskin or a discarded wasp’s nest, or use old cigar boxes or wooden roof shingles as the basis for her creations. Her current inventory exceeds 3,000 pieces.

Seirmarco-Yale’s passion for art extends beyond her own creations. Early in her career, she taught drawing and painting techniques, as well as art theory and criticism at community colleges. In her subsequent role as Director of the Toledo Museum of Arts’ Docent Educational

Program, she equipped volunteer guides with the skills to make art accessible and engaging for all visitors.

As a testament to Seirmarco-Yale’s conviction that art should be inclusive and accessible, she recently published “Art, You Be the Judge: Reawaken Your Instinct and Enjoy Art on Your Own Terms.” The book guides readers to overcome their insecurities about appreciating art; its insightful exercises encourage them to reconnect with their inner creative voices and embrace their unique perspectives on art.

Beginning in this issue, The Reston Letter will feature Seirmarco-Yale’s insights in a monthly column that will bring her expertise and enthusiasm directly to our readers. Look for it in the Lifestyle section.



Louise Seirmarco-Yale

Hudgins Community Center Offers Programs for Everyone

By Holly Weatherwax, Staff Writer

Open since July 2006, the Cathy Hudgins Community Center (CHCC) at Southgate is a place for local residents of all ages to gather and participate in a variety of activities. Originally the Southgate Community Center, it was renamed in 2021 in honor of Hudgins, a long-serving Fairfax County Board Supervisor.

CHCC’s mission is to “bring people and resources together to strengthen the well-being of individuals and communities.” Since his arrival in 2008, Director Quincy L. Lewis has been working to expand the center’s outreach to all sectors of the community.

Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) provides resources to CHCC, which, in turn, provides many free or reduced-cost programs. Some programs are family based, like the Reston Community Market Place (part of the Capital Area Food Bank program) that offers free fresh produce and protein to anyone who needs food assistance at 8:30 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month. A farmer’s market-style program provides fresh produce from 8 to 11 a.m. on the third Saturday of each month. Transportation to Target and Walmart are offered for \$1.

One of CHCC’s most active programs is the after-school program (weekdays, 3:30 to 6 p.m.) for grades one through six. It also offers coverage on teacher

work-days with pre-registration. Students, most from nearby Dogwood Elementary, participate in Open Gym, Computer Clubhouse, or Youth Zone, which includes homework help.

For teens, there’s Teen Open Gym, STEAM club (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics), Teen Zone, Clubhouse Homework Time, Teen Computer Clubhouse, as well as evening homework sessions. Teens can play indoor and outdoor sports, board, and video games, work on community service projects, cooking, and arts and crafts. The Tech Lab offers a drone program with competitions. There also are basketball and soccer leagues and an Inclusive Open Gym program for teens with disabilities. A teen summer program includes up to seven field trips.

The CHCC Basketball team won the NCS Intramural Basketball Championship this May. BJ’s restaurant in Vienna sponsored half the meals and drinks at the celebratory dinner in May.

For adults, there are social time programs, computer skills classes, open gym, pickleball, ping pong ,and an Open Lab program that allows adults time to access the Internet and check email. There are also beginner level ESOL classes.

Families can take free Zumba and Yoga classes, and take part in the National Night Out program in August.

As part of a pilot program, the cen-



Photo by Benjamin Burgess

ter provides transportation for seniors who participate in SAIL (Stay Active & Independent for Life) classes that work on strength and balance, or an Arthritis Class that helps build flexibility, range of motion, and strength. Other opportunities include a crocheting class, seated and standing Tai Chi, and games like Wheel of Fortune and Bingo. These activities are offered free for seniors who have an NCS Membership.

This summer, the center will hold a drive to collect 200 to 300 backpacks for local elementary, middle, and high school students.

Check the website for offerings and opportunities: [fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/cathy-hudgins-community-center](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/cathy-hudgins-community-center), or call 703-860-0676 for information or to register.



CHCC basketball won their championship this May. Photo by CHCC

Reston Library to Close for Renovations

By Friends of the Reston Regional Library

Reston Regional Library still expects a new building in the coming years. However, due to various delays, the county will make some interim upgrades to the current building, which will require the branch to close for the summer.

The last day of service will be Friday, June 28. After construction begins, the building will be closed into September. The current estimate is 10 weeks, but no end date has been set. Library Wi-Fi will still be available to patrons outside the building, but they must stay outside of fenced off construction areas, including

the parking lot.

The branch was built in 1985. A bond to support a new building was approved in 2012, but has not yet been utilized. Renovations will include health and safety updates affecting the public restrooms, lighting, and other fixtures. According to the County, “...this brief and necessary refresh will... ensure that it remains usable, clean, and safe for the duration of the building’s lifespan.”

Reston staff will temporarily transfer to other branches. As always, any Fairfax County Public Library cardholder can check out and return materials at any branch, and participate in programs at any branch. Patrons accustomed to pick-

ing up holds in Reston should ask a librarian for help changing their preferred branch for pickup.

The Friends of the Reston Library book donations, as well as August and September book sales are canceled. There will be a Puzzle Sale in October and a Holiday Sale in December; donations can be taken to Herndon-Fortnightly, Great Falls, or Oakton branches.

For information about Reston Regional Library construction, visit the FCPL website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>. For information about the Friends of the Library, visit: www.RestonLibraryFriends.com.

THE RESTON LETTER	
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

<div>13JUNE</div> <div>Take a Break Concert Series</div>	<div>13JUNE</div> <div>Guy's Night Out</div>	<div>14JUNE</div> <div>Fab Fridays Concert Series</div>	<div>15JUNE</div> <div>Family Fun Entertainment Series</div>
<div>15JUNE</div> <div>STREETFEST</div>	<div>16JUNE</div> <div>Art in the Park</div>	<div>17JUNE</div> <div>Growing in Small Spaces</div>	<div>19JUNE</div> <div>Sunset Concerts</div>
<div>22JUNE</div> <div>Lake Thoreau Deckboat Disco</div>	<div>29JUNE</div> <div>Fireworks and Fun</div>	<div>1JULY</div> <div>Orchestra Sight-Reading Sessions (Open Rehearsal)</div>	<div>4JULY</div> <div>Firecracker 5K For The Troops</div>

Thursdays, through August, 7-8:30 p.m.
Take a Break Concert Series
Halley Rise, 2025 Fulton Place
Free for all ages.

Thursday, June 13, 7:15 p.m.
Guy's Night Out
New Trail Cycling & Strength
\$25
Register here: <https://newtrail-cycling.com/>

Fridays, through August, 7-8:30 p.m.
Fab Fridays Concert Series
Reston Station
Free for all ages.

Saturdays, beginning June 15, 10-10:45 a.m.
Family Fun Entertainment Series
Reston Town Center, Town Square Park
Free for all ages.

June 15 and July 13 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
STREETFEST
Market and Library Streets in RTC
The streets come alive with a Kids' Zone, Game Zone, Pet Zone, entertainment, music, food, and vendors. Something for everyone on the RTC streets.

Sundays, through August, 7-8 p.m.
Art in the Park
Reston Town Center, Town Square Park
Free for all ages.

Monday, June 17, 5:30- 6:30 p.m.
Growing in Small Spaces
The Farm at Halley Rise
Free, donations encouraged

Wednesdays, through August,

7-8 p.m.
Sunset Concerts
Lake Anne Plaza
Free for all ages.

Saturday, June 22, 6-10 p.m.
Lake Thoreau Deckboat Disco
Bring your favorite boat and join us for a disco-themed event. There will be music and prizes!
Register here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/384435901198189>

Saturday, June 29, noon
Fireworks and Fun
Lake Fairfax Park
Bring your family to Lake Fairfax Park to enjoy food, fun, and fireworks.
Parking - \$15 before event, \$20 at the gate
Register here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/>

lake-fairfax/family-fun-fireworks/062924

Mondays in July, 7:30 p.m.
Orchestra Sight-Reading Sessions (Open Rehearsal)
Reston Community Center
Bring your instrument and sight-read some music for fun with the Reston Community Orchestra!
Adults: \$20/session. Youth (17 years and younger): \$10/session (\$50 for all 5 sessions).

Register here: <https://restoncommunityorchestra.org/2024-summer-reading-sessions/>

Thursday, July 4, 8:00 a.m.
Firecracker 5K For The Troops
Reston Town Center
Honor our troops by participating in a 5K race.
Register here: <https://www.prraces.com/firecracker/>

Community Calendar

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



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In Loving Memory

Irma Miller Finn Brosseau

Irma Miller Finn Brosseau, former executive director and CEO of The National Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW), died peacefully at her home in Reston, on April 15, 2023. Irma died at the age of 92 of dementia after living a full and happy life.

She was preceded in death by her beloved son Jonathan Finn, her husband George Brosseau, her ex-husband David Finn, her parents Alfreda Dyer (Lee) and Harry Miller, and a large extended family. She is survived by her adoring daughters Hester Finn and Sarah (Steve) Ramos; granddaughter Daniella Ramos;

stepdaughters Carole Stokes (Mike) and Catherine Brosseau (Frank Applestein); granddaughter Becca Rinas; grandson Ethan Stokes; and former stepson-in-law Mark Rinas.

Irma was born in Boston, MA on September 4, 1930, and grew up on the rocky beaches of Winthrop, MA, surrounded by her close extended family. She graduated from Simmons College with a BS in Journalism in 1952. Early in her career, she worked for the Houghton Mifflin publishing company and for newspapers in Boston, Anchorage, AK and, finally, Reston, where she raised her three children. From 1977 to 1987, she proudly worked her way up from Program Director to Executive Director and CEO of BPW in Washington, DC. She was a passionate feminist and was a pivotal person in the early years of the women's movement.

Irma and her late husband George founded The Brosseau Group, a management consulting business that specialized in working with boards of directors of nonprofit organizations. Irma was awarded an honorary doctorate in 1984 from Hawthorne College in Antrim, NH and was the 1987 recipient of the Simmons College Alumnae Achievement Award.

In the early 1960s, Irma and her first husband were founding members of Temple Beth Shalom in Anchorage.

SPECIAL NEEDS DENTISTRY

Dental Care for Children with Special Needs

At Smile Wonders, we treat children with special needs with care and compassion, giving them the same high level of dental care as all our patients. Here are ways we accommodate Children with Special Needs:

Customized Accommodations

Personalized Appointments

Schedule Appointments in the same room, same time, same dental assistant at each visit to establish routines and familiarity.

Visit Flexibility

Split visits to make short quick visits to reduce anxiety. Or schedule longer appointment times allowed for children that need a little bit longer to get settled and able to cooperate.

Quiet Rooms

Many children with special needs feel safe in their own rooms and defined safe space at Smile Wonders. There are no other children playing and distracting or causing over stimulation. They can wear headphones and connect to television mounted to the ceiling or listen to their favorite music. It helps them to relax and avoid having to listen to the normal sounds associated with a dental office. They are also free to enjoy our other play areas.

Specialized Equipment

We adapt our dental equipment and techniques to children with special needs, such as those who cannot stand or sit motionless, creating a more pleasant visit to the dentist. We also provide a frequency schedule as well as tricks and recommendations for modified brushing routine for each child.

Collaboration With Other Providers

Dr. Rishita at Smile Wonders works with area Developmental Pediatricians, Occupational Therapists, or Speech Language Pathologists to provide a "Visual Social Schedule" at home "Oral sensory exercises" or coordinate appointment with "Sensory Diet" prior to dental appointments. This personalized activity plan gives children the sensory input they need to reduce anxiety, remain attentive, focused and organized throughout their day.

Sedation Dentistry

Children that have mild behavioral and cooperation concerns, we can use Nitrous oxide (laughing gas) to help with reducing the gag reflex a nd level of anxiety.

Children that have moderate level of behavioral concerns and extensive dental needs, can be evaluated for eligibility to be treated with use of in-office IV sedation under the supervision of our Board Certified Anesthesiologist - Dr. Andy Tran of Olympic Anesthesia, PC.

Contact Smile Wonders

If you are looking for a pediatric dentist experienced with special needs children, schedule your appointment with Dr. Rishita Jaju at Smile Wonders today.

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She was also one of the founders of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Reston, where she continued her spiritual growth while retaining her Jewish roots.

Irma was fortunate to follow her passion of writing starting as a young girl with diaries continuing through adulthood with journals and culminating with her two-volume memoir. What a gift this was.

Throughout her long and fulfilling life, Irma always maintained her core values: motherhood, family, close friendships, and forming treasured connections with others. She was an amazing woman, the best Mom and Bubbe, and her sweet, engaging, beautiful presence is deeply missed by all who knew her.

Visitation with the family was held April 18-19, 2023 at the Ramos home and a memorial service was held on June 17, 2023 at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Reston.

4

EDUCATION

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE GRADUATE!

TO: VIRGINIA BANTON

Congratulations Virginia Banton! We are so proud of you & your accomplishments! Love, Mom, Dad, & Jamie

SOUTH LAKES HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2024

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE GRADUATE!

TO: KYRA DORFMAN

Kyra, congratulations on your graduation! We are so proud of you and look forward to your continued success at MaryWash!

SOUTH LAKES HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2024

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE GRADUATE!

TO: JACKSON RITTER

Congratulations and best of luck to you at Westminster College. We are so incredibly proud of you. -Love, Mom, Ninny, & Nate

HERNDON HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2024

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE GRADUATE!

TO: OWEN WOJCIECHOWSKI

We're so proud of the young man you are. Congratulations on a job well done. You are just getting started & we are honored to continue cheering you on!

SOUTH LAKES HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2024

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE GRADUATE!

TO: QUINCY MEADE

We are so proud of you Quincy! You are going to do great things at Herndon Middle School! -Love, Mom & Dad

ARMSTRONG ELEMENTARY CLASS OF 2024

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE GRADUATE!

JMU

TO: SABINE SOLTYS

Congratulations Sabine! You are a gift and we are so proud of you. Your curiosity is boundless and you have an incredible ability to be a difference maker. Continue finding your voice and using it for good. "Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God" Micah 6:8 -Love, Mom & Dad

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 2024

HHS seniors enjoyed their Legacy Walk at Aldrin Elementary. Photo by AES

The Reston Letter is funded solely by advertisers and donors. Consider helping us keep this community service alive.

‘Miss Pompeii’ Retires After Nearly Two Decades at Smith Children’s Center

By Ellyn Wexler, Staff Writer

Pomposa Ferrer, affectionately known as “Miss Pompeii” at the Robert E. Simon Jr. Children’s Center, is set to retire in July. Why now, after more than 60 years in education? “Because I’m 84 years old today,” she shared on May 23, eager to embrace the next chapter.

Ferrer’s journey began in the Philippines, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at Far Eastern University, and a master’s in education with an emphasis in school administration and supervision at Ateneo de Manila University.

Her illustrious career has included serving as a diplomat for the Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs as well as teaching children of all ages wherever she has lived – in the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the U.S., including California, North Carolina, and Virginia. She also dedicated 14 years to teaching adults in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes in Herndon, Chantilly, and Centreville.

As part of the 28-member Philippine

School Association, Ferrer established schools in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. She directed the Saudi school for eight years, handing it over to the community in 1989. Since its 1994 establishment, the Philippine School Bahrain has educated the kindergarten through 12th grade children of the kingdom’s overseas Filipino workers.

Ferrer’s first-grade teacher, Mrs. Garin, kindled her passion for teaching, instilling in her a love for school, teaching, and children.

In addition to catching up on her reading and travel, Ferrer intends to continue her work with the Bahrain school as a member of the Handmaids of the Lord ministry. “We’re helping more than 200 very poor children go to school,” she said. “I’ll visit rather than live there,” she explained. Her granddaughter, a doctor in the Philippines, carries on her legacy, “helping the poorest of the poor.”

Miss Pompeii also plans to drop by the Simon Center occasionally, knowing she’ll miss the children. Leila Kaszubinski, the Simon Center director who has known her since 2004, praised her as



"Miss Pompeii" will retire in July after more than 60 years in education. Photo contributed by the Simon Center

“an amazing teacher and a terrific person,” adding that “Miss Pompeii will be missed more than words can express.”

“We have known for over a year that she would be retiring, but it was still bittersweet when she handed in her written notice,” Kaszubinski said. “We all wish her the best in her retirement.”

Sunrise Senior Living in Reston, Reston Bible Church, and StandUp Ministries, Reston, came together to commemorate relatives of residents at Sunrise this past Memorial Day. A special service, singing of the National Anthem, and recitation of names, was part of the memorial. Crosses, Stars Of David, flags, and dog tags were displayed on the lawn for the event. Photos by Isadora Guerreiro

Roxanne
WATTS FINE HOMES

Reston Market Data
Jan - May 2024
Compared to Same Period in 2023

AVERAGE SALES PRICE Up 10% This Year \$645,000	AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET Down 32% 13	NEW LISTINGS Up 216% 431
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\$30 Non-member adults
\$20 Non-member kids

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EDUCATION

Aldrin Elementary Principal Receives Award

Contributed by Aldrin PTA

Shane Wolfe of Aldrin Elementary School received the VA PTA Principal Partner of the Year at the group's May 19 annual meeting. Earlier in the month, he was recognized by the Fairfax County Council, who put his name forward.

Principal Wolfe's collaborative approach has boosted parent engagement and created a stronger school community. From hosting ice cream socials to cultural and heritage nights, book fairs, family reading nights, career day, and Bingo, Principal Wolfe's warm and welcoming attitude has engaged families in school activities.

The Aldrin Reads initiative, where staff

bring books, snacks, and activities to the community twice a year, has filled students' homes with libraries and spread the love of reading.

Wolfe has spent nearly his entire administrative career in the Herndon/Reston area, beginning as Assistant Principal at Terraset and Armstrong elementary schools. At the time of his appointment to Armstrong, he was the youngest principal in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Following his six-year tenure as Principal at Armstrong, Wolfe accepted a position as Principal at Bailey's Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences in Falls Church. He returned to Aldrin as Principal in July 2012.



Principal Shane Wolfe

Congratulations to Principal Shane Wolfe on being named a Virginia PTA Power Partner Principal of the Year and for being recognized at the 2024 VA PTA Annual Meeting on Saturday, May 18.

@AldrinEagles
#OneAldrin



Hey Kids! Need Summer Reading Ideas?

By Lisa Johnson, Herndon High English and Writing Teacher

In search of some reading inspiration for your family this summer? After teaching all different grades from elementary to high school, I have come across many insightful, funny, heartwarming, and inspirational books over the years. Here you will find some of my and my students' all-time favorites to add to your summer reading list.

Books to read with elementary schoolers

1. **"Each Kindness"** by Jacqueline Woodson

While this story has a sad ending, it teaches a strong lesson on the importance of never missing an opportunity for kindness.

2. **"Jabari Jumps"** by Gaia Cornwall

This is a wonderful and relatable story about overcoming fears, as Jabari overcomes his fears of the diving board with the help of his father.

3. **"Little Taco Truck"** by Tanya Valentine

When Little Taco Truck's favorite spot is taken, he learns both how to stand up for himself and make room for others – a balance that is difficult to strike.

4. **"Mother Bruce"** by Ryan T. Higgins

In Book One of this hilarious series, goslings mistake happily independent Bruce the bear as their mother, and Bruce must learn how to navigate his new and unexpected family.

5. **"After the Fall"** by Dan Santat

We all know the story of Humpty Dumpty, but what happens after he can't be put back together? This story inspires readers not to allow setbacks and fears to keep them from achieving their dreams.

6. **"The Rabbit Listened"** by Cori Doerfeld
- This book teaches children (and adults) how sometimes the best way to help is simply to be there for someone amidst their struggles.
7. **"The Dreamer"** by Il Sung Na
- This beautifully-illustrated picture book teaches children about the importance of perseverance, planning, determination, and how pursuing their dreams can inspire others through the story of a pig who is determined to learn to fly.
8. **"The Remember Balloons"** by Jessie Oliveros
- When Jesse's grandpa starts to lose his memory, Jesse learns the importance of listening and carrying on his stories.
9. **"This is Not My Hat"** by John Klassen
- This funny and adorably-illustrated story follows what happens to a tiny fish who steals something that he feels should belong to him.
10. **"Beware of the Jormsnout"** by Sarah Carpenter
- A Reston resident wrote this clever and entertaining collection of interactive poems and short stories. With short pieces that open opportunities for conversation, creativity, and collaboration, this book is a perfect way to connect with your child.

Middle School

1. **"Bridge to Terabithia"** by Katherine Paterson

This 1978 Newbery Award-winning novel about two friends who create an imaginary kingdom for themselves has stood the test of time as a middle school classic.

2. **"Wonder"** by R.J. Palacio

An uplifting novel about a young boy with a facial deformity navigating school for the first time, "Wonder" inspires both self-love and acceptance of others.

3. **"Inside out and Back Again"** by Thanhha Lai
- Through a collection of poems, the reader follows the journey of H , a recent immigrant from Vietnam, as she explores American life for the first time.
4. **"When You Reach Me"** by Rebecca Stead
- A Newbery Award-winning, page-turning novel about friendship and time travel, as two friends work together to prevent a tragic death.
5. **"One Crazy Summer"** by Rita Williams-Garcia
- Both a Newbery and a Coretta Scott King award-winner, this novel tells the story of three girls who navigate reconnecting with their estranged mother.
6. **"Matilda"** by Roald Dahl
- A forever classic, "Matilda" is about a brilliant girl who, while unappreciated by her parents, finds power and connection as she uncovers exceptional abilities.
7. **"Esperanza Rising"** by Pam Munoz Ryan
- When tragedy strikes, Esperanza learns to rediscover herself after having to leave her elite, upper class lifestyle in Mexico to create a new life in the United States.
8. **"The Thief Lord"** by Cornelia Funke
- Two orphaned boys who escape to Venice become part of a group of boys who embark on adventure, uncover secrets, and magical treasure in this thrilling story.
9. **"Island of the Blue Dolphins"** by Scott O'Dell
- This historical fiction novel based on a true story tells how a young girl stranded on an island off the California coast, learns to survive and find joy.
10. **"The Giver"** by Lois Lowry
- This utopian / dystopian novel about a young boy who uncovers the problems with his community after receiving the

gift of memories has been a teen favorite for the past 30 years.

High School

1. **"The Book Thief"** by Markuz Zusak

A page-turning historical fiction novel set in Nazi Germany during World War II that explores friendship, mortality, and the importance of literature.

2. **"Nothing to See Here"** by Kevin Wilson

This humorous novel is about two high school friends who reunite later in life and lead exceptionally different lifestyles.

3. **"Everything, Everything"** by Nicola Yun

An especially great story to read along with your teen, this novel explores the ideas of risks, safety, and power through the story of a girl who is allergic to the outside world, but is longing to explore it.

4. **"Fish in a Tree"** by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Through the story of a girl who navigates life trying to mask her dyslexia, this novel provides teens with empathy for those with invisible disabilities and the comfort that they are not alone in their struggles.

5. **"The Nightingale"** by Kristin Hannah

This historical fiction novel examines morality and impossible choices through the stories of two sisters in German-occupied France during World War II.

6. **"The Fault in Our Stars"** by John Green

For the past decade, this tragic but heartwarming story about a teen romance amidst a terminal disease has been a top favorite for teens.

7. **"All American Boys"** by Jason Reynolds

This novel follows the lives of two teenage boys who navigate racism and police brutality in their community.

8. **"The Sun is Also a Star"** by Nicola Yun

Through the story of a young couple who falls in love while one of their families faces deportation, this story explores the themes of identity, family, and love.

9. **"The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo"** by Taylor Jenkins Reid

A current teen and adult favorite about the glamorous and scandalous life of a fictional Hollywood movie icon.

10. **"Eragon"** by Christopher Paolini

A page-turning fantasy novel that has been a consistent teen favorite for more than 20 years tells the story of a teen boy who embarks on an epic adventure.

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EDUCATION

Making an Impact

Ethan Goldman Tells Stories

By Chuck Cascio, Author and Former South Lakes Teacher

Ethan Goldman established the television and film production company Anchor Entertainment six years ago, and he proudly refers to his company’s Mission Statement that says, in part, “We foster an inclusive, family-first work environment that reflects a wide range of perspectives, experiences and backgrounds; all supported by our firm belief that mutual respect is an integral part of any successful endeavor.”

The 1992 South Lakes High School graduate attributes those thoughts to values he learned growing up in Reston. “Robert E. Simon’s vision was to build a community where people of all backgrounds could come together and celebrate who they are,” Ethan says. “From my own personal experience, it not only worked, it thrived. Those values taught me about the power of diversity – racially, religiously, and socioeconomically – as well as the importance of community involvement. Those are core tenets of

Anchor Entertainment.”

With more than 25 years in the television and film industry, during which he worked with programs that were produced on MTV, Discovery, Bravo, and many other networks, Ethan’s ambition always was to help produce meaningful shows. Some of the important transitional works he helped develop occurred during his internship with documentary filmmaker David Sutherland. “He was producing a multi-part documentary for Frontline (PBS) called ‘The Farmer’s Wife’ about a family in Nebraska facing foreclosure of their farm due to economic hardship,” Ethan says. “Even though I was just logging and transcribing countless hours of interviews, it was a really rewarding experience, and instrumental in guiding my decision years later to pursue a career in documentary storytelling.”

Ethan emphasizes that being raised in Reston, where his family moved from Boston in 1978, contributed significantly to his career path, and he still reflects on the “many fond memories of growing up in Reston – from competing in swim

meets for Upland, to lifeguarding and playing youth basketball and soccer in the community leagues. Reston was an ideal place to grow up.”

Anchor’s developmental approach and quality of its stories has resulted in numerous awards including, in part, a Realscreen Award for the series, “The Lost Kitchen;” two Telly Awards for Best Documentary and Best History Series; an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Social Issue Documentary for the MSNBC series, “Model America,” as well as recently being named one of the world’s Top 10 Factual Production Companies by Realscreen as part of its “Global 100” list. Anchor’s latest feature documentary, “Rather,” about the life of legendary newsman Dan Rather, can be seen on Netflix.

“We believe in the power of storytelling to unite, not divide,” Ethan says. “So much of what we do is about fostering community in the workplace at Anchor offices, among our industry colleagues with whom we collaborate, and with the audiences to whom we deliver these



Ethan Goldman

carefully crafted stories.”

Making an impact continues to be Ethan’s major objective. “My goal is to get involved with projects I care about deeply. Whatever I do has to be worth the emotional and financial investment. Each project is a massive time commitment, so I do everything I can to ensure that Anchor’s projects are ones that we are excited about spending the next two to four years making.”



Herndon High School seniors from Aldrin Elementary visited Aldrin for the HHS Legacy Walk. South Lakes seniors also walked the halls of their elementary schools in their gowns. Photo contributed by AES



Armstrong Elementary students met for free Chick Fil A at North Point and walked and rolled to school together last month on Walk and Roll to School Day. Photo contributed by AES



"Sunset Hills Montessori School students didn't let the rainy weather dampen their spirits at their 10th annual Fun Run. Usually held along the scenic Lake Audubon trail, the event was moved indoors to the school auditorium, where students eagerly participated in heats." - Alexis Davis



South Lakes High and Langston Hughes Middle students performed to a packed house at Lake Anne’s Kalypso’s restaurant to help raise money to provide scholarships for students in need to receive private performing arts training. The “Summer Lovin” fundraiser cabaret event was organized by Reston Stars, a South Lakes student-led group that strives to increase equitable access to arts enrichment through CORE Foundation, a Reston 501(c)(3) non-profit. For more information, visit <https://corefoundation.org/reston-stars> – August Rivers, Reston Stars



Dominion Christian School students welcomed their grandparents to campus for Grandparents Weekend. There was an art show, spring concerts and recitations. Photo by DCS

Crossword Corner

By Reston crossword constructor, Joe O'Neill

Joe O'Neill, a 40-year Reston resident, is a retired former 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 eleventh crossword puzzle creation, made specifically for The Reston Letter readers!

Sneaky, Squeaky, and Peeky

ACROSS

- 1. Half-___ (java request)
- 4. Fist bump
- 7. Squeak silencer
- 8. Tolkein monster
- 9. Quick peeks
- 11. Little Kid
- 12. Ballpark favorites
- 16. Rock found in veins
- 17. Drake's genre
- 18. What very few golfers break
- 19. Sneaky

DOWN

- 1. Wheel tooth
- 2. Feel sick
- 3. Butter up (colloq.)
- 4. Carers who cure
- 5. "___ you nuts?"
- 6. HP products
- 10. Head gesture
- 12. How bunnies get around
- 13. Rita ___, British singer
- 14. Gadot of "Wonder Woman"
- 15. Gather secrets secretly

1	2	3		4	5	6
7				8		
9			10			
		11				
12	13				14	15
16				17		
18				19		

SPORTS

Seahawks Pull Off Banner Spring Season

By Laurie Dornak, South Lakes Boosters Club

The 2023-2024 school year has been a year of outstanding performances by the students and student athletes of South Lakes High School on and off the field. From the football program's first 10-0 regular season to the girls indoor track and field and boys basketball VHSL Class 6 State championships, the Seahawks launched into spring sports season with gusto putting up another banner season, both literally and figuratively in the regular and postseason.

South Lakes Girls Lacrosse executed their most successful season in school history finishing overall 15-6-1 and second in the Northern Region overall. The 2024 Seashawks earned many individual District and Region honors and finished as the winningest girls lacrosse team in school history. Topping off that record, the Seahawks earned the program's first Concorde District title and VHSL Class 6 State tournament run. The Seahawks were Regional finalists and competed in the state quarterfinals.

South Lakes Boys and Girls Outdoor Track teams continued their tradition of excellence and competitive successes during the regular season with many District, Regional and State qualifiers early in the season and new school, state and national records set. The Seahawks

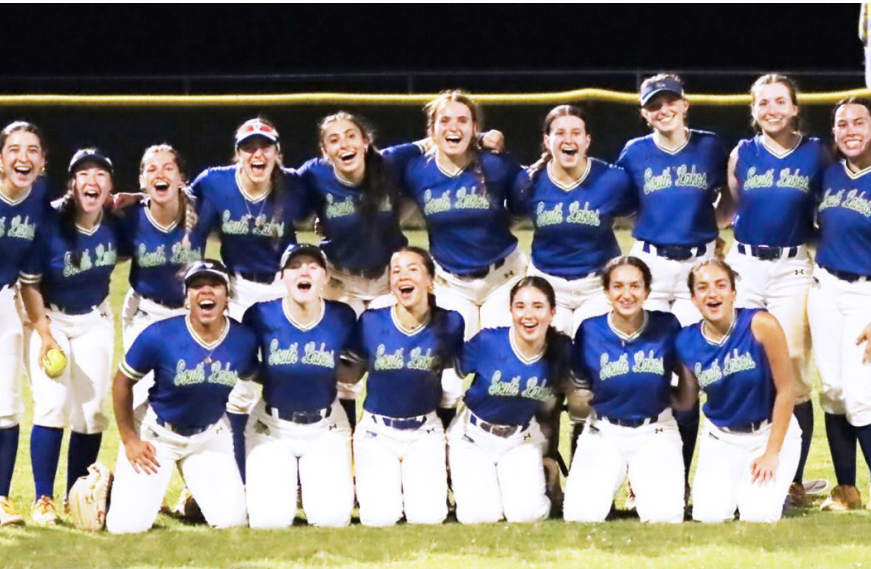
sent 19 athletes to the Penn Relays for some national level competition and the girls 4x800 relay team brought home a Penn Relay wheel for their third place finish. The boys and girls team finished strong with back to back Concorde District championships each. The girls team brought home more hardware as Northern Region champions. Both teams sent strong teams to the VHSL Class 6 State meet where the girls finished third. What's next? These teams will be sending athletes to Nike Outdoor Nationals again this month to finish off an outstanding trio of cross-country and track and field seasons.

South Lakes Softball, under the leadership of 3rd year Head Coach Casey Shieda, put down a season of

consistent results advancing deep into the postseason making the program's first appearance in the VHSL Class 6 State tournament after demonstrating strong pitching and offense and a challenging defense. The Seahawks finished their season 16-11-1 overall. A team with terrific chemistry, grit and determination, a number of underclassmen stepped up this year; competed and grew playing together. The Seahawks finished the Concorde District and Northern Region as finalists (to Madison in both tournaments). The Seahawks, playing in their first VHSL Class 6 State tournament, defeated Lake Braddock (2-0) in the quarterfinals and competed in the semi-final game against Osbourn Park.



South Lakes Girls Lacrosse 2024 Concorde District Champions, photo by South Lakes Athletics.



South Lakes Softball at the VHSL State Semi-final game in Richmond, VA. Photo by Beth Shaw



South Lakes Boys and Girls Outdoor Track and Field 2024 Concorde District Champs and Girls 2024 Northern Region Champions photo by South Lakes Athletics.



On Thursday, June 6, community members and families came out to support the SLHS baseball and softball teams in a joined send-off, as they hopped their buses for Richmond in the state tournament. Softball made the program's first appearance at the VHSL Class 6 State tournament, and the baseball team made it to the championship game for the first time in history, where they came up VHSL Class 6 runners up. Photos by Isadora Guerreiro



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Herndon Women's Tennis on the Rise

Contributed by HHS Athletics

Herndon High tennis has been gaining momentum since spring 2022 with the arrival of freshmen Sophia Dadley (#1), Julia Wheeler (#3), and Ella Murray (#4). The Lady Fighting Hornets scored their first win, as a team, in nearly a decade.

The win didn't come easy against Washington and Liberty High School. Further advancing in the

season, Dadley and her doubles partner Alexandra Godaire placed #3 in the districts, earning them a spot at regionals.

"I have been lucky to be with a team that supports me through my ups and downs," said Dadley, about securing her a spot in the district finals and a singles spot in regionals. The junior has been named Districts' second team in singles and doubles, earning her MVP

honors three years in a row.

Dadley started playing tennis at age 9, coached by her mother, and at 10, she began playing with Reston Tennis and earned a scholarship. She now splits her time between tennis, school, senior year planning, quality time with family, and hanging out with teammates. This summer, she plans to work as an assistant tennis coach with the Reston Association.



Sophia Dadley led the Hornets this season. Photo by HHS Athletics

SPORTS

South Lakes Baseball's Dramatic State Semi-finals Win Caps off Stellar Season

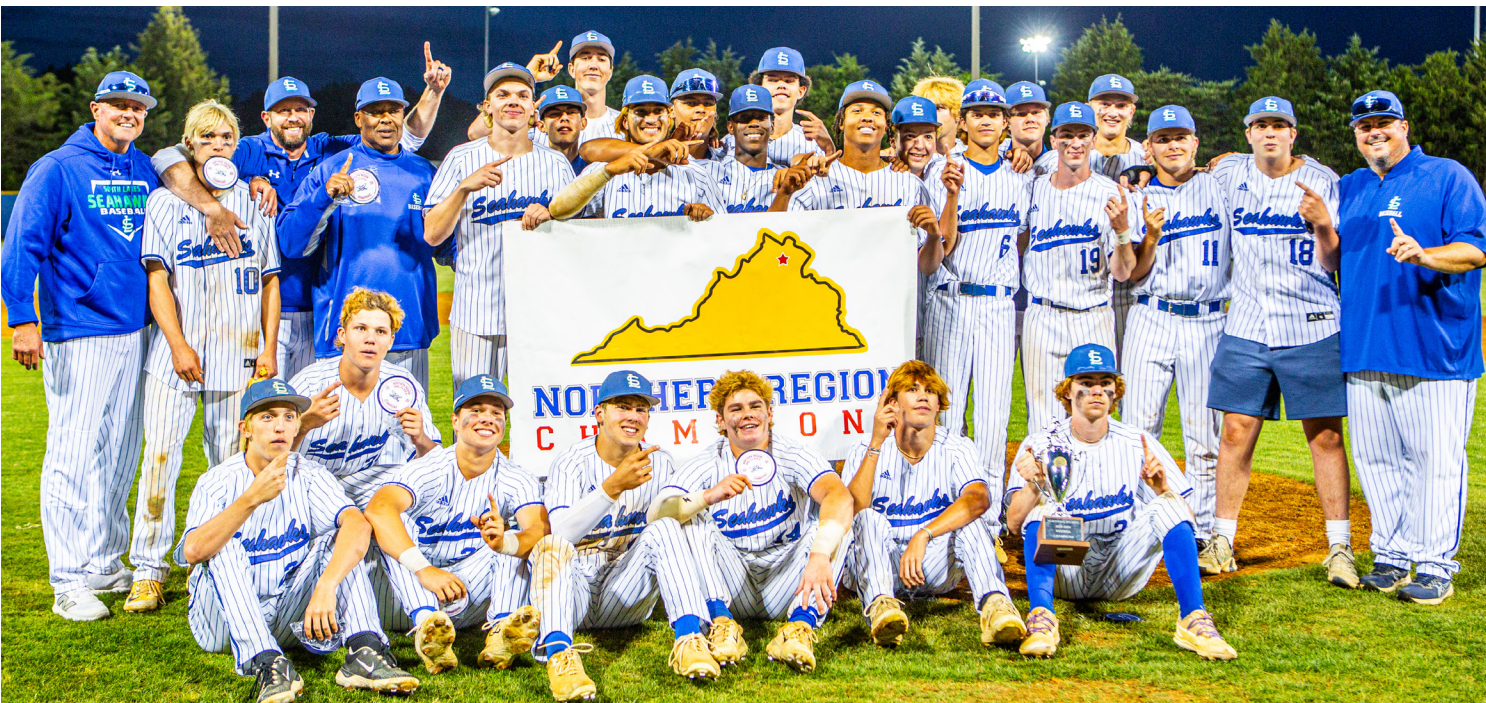
By Laurie Dornak, Seahawks Sports Boosters

South Lakes Baseball went 20-8 overall and have had the adjective “resilient” tagged to them all season long. Finishing as the Concorde District Finalist, the Seahawks brought home championship Northern Region hardware defeating McLean 8-5, which advanced the tight-knit squad to the VHSL Class 6 State tournament as a top seed. Seahawks were recognized as All-District and All-Region players; and were delighted to have Head Coach Morgan Spencer recognized as the Concorde District Coach of the Year and Northern Region Coach of the Year.

At the state tournament quarterfinal game, the Seahawks defeated West Potomac 13-6 to advance to the semi-final game. In the semi-final game against Western Branch, the Seahawks continued to show their resilience and had a walk-off game winner. Down 3-0 at the bottom of the seventh, senior Chris Downs doubled into the right-center field gap. With that inspiration, the Seahawks brought in three runs to tie it up with a hit to right field and a pair of bunts down the first base line.

Western Branch intentionally walked the next batter. Leftie Junior Christopher Kemmerer walked it off with an RBI single up the middle into center. Four quick runs at the bottom of the seventh gave the Seahawks the win 4-3 over a strong Western Branch Bruins team.

South Lakes met McLean again in the title game on Saturday, June 8. Junior Kameron Johnson hit a long two-run homer putting the Seahawks on the board



South Lakes Seahawks baseball team beat McLean to take the title of Region Champions. Photo by Rei Linam



Senior Keegan Porter scored the walk-off winning run in the semi-final game. Photo by Randee Wittkopf

first in the first inning. McLean scored over the next three innings going up 5-2 by the middle of the fifth inning. A seven-run inning by McLean followed in the sixth. The South Lakes team finished the season as VHSL Class 6 runner-up in the program's first state title appearance and their first region title in 27 years.



South Lakes Coach Morgan Spencer, the District Coach of the Year, holds the trophy after their Region win. Photo by Rei Linam



The Seahawks' win in the state sem-finals was the first in school history. Photo by Randee Wittkopf



Reston Herndon Little League Majors Division held its championship game on June 9 at Bryce Harper Field. The Cubs prevailed over the Rays, despite a late-inning rally. The players received championship and runners-up trophies and celebrated another great season of youth baseball in Reston. Photo by Lauren Las-seigne

A Young Hornet Squad Finishes Fourth in District Baseball Competition

By Coach Steve Frank, HHS

The 2024 Hornets was a youthful baseball squad that improved throughout the season. They started 0-5, but worked their way to a 10-10 overall record and 6-6 in the District for a fourth-place finish.

In the playoffs, senior James Beasley pitched a no hitter

against Wakefield in a 10-0 win. Herndon lost to the district champs Yorktown in the semifinals. Herndon qualified for Regionals for the fourth time in five seasons, playing the Madison Warhawks, defending champs. The Warhawks prevailed 3-2 in eight innings.

In the final game, Beasley was the only senior on the

field; the lineup consisted of two freshmen, two sophomores, and five juniors. Four seniors are graduating from the 22-player roster.

Individual awards went to Beasley (First Team All District and Region, and Region Pitcher of the Year), and junior Brayen Humpherys (First Team All District and Region).



Pitcher James Beasley allowed no hits in his last game as a Hornet. Photo by David Mclean Photography



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OPINIONS

Restonian

Ode to Nextdoor: So Many Questions, So Few Answers

By Restonian, Reston Blogger

Why is the helicopter flying overhead? • The neighborhood kids are playing ding-dong-ditch again. I have emailed this blurry Ring video to the county police, FBI, ATF, CIA and MI5. Does anyone parent anymore? • Who can fix my 50-year-old air conditioner? The neighbors keep asking us to do something about “Old Grindy” because it makes their house shake, but it keeps our house at a comfortable 82 degrees. • AVOID: This contractor came over to fix my 50-year-old air conditioner. He just put his head in his hands and started weeping gently. Does no one want to work anymore? • FOR SALE: Chair, gently loved, good place to sit. \$3500 OBO. • I saw someone I don't recognize walking down my street. Should I call 911 before or after I go to my panic room? • Seriously, why is the helicopter hovering over my neighborhood? • Friendly message from your cluster board: Paint your door one of the one approved colors or face our wrath. We never forget, and we never forgive, for we are the Thin Mauve Line. P.S. Don't forget the cluster picnic on Friday! • ALERT: A strange man wearing a uniform was wandering around the neighborhood and deposited several items in my mail-

box. Should we call the National Guard? • FREE: Chair, minus the upholstery, legs, back, and cushion. Okay, it's a piece of wood, but does no one want to give a perfectly good piece of furniture a little TLC anymore? • The neighborhood kids are now hanging out in the parking lot. Don't they have homework? • Hi, I'm a local government official who has to post here as part of my job. Consider this the equivalent of walking into a crowded room and dropping off a flyer without making eye contact with anyone, then slowly backing away. • Why is the helicopter flashing its spotlight into my window? • [This post has been deleted] • Who is censoring my posts about my petty conflict with my neighbor? What, is this Soviet Russia? • [This post has been deleted] • Why has the helicopter landed on my roof? • Hi, it's the neighborhood kids. We got tired of playing ding-dong-ditch and hanging out in the parking lot, so we created Nextdoor accounts. Why is everyone watching us all the time? • We went to this restaurant, ordered two glasses of water, and they didn't burst into tears with gratitude for our custom. Does no one understand customer service anymore? • Why is the helicopter pilot and a SWAT team bursting through my attic? • Can anyone recommend a good lawyer?

Ask Doctor S.

Take a Listen

We all have at least one person in our lives — a parent, an in-law, a co-worker, a spouse, or a friend, who immediately offers us solutions whenever we share something with them. We have a problem with a boss, another friend, a child, or just a situation, and, hoping to receive support or encouragement, we text or call (or talk with in person) that person with all the details, and, in response, we hear, “You should” do this or say that. We end up leaving the conversation feeling unsupported, annoyed, or dismissed. What if we could take our power back, and, instead, ask the other person for what we need FIRST? I realize this requires some vulnerability as well as some insight into other people's skill sets, but so many relationships could thrive if we all decided to start our conversations with a simple statement: “I am venting, and I just need you to listen.”

As for the person on the receiving end of the text, call or in-person interaction, in the event that this statement is not made, what if you asked the question, “Are you venting, or would you like a solution?” before jumping in with a quick fix?

Most of us need of a good listener. According to an April 28 Psychology Today article, active listening involves five steps: receiving, understanding, remembering, evaluating, and responding. Most importantly, however, is the pausing required to listen to the substance of what the speaker says. We watch countless adults in our lives from very early on, reacting to each other, because most people are more interested in imparting their knowledge and expertise and planning a reply than listening. While those in positions of authority often have lived longer or had more life experience, that does not make their guidance best for you in your situation. Which is more important — maintaining a relationship, or being “right” about how someone else might handle a problem? Unless the situation involves safety, I would choose to preserve the relationship.

At this time of year, many high school graduates are about to embark on their next chapter. Parents, this is a particularly good time to practice resisting the urge to problem solve for your young adult child (i.e., please do not fill out job applications, college forms, etc., for your child *unless you plan for your child to continue to require someone to make their lives easier down the road*). Teens want and need to trust their parents to be resources, so, when teens unload or share something that is causing them worry, anxiety, or another emotion, be sure to clarify what he/she/they needs before attempting to fix anything. Our kids will inevitably make choices with which we do not agree, and, as long as they are not in danger, we can conserve our energy for a time they might actually need our help.

If you are on the receiving end of unsolicited advice, it is important for you to pause, too, to allow yourself to consider where the other person is coming from and recognize that people come with histories, baggage, and ways of handling situations based on their own lives. Most people are not telling you what to do, trying to control you, or attacking you. Therefore, when you receive unsolicited advice, take a moment to consider the other person's backstory and how that likely shapes their response. If you simply acknowledge what the other person suggests (e.g., “that's an interesting idea”), rather than becoming defensive or argumentative, you will minimize the risk of even more unsolicited feedback, and, potentially damaging your relationship.

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. Please visit the About Us section on our website to learn more about our NEW THERAPISTS!

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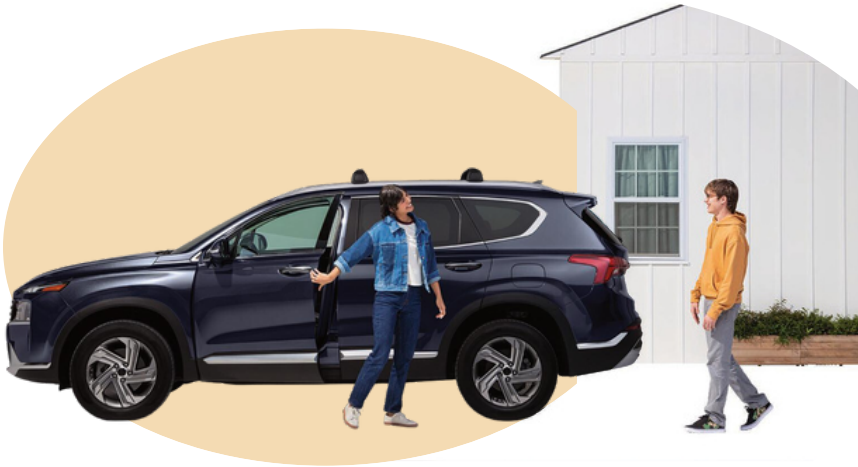
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LIFESTYLE

Inside Art

By Louise Seirmarco-Yale,
Reston Artist



If I were to ask if you like art, what would you say? I’ve often gotten the same reply: “I don’t know anything about art, but I know what I like.” Some claim not to be creative or able to draw.

Those responses make me wonder. We mostly agree that sports are for everyone; either you are an athlete or a fan. When asked if we like a sport, we usually don’t feel the need to say, “I’m not athletic,” or conclude that sports are only for an elite few. We assume we can appreciate athleticism without being talented ourselves.

Why then do people become defensive when it comes to art? When you ask little children if they like art, the answer is always the same: They love art. So, what happened to the natural love of art we had as children?

Our innate openness to human creative expression seems to be in our DNA. Since the dawn of man, people have decorated their houses (or caves). There also seems to be a natural inclination to make stuff. Once it is formally declared “art,” however, many adults become intimidated.

The elitist notion that one must be talented, rich, and educated to enjoy art leaves out most of us. I call this “The Art Myth.” The notion that somehow one must “know about art” to enjoy it is false. Yet we deny ourselves this pleasure. What a shame. Art enriches life.

I’ve often thought that the sometimes barren, all-beige environment of corporate cubicles could use a bit of livening up with some art. What if it’s true that art makes people happier? A happy employee is more productive, right? Wouldn’t that be good for the bottom line? Why then live without art on the job as well as at home? We are insecure about our choices. What will others think? Leaving the walls beige is the safer choice, albeit boring. Too bad. Good news: We can change.

Needing experts to guide us is firmly entrenched in society’s thinking. As children, we naturally need adults for guidance even if they misguide us. Do you remember a hurtful incident around art? Did it cause you to mistrust your art instincts?

We can change how we feel about art as adults. We don’t need an expert to pick out the color of our car, or the clothes we wear. Maybe it’s because these are not considered art choices? But they are. You are already good at it, right? You buy what you like, and you feel good about it.

Every month, I will bring you ways to help you to trust your art instincts again. We will look for erroneous notions about art from childhood that no longer work. Begin to look around you. Start noticing art. You will discover that you do know what you like. And, that it is enough.

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: hello@peopleneedart.com.

Go Plastic Free in July

Contributed by the Reston Environmental Advisory Committee

Single-use plastics continue to be a hot topic both globally and locally. Convenient and inexpensive, these items have become an integral part of our lives, but also cause significant damage.

Single-use plastics, such as straws, utensils, take-out containers, beverage bottles and cups, and bags, are commonly seen littering streets and parks, as well as lakes and streams, affecting the aquatic environment. They eventually make their way to the ocean, causing further pollution and damage to the marine environment.

It is estimated that by 2050, plastics will outnumber fish in the ocean. Nearly all plastics are made from fossil fuels, impacting our climate with the release of greenhouse gas emissions at every point of their lifecycle, from production to landfill. Plastic does not break down; instead it breaks up into many tiny pieces, in due course becoming what is known as microplastics. These end up everywhere, contaminating our land and soil, water, and even the air we breathe.

While waste management recycling systems and statewide bans such as the 2022 Plastic Bag Tax in Fairfax County are in place to reduce pollution and divert waste from ending up in landfill, these methods

are not enough to break our dependency on plastics. That starts with refusing or reducing single-use plastic items.

Plastic Free July began as a grassroots movement in 2011 to raise awareness of plastic pollution. The movement has grown, with millions of people pledging to reduce their plastic consumption in the month of July. It is estimated that those participating in the movement in 2021 reduced almost 2.1 million tons of waste.

Plastic Free July is a great way to encourage people to reduce plastic waste, find alternative options, and build long lasting habits. Joining the movement is easy; go to <https://www.plasticfreejuly.org> to register.

Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Conduct a “waste audit” of your trash to see where your use of plastic is the greatest.
- Create a “To Go Bag” with reusable items such as a water bottle, coffee cup, silverware, or straws to carry with you when out and about.
- Store reusable shopping/produce bags in the car or in your “Go Bag” so they are always handy.
- Say no to plastic straws or silverware when ordering takeout. Or opt to dine in instead.
- Bring reusable containers to the restaurant to take home leftovers (thereby also



A littered creek in Fairfax County. Photo contributed by Clean Fairfax

- reducing food waste).
 - Choose products with cardboard instead of plastic packaging.
 - Buy loose produce instead of those bagged/wrapped in plastic.
- Clean Fairfax also has some useful resources and tips available to help you make the change. If you want to consider extending it past July, take Reston’s Biophilic Pledge and commit to reducing your use of single-use plastics along with other environmental pledges.

Reston Newcomer Launches Coworking Club

By Megan Schmid, Staff Writer

After moving to Reston from London in 2022, Georgia Norton discovered how mental health metrics vary immensely from country to country. According to a recent American Psychiatric Association poll, one in three Americans feels lonely every week and is more likely to ease this feeling through a distraction, like TV or social media, instead of reaching out to connect with others.

“For many in a large city, working from home, video-calling, and ordering groceries online all liberated us to be more present and engaged in our local communities, simplifying lifestyles,” Norton said. “But when I moved to Reston, I noticed a lot of isolation, and craved that serendipity of conversation on the sidewalk and at walkable local events, school runs, and coffee shops. A lot of ‘convenient’ technology innovations are restricting human connection, which we fundamentally need as a social species.”

In an effort to encourage community bonds while in the challenging throes of parenthood, Norton started the Parents’ Coworking Club pilot program at the Jo Ann Rose Gallery space at the Reston Community Center at Lake Anne. She chose this space for its natural light, high ceilings, and inspiring displays of local art, a stark contrast to the typical coffee shops, kitchen tables, or corporate office space rentals commonly available to those who work remotely.

The Parents’ Coworking Club, created specifically for parents of Reston elementary school children, met three times this past spring. Around 25 parents came across the weeks, with children in six different Reston schools.

With peaceful music playing in the background, 16 desks were set up with

aerating plants, and healthy refreshments were provided. There also was a stretching area, a lending library with texts on conscientious parenting, and a table with stationery supplies, activism resources, and local event information provided by Reston Museum.

“There was a real appetite for this offering, and I saw some wonderful connections being made as attendees got to chatting with one another about what they did and what their kids are into. Camaraderie was the top piece of feedback, which was exactly what I’d hoped to spark,” Norton said.

Norton plans to host the next Parents’ Coworking Club this fall at the Reston Community Center at Hunters Woods. She is also exploring costs and applying for grants to lease an office space to provide more community events for local families. “Rates of loneliness are shocking and with all the division in society right now, nurturing our community feels like the right thing to do,” she said.

Contact Georgia@Playhood.club to join the mailing list or sponsor an event. Ideas like Norton’s that result in positive action



in the community are the types of ideas that continue to make Reston a great place to live, work, and play — just like our founder intended.



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LIFESTYLE

The Reston Letter Book Club is Off and Running!

By Sarah, Hickner,
Reston Letter Book President

Our inaugural Reston Letter Book Club meetup featured the prolific Reston author Donna Andrews. We sipped tea while Andrews spilled the tea on all things writing and murder mystery. I would love to tell you about real life people who have made it into the pages of her books (and may or may not have survived), but those are official RL Book Club secrets! The new location of the Elden Street Tea Shop at Lake Anne was a perfect setting for our gathering. We finished the evening inspired and ready to meet more local authors.

For the next meetup we will be discussing our next book, “In His Own Words: Stories From the Extraordinary Life of Robert E. Simon Jr.” by Reston’s own Kristina Alcorn.



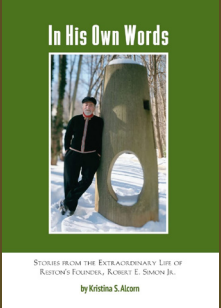
Readers enjoyed tea and talked books with mystery author Donna Andrews at the first meet-up. Photo by Isadora Guerreiro

We will meet on August 1 at Veloce Deli in Reston to discuss the book with Kristina. Our goal is to bring Reston area authors and readers together, so our next book will teach us about the town that started it all. The book is available locally at Reston Museum and new copies are also for sale at the Reston Used Book Store.

NEXT BOOK CLUB
MEET-UP



THURSDAY
AUGUST 1
6 P.M.



BOOK:
IN HIS OWN WORDS: STORIES
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BY KRISTINA ALCORN

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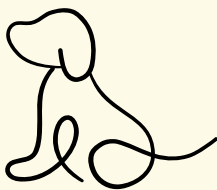
See you there!

<div>2024 Pool Schedule</div>							
SEASON 3 (June 15 - August 11)	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Autumnwood Pool	11 a.m. - 9 p.m.	11 a.m. - 9 p.m.	Fitness 12 - 6 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Dogwood Pool	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Glade Pool & Spa	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Golf Course Island Pool	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Hunters Woods Pool & Spa	12 - 9 p.m.	12 - 9 p.m.	12 - 9 p.m.	CLOSED	12 - 9 p.m.	CLOSED	12 - 9 p.m.
Lake Audubon Pool	12 - 9 p.m.	12 - 9 p.m.	12 - 9 p.m.	CLOSED	12 - 9 p.m.	12 - 9 p.m.	CLOSED
Lake Newport Pool	12 - 8 p.m.	12 - 8 p.m.	12 - 8 p.m.	12 - 8 p.m.	12 - 8 p.m.	12 - 8 p.m.	CLOSED
Lake Thoreau Pool & Spa	Open 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Fitness 7-9 p.m.	Open 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Fitness 7-9 p.m.	Open 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Fitness 6-9 a.m. & 6-9 p.m.	Open 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Fitness 6-9 a.m. & 6-9 p.m.	Fitness 6-9 a.m. & Fitness 12-9 p.m.	Open 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Fitness 6-9 a.m. & 6-9 p.m.	Fitness 6-9 a.m. & Fitness 12-9 p.m.
Newbridge Pool	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
North Hills Pool & Spa	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	Fitness 12 - 6 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
North Shore Heated Pool & Spa	Open 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Fitness 7-9 p.m.	Open 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Fitness 7-9 p.m.	Open 12 p.m. - 7 p.m. Fitness 6-9 a.m. & 7-9 p.m.	Open 12 p.m. - 7 p.m. Fitness 6-9 a.m. & 7-9 p.m.	Open 12 p.m. - 7 p.m. Fitness 6-9 a.m. & 7-9 p.m.	Open 12 p.m. - 7 p.m. Fitness 6-9 a.m. & 7-9 p.m.	Open 12 p.m. - 7 p.m. Fitness 6-9 a.m. & 7-9 p.m.
Ridge Heights Heated Pool	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Shadowood Heated Pool	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	Fitness 12 - 6 p.m.	11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Tall Oaks Pool	11 a.m. - 9 p.m.	11 a.m. - 9 p.m.	12 - 9 p.m.	CLOSED	12 - 9 p.m.	CLOSED	12 - 9 p.m.
Uplands Pool	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.	CLOSED	9 a.m. - 7 p.m.



*Fitness is time allotted for Recreation Pass holders ages 15+ to participate in lap swimming, water fitness exercise and aquatics programs.

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July Issue!

Safety Tip of the Month

Brought to you by Fireman Wyatt & The Outtaman

Don't take safety for granted. Ensure you have at least two ways out of your home in case of a fire...when every second matters.

- Identify Primary & Secondary Exits:** Know your main exit (like the front door) and a secondary exit (like a back door or window).
- Keep Fire Escape Ladders Accessible:** Make sure fire escape ladders are in upper floor rooms, are easily accessible, and that everyone knows how to use them.
- Practice Your Plan:** Regularly practice fire drills with your family to make sure everyone is prepared and knows the escape routes.

Stay safe and be prepared!



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