

HONORING FAIRFAX ACE HARDWARE FOR 100 YEARS SERVING THE COMMUNITY

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 15, 2024*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Fairfax Ace Hardware as a cornerstone of the Fairfax neighborhood and an exemplary example of commitment to service, innovation, and community spirit.

From humble beginnings to becoming a cornerstone of neighborhoods all over the country, Ace Hardware has been a hub for DIY enthusiasts, builders, and neighbors alike and since its opening in 2011, Fairfax Ace Hardware has become a helpful place, in more ways than one, for their Fairfax neighbors.

For 13 years, Fairfax Ace Hardware has been more than just a place to purchase tools and grilling supplies. It has been a gathering place where neighbors connect, share stories, and support one another. The employee-owned store's knowledgeable team, led by CEO Craig Smith, has always gone above and beyond to ensure the consistent delivery of outstanding customer service, a dedication to customer service and a no-hassle return policy.

The dedication of the Fairfax Ace Hardware team has led to multiple instances of being noticed by Ace Hardware's national offices, most recently and most monumentally being chosen as one out of ten stores to host a celebration commemorating 100 years of operation of Ace Hardware. This celebration, aptly named "The Biggest Block Party" and hosted on June 29, 2024, serves as a glowing manifestation of years of superb customer service and community engagement.

In addition to retail success, Fairfax Ace Hardware has been an outstanding corporate citizen sponsoring countless Fairfax events, fairs, and initiatives, supporting youth sports teams, and contributing to numerous charitable causes including raising over \$20,000 over the last two years for Children's National Hospital through a national partnership with Ace Hardware. Their generosity and community spirit have left an indelible mark on our town, fostering a sense of unity and pride among its residents.

As we celebrate this achievement, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations and deepest gratitude to the Fairfax Ace Hardware team. Your hard work, dedication, and love for our community have made a lasting impact.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Fairfax Ace Hardware for its outstanding contributions to Fairfax and in being an example of Ace Hardware's century long commitment to fostering community spirit. We look forward to many more years of success and service.

RECOGNIZING THE GRASSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL WOMEN'S TRACK TEAM

**HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 15, 2024*

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the

Grassfield High School Women's Track team on winning the Class 6 Women's State Track Championship.

As their Congresswoman, I am proud of these young athletes and their recent achievement.

Located in Chesapeake, Virginia, the Grassfield High School Grizzly Bears were able to bring the Class 6 Women's State Track Championship back home to their fellow students, faculty, families, and friends through their hard work and dedication to their team. The Grassfield High School Women's Track team star runner, sophomore Sophie Ranbo, took home three top place positions in the 100 meter, 200 meter, and 400 meter dashes. Head coach, James Nixon, led this group of young women to victory and concluded a great season.

As a former athlete myself, I want each of these young women to know Virginia's 2nd District is extremely proud of their accomplishment and applauds them on their well-earned victory. Again, congratulations to the Grassfield High School Women's Track Team on winning the Class 6 Women's State Track Championship.

CONGRATULATING THE ELECTED OFFICERS OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY FEDERATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATIONS

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 15, 2024*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations (the "Federation") and to congratulate its recently elected officers who will serve in leadership positions for the 2024–2025 term.

Founded in 1940 and re-incorporated in 1995, the Federation is a coalition of civic and homeowner's associations who work together to promote and support initiatives that will benefit the community as a whole. The Federation realized early in its existence that by joining with other civic and homeowner's associations from every corner of the county and speaking with one unified voice, its influence and contributions would be far more powerful and effective.

The Federation is composed of thousands of volunteers who actively participate in matters of local and state government that impact then communities. Individual members serve on countless task forces, boards and commissions to help preserve the quality of life that is enjoyed by all who call Fairfax County home. As a former two-term President of the Federation, I understand that those who volunteer their time, energies, and talents to civic activities play a vital role in making Fairfax County one of the best places in the nation in which to live, work, and raise a family.

The Federation would not be nearly as successful and effective without the leadership of its officers. It is my great honor to include in the RECORD the names of the following newly elected Federation officers:

President: Tim Thompson. Tim is currently a Federation Past President and is co-Chair of the Budget Committee and, as co-Chair of the Legislation Committee, frequently represents Federation issues to Fairfax General Assembly members. He served as the Federation delegate to the Fairfax County Redistricting Committee.

First Vice President: Morgan Jameson. Morgan has served the Federation as Corresponding Secretary and as the Federation representative to and Vice Chair of the Fairfax County Airports Advisory Board. He previously served as the Federation 1st Vice President and has represented Federation legislative issues to the Fairfax delegation to the Virginia General Assembly in Richmond.

Second Vice President: Sue Shuman. Sue has served on the Mantua Citizens Association (MCA) Board as president, vice president, and parks and environment chair. Sue is the Neighbor Network founder and president. She previously served on the Federation board as co-Chair of the Citizen Association Services and as an MCA delegate to the Federation. She was appointed in 2021 to the Fairfax County History Commission and has served as treasurer. Sue served on the county's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance Exception Review Committee.

Treasurer: Jeff Parnes. Jeff has been active in the Federation for 20 years, including the elected offices of Treasurer, First Vice President, and President. Jeff is the Federation webmaster and chairs the Transportation, Resolutions, and Citizen of the Year committees. He has been active in Providence, Hunter Mill, and Sully District Councils over his forty-four years in Fairfax County. He served the Sully District Council as its vice-president, president, land use and transportation chair and webmaster. Jeff served as the Greenbriar Civic Association Land Use Committee chair and as President, Treasurer and Civic Affairs Committee chair for the Chantilly Highlands Homes Association.

Recording Secretary: Bill Barfield. Bill is a Federation Past President and a Past 2nd Vice President. He is currently Chair of the Nominations Committee, the Citizen of the Year Committee, and co-Chair of the Legislation Committee from which he produces the annual Federation Legislative Issues report for the Fairfax delegation to the General Assembly. He has been President of two community associations, Chairman of the Braddock District Council of Community Associations, founding member and Vice Chair of the Braddock District Land Use and Environment Committee, and was 1st Vice President of his current community.

Corresponding Secretary: Luann Whittenburg. As a Federation member since 2019, Luann is ready to serve as Federation Corresponding Secretary. In 2023, she served on the Federation's Bylaws Committee. Her other community activities include representing the Fairfax Medical Reserve Corp on the Fairfax Citizens Advisory Council, 2022-present. Her ongoing activities in her community association include creating Neighborhood Watch and supporting the annual Fairfax National Night Out and community emergency and disaster preparedness events.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking all of the members of the Fairfax Federation of Civic Associations and in congratulating the 2024–2025 officers on being elected to lead this dynamic organization. I commend them for their efforts on behalf of the community and wish them continued success.

RECOGNIZING THE CAPE HENRY COLLEGIATE GIRLS LACROSSE TEAM

**HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 15, 2024*

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the Cape Henry Collegiate Girls Lacrosse team on winning the 2024 Tidewater Conference of Independent Schools (TCIS) Championship.

As their Congresswoman, I am proud of these young athletes and their recent achievement.

Located in Virginia Beach, Virginia, the Cape Henry Collegiate Dolphins were able to bring the TCIS Championship back home to their fellow students, faculty, families, and friends through their hard work and dedication to their team. The Cape Henry Collegiate Girls Lacrosse Team defeated their opponents in overtime, finishing the game eight to seven. Coach Ashmore Standing received the TCIS co-coach of the year award, and her student, Madeleine Keogh, won TCIS's Player of the Year.

As a former athlete myself, I want each of these young women to know Virginia's 2nd District is extremely proud of their accomplishment and applauds them on their well-earned victory. Again, congratulations to the Cape Henry Collegiate Girls Lacrosse team on the 2024 TCIS Championship.

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF JOHN C. ELLIS LODGE NO. 17 BASED IN DECATUR, ILLINOIS

**HON. NIKKI BUDZINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 15, 2024*

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 150th anniversary of John C. Ellis Lodge No. 17 based in Decatur, Illinois. John C. Ellis lodge, a part of Prince Hall Freemasonry, is the oldest active fraternal organization in the State of Illinois. Since Decatur Lodge No. 17 was founded on July 18, 1874 they have worked to promote service to their community and mankind.

In 1966, Decatur Lodge No. 17 voted to change its name to John C. Ellis Lodge No. 17 after Dr. John C. Ellis, who was a member and one of the longest serving Grand Masters in Illinois history. Dr. Ellis was also the first African American medical doctor in Decatur, Illinois and dedicated his life to serving his community in Central Illinois.

A century and a half after its founding, John C. Ellis Lodge No. 17 is still dedicated to perpetual improvement in their community. They work together to reach the principles of brotherly love, fellowship, and service. I want to thank the generations of Decatur-area residents who have made up John C. Ellis Lodge No. 17 for their dedication to serving Central Illinois and their commitment to bettering their community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER**

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 15, 2024*

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for the following roll call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 336 and YEA on Roll Call No. 337.

COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF VISIT FAIRFAX

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 15, 2024*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of Visit Fairfax.

Visit Fairfax, established in July 2004, is a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization that works in conjunction with their stakeholders to distinguish Fairfax County as a premier tourist destination. Their mission is to promote, market, and sell Fairfax County as a year-round destination for visitors from all market segments including all business travel, leisure, and sports travel.

Tourism is a proven economic development strategy for Fairfax County, bringing in over \$3.3 billion annually. Within the entire Commonwealth of Virginia, Fairfax County is the third largest contributor of expenditures to Virginia's tourism industry. In 2022, visitors to Fairfax County directly supported approximately 22,000 local jobs. While the majority of these jobs were in the leisure and hospitality industries—accommodations, food service, arts, entertainment and recreation—tourism impacts a multitude of businesses and crosses numerous industries.

Those figures are largely due to the work of the talented tourism professionals at Visit Fairfax. Based on the principles of partnership, cooperation and mutually beneficial alliances, their program of work is managed by objectives, and accountable for tangible, measurable results ensuring a significant Return on Investment.

Staff of Visit Fairfax work tirelessly to achieve the mission of the organization throughout the county. This includes sales calls, trade and travel shows, and one-on-one appointments with hospitality partners to increase leisure travel to Fairfax County. They also have to work closely and proactively with meeting planners and event coordinators to bring groups and organizations to Fairfax County, and they actively pursue adult and youth sporting events and activities to maximize the usage of local sports facilities.

Behind the scenes, staff from Visit Fairfax compile events and attractions, update information on restaurants and hotels, and much more to create a comprehensive database for those visiting Fairfax County, as well as residents looking to make the most of their community. With countless activities going on year-round, it is no small undertaking to have everything accessible and organized. Visit Fairfax's website also includes tools that allow people to plan a trip to Fairfax County and has

potential itineraries for everyone. These resources make it easier for people to access all that Fairfax County has to offer.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Visit Fairfax on their 20th Anniversary. This milestone would not have been achieved without the dedication of the staff and Board of Directors of the organization. Fairfax County is an incredible place to live, work, and play, and thanks to Visit Fairfax, our residents and visitors have the chance to see that for themselves. I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding this organization and wishing them the best for their next 20 years.

RECOGNIZING THE GRASSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL TEAM

**HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 15, 2024*

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the Grassfield High School Softball team on winning the Class 6 Region A Championship.

As their Congresswoman, I am proud of these young athletes and their recent achievement.

Located in Chesapeake, Virginia, the Grassfield High School Grizzlies were able to bring the Class 6 Region A Championship back home to their fellow students, faculty, families, and friends through their hard work and dedication to their team. They are a group of strong women who had a near-perfect record going into their state championship game. They have not won the regional championship game since 2018 and assistant coach, Larry Murphy, led these women to a four to one victory.

As a former athlete myself, I want each of these young women to know Virginia's 2nd District is extremely proud of their accomplishment and applauds them on their well-earned victory. Again, congratulations to the Grassfield High School Softball team on winning the Class 6 Region A Championship.

RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE VICTORY CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL OF WOODBRIDGE, VIRGINIA

**HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 15, 2024*

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and celebrate the 19th anniversary of the opening of the Prince William County, Virginia branch of Victory Christian Ministries International. This milestone represents nearly two decades of dedicated service, spiritual guidance, and community support to the Prince William community.

With humble beginnings in Clinton, Maryland, Pastors Tony and Cynthia Brazelton have dedicated themselves to growing and nurturing the Victory Christian Ministries International community. VCM's story began in the Brazeltons' Maryland basement where they hosted simple, yet powerful prayer meetings that rapidly grew. Soon, people from different