

The Jubilee Christian Center guides the giant American Flag Balloon.



PHOTOS BY JESS KIRBY/
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City Turns Red, White and Blue

Area residents celebrate the city's 55th annual Independence Day Parade.

BY JESS KIRBY
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City once again turned red, white and blue for its 55th annual Independence Day Parade after being cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19. For an hour and a half on the warm morning of July 3, military service members, first responders, government officials and performers marched through the heart of Old Town Fairfax to celebrate the Fourth of July with the theme "One Flag. One Hand. One Heart."

Hundreds of people lined the streets, wearing patriotic colors and cheering on the parade participants.

Oral surgery assistant and Burke resident Kristin Kuch and her daughter Briana Leake attend the parade every year.

"We like just about everything, but we really like the little mini cars, the Shriners and the dancers," said Kuch. To her, the Fourth of July means "freedom, the fact that we can all get together again and



Performers from Falun Dafa of DC spread awareness for Falun Dafa, a spiritual practice of meditation and self-improvement.



Fairfax Mayor David L. Meyer rides through the streets as the City of Fairfax City Councilmembers follow.

do this after the year that we've had. It's nice to see everybody getting back out, celebrating our freedom and being together."



Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8469 presents the flags of Veterans of Foreign Wars and POW/MIA.



Kristin Kuch and her daughter Briana Leake sit on University Drive to enjoy the parade

Britepaths Seeks Donations of Food and Funds to Help Families in Need

Fairfax-based nonprofit Britepaths is seeking community support to help stock its emergency Food Pantry that was closed due to the pandemic, and to help purchase school supply kits for more than 4,000 students in need at Fairfax County schools.

Pantry donations will allow Britepaths to resume offering food and supplies to Fairfax County residents who are referred to the organization because they're experiencing a financial crisis. The organization has been mailing grocery store gift cards to clients during the pandemic, but the ability to provide pantry staples will allow it to serve more families.

Donations are accepted from Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Britepaths' office: 3959 Pender Drive, Suite 200, Fairfax, VA 22030. It is recommended to contact the organization in advance at 703-273-8829 or info@britepaths.org. Details about most-needed items and a link to an Amazon Wish List are available at: <https://britepaths.org/our-programs/food-bridge/food-donations>.

Britepaths' Collect for Kids Back to School Program typically provides school supplies to 2,500 students attending schools in Fairfax County Public Schools' Fairfax High School and Justice High School pyramids.

THIS YEAR, staff at its partner schools submitted requests to assist more than 4,000 students, and Britepaths needs to raise \$40,000 by August to purchase all the needed supply kits.

Community members are asked to donate funds via Britepaths' secure on-line donation page at: <https://britepaths.org/our-programs/back-school>, or mail a check to 3959 Pender Drive, Suite 200, Fairfax, VA 22030. Write "Back to School" in the memo line. For more information, phone 703-273-8829 or email info@britepaths.org. A list of schools whose stu-

dents are served through this program is below.

Britepaths is grateful to Northern Virginia Association of Realtors (NVAR) Cares, Twins Ace Hardware and Mara Hair and Mode Studio for sponsoring the Back to School Program. Additional sponsorships are welcomed.

Lisa Whetzel, Britepaths' Executive Director, said, "We need to look no further than our Back to School program to see how the pandemic has affected families financially. We've been working with the same schools for years and the requests for school supply assistance have remained pretty stable at 2,500, but they nearly doubled this year. We decided to stretch and say, 'Yes' to all the requests because we know we have generous neighbors who want to help. We hope our community will help us come through for these kids who are already dealing with so much."

WHETZEL added, "We are excited to reopen our emergency Food Pantry so we can serve more families who are in crisis due to layoffs, illness and other factors that have impacted their income. Our office has been closed to the public for the past year, and we are looking forward to connecting with our clients and supporters again through the Food Pantry. We hope our neighbors will support our efforts to stock up so we can start distributing food again. Even a small donation can make a big difference."

Britepaths' Collect for Kids Back to School FCPS Partner Schools in

Fairfax High School Pyramid include:

- ❖ Daniels Run ES
- ❖ Eagle View ES
- ❖ Fairfax HS
- ❖ Lanier MS
- ❖ Providence ES
- ❖ Willow Springs ES
- Other
- ❖ Fairfax Villa ES

More information is available at: britepaths.org.

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](https://www.connectionnewspapers.com/calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

SATURDAY/JULY 10

Konjur in Concert. 6-9 p.m. At Moe's Peyton Place. Benefit Show at 6516 Backlick Road, Springfield.

SUNDAY/JULY 11

The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum is reopening on Sunday, July 11,

2021, with a "Welcome Back" event from noon - 3 p.m. with free admission, tours and refreshments. Docents will provide tours featuring new exhibits. Young visitors can enjoy puzzles and other attractions.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10