



THE  
**Forest Hill**  
**FLYER**

Published by the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association

## Spring 2024 Issue

PAGE

- 3** Return of the 5K fun run
- 5** President's message
- 6** Developments on Forest Hill Ave
- 9** Bridge over Reedy Creek
- 11** Guide: Getting rid of old stuff
- 13** Art Spotlight: Janet Lambdin Ringle
- 15** City Council Update

# The 5K is Back!

March 16 AT 9am



FHNA meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm  
at Forest Hill Presbyterian Church and on Zoom. See you there!

[www.foresthillneighborhood.com](http://www.foresthillneighborhood.com)



# ALEXIS THOMPSON

RIVER FOX REALTY

804.627.3803 | alexis@riverfoxrealty.com



## LOCAL

I've owned two homes in Forest Hill, and our office is in the neighborhood! We make sure to give back to the community - last year we paid for and built an ENTIRE HOUSE for Habitat for Humanity!



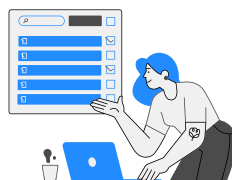
## AGENT + LEADER

As the owner of River Fox Realty, I regularly teach ethics, real estate investment, marketing and sales strategy. Our brokerage is in the top 2% of Richmond real estate brokerages, with only a fraction of the agents (quality over quantity!).



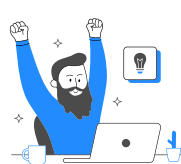
## TOP 1% IN SALES

As an agent who is ranked in the top 1% in Richmond, my clients get the highest level of experience. Last year, our \$/ft sale price in the area was approx. \$302/ft compared to all other brokerages averaging at \$257/ft.



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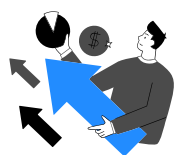
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Just a few of my happy sellers



## Forest Hill 5K Returns! by Christine Waldron, FHNA Vice President

As vice president of our neighborhood association, I am excited to announce the Run for the Hills: Forest Hill 5K will be on March 16th at 9 am in our neighborhood. This 11-year tradition of a five kilometer fun run was canceled due to the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic and quarantine. Its return marks a time to celebrate not only your neighborhood, but also the fact that you are part of an amazing community.

I hope that you will join us for the 5K because the start and finish happen at the Stone House in Forest Hill Park. Participants will experience not only some hills, but also the lake, streets, and architecture that make our neighborhood unique. You can walk, jog, or run it. Dogs and strollers are also welcome at this fun run. Want to wear a fun costume? Do it! Love to dress up your dog? Do it! If you live on the route, please take this opportunity to hang your Forest Hill flag on March 16th, create a water station (for humans and dogs), or a cheering section! If you don't have a flag yet, please check out [foresthillneighborhood.com](http://foresthillneighborhood.com).

Please join us if you are interested in volunteering because we still have some spots open for people on the course to help guide our runners! Contact me at [jchristinewaldron@gmail.com](mailto:jchristinewaldron@gmail.com) if you would like to volunteer. 🌲

## RUN FOR THE HILLS



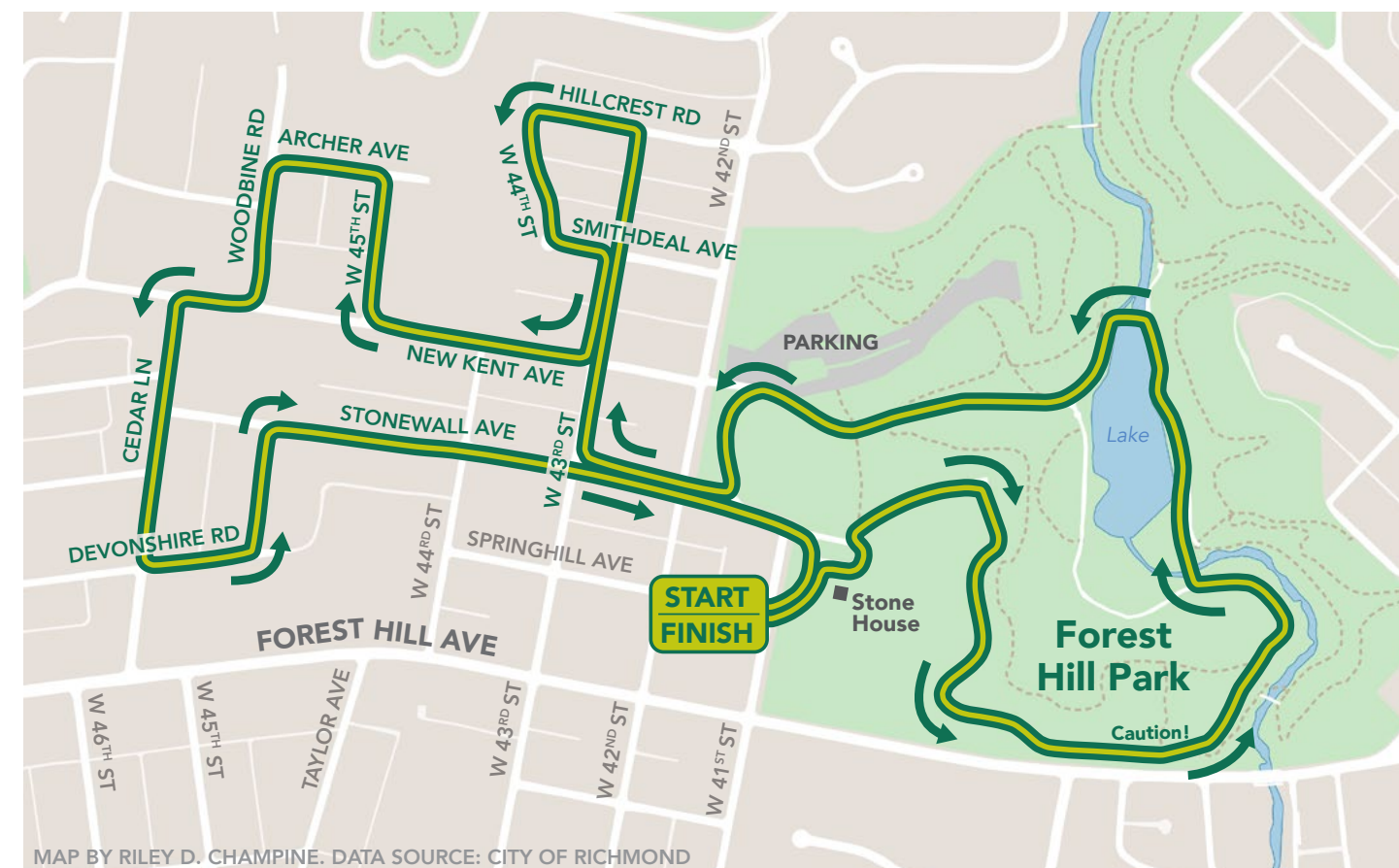
FOREST HILL 2024

March 16th, 9am

START/FINISH AT  
The Stone House



Scan to register online. Walk-up registration will be available on race day from 7-8:30am.







## Tubing, Rafting & Summer Camps

Check out what we've got going on for the 2024 season at  
[riversideoutfitters.com](http://riversideoutfitters.com)  
 (804) 560-0068

- River season is right around the corner!
- Come join us in our 20th year for some rafting and tubing adventures with your friends and family
- And don't miss out on getting your kids a spot in our summer adventure camps. As you know those fill up fast!
- Wherever you find yourself, have a blast and stay outside! See you around the neighborhood

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# Live Locally, Act Locally by Greg Somerville, FHNA President

Before moving to Forest Hill, I could have been the poster child for political non-engagement. I voted in state and national elections, but did little else. I let other interests and priorities control my calendar. At my core, I felt I couldn't make a difference.

Recently I had a chance to talk with Kristen Nye, our 4th District Representative and President of the City Council. Since she's a neighbor, she let me drop by her house and chat about her political career. I was inspired to learn that her distinguished record of public service began with one small step of community engagement.

### Kristen, how did you get involved in local government?

Before my son reached elementary school age, I stumbled upon information about plans for the Patrick Henry Charter School. I got involved and ended up on the Patrick Henry School Board. After confronting lots of misconceptions from city officials, I decided to put my name in the hat when a Richmond School Board seat opened in 2012. Though I had never run for – or had an interest in – public office, I won the election and served a 4-year term. In 2016, I decided to run for the 4th District seat on the City Council. I have been serving in that role for eight years.

### What motivated you to move to Forest Hill?

Through my involvement with Patrick Henry, I came to love Forest Hill Park. The house we now live in allows us to walk our dog in the park every single day. We hear owls, we see turtles. This was one of the little oasis areas in our city. Shane and I are so lucky.

### What's a specific issue that has been significantly influenced by Forest Hill neighbors?

Several years ago we initiated a traffic study on pedestrian infrastructure along Forest Hill Avenue, between Westover Hills Boulevard and 41st Street. Many neighbors pitched in, but Whit Clements (former FHNA President) played a major role. We walked down Forest Hill Avenue discussing specific safety concerns. Engineers can always study accident reports, but when neighbors point out the places where they can't cross the street with a child, it makes an impact.

The plan has not been fully implemented, but many pieces are in the queue that will make that corridor a lot safer. I'm really proud of the Forest Hill neighbors who advocated for this.



Kristen (right) and her partner Shane

**Until recently, I have been almost totally uninvolved in local government. What advice would you have for neighbors like me who might think they can't make a difference?**

We spend lots of time thinking about whom we will elect for President or Congress, but our most powerful impact is felt locally. Is there a pothole on your street? Reach out to me. Does it seem minor? It could be impacting several other people. We need to be advocates for our streets, our neighborhoods, our district, and our city. 🌳



Kristen's dog, Jeri, at the biscuit box in Forest Hill Park

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# NEW PROJECTS IN THE MIX

Map and reporting by Riley D. Champine

The Richmond 300 plan released in 2017 envisioned the so-called Westover Hills neighborhood node — our nearest commercial zone — as an area that would be enhanced by a denser urban form with a mix of residential units. Six years later, city leaders have declared a housing crisis, citing a deficit in new units compared to the region’s growing population. So far only the Hill Standard project completed in 2020 has met the plan’s call for more mixed-use, bringing 16 apartments and half a dozen local businesses into walking distance of Forest Hill. But with four developments in the works as of February 2024, our local crossroads may soon add up to 93 new residential units on top of 20,000 square feet for commercial use.



## 5069 Forest Hill Ave (former Westover Place)

A three-story structure with 7,8000 square feet of commercial space and 30 residential units above is proposed here. But after razing the 1980s strip once home to a comic book store and a Chinese restaurant here, progress seems to have stalled. In December 2023, Richmond BizSense reported that the developer Michael Plotkin described the project as being “in a bit of a hold pattern because of interest rates.”

## The Westover (5047 Forest Hill Ave)

Neighbors have likely noticed several windows being cut into this brick building that was built in 1950. While the bottom floor is being used by Defiant Food Group, a company that specializes in sous vide food prep, the top floor has been vacant. Dodson Development is adapting that empty space to include 11 new apartments, and may add a mural to the building. These units are expected to be available by May 2024.

## 1005 Westover Hills Blvd

A three-story mixed-used building is proposed for this triangular lot that once sold Christmas trees. It would contain 4,500 square feet of ground floor retail with options for office space, condos, or up to twelve apartments above. Drawings show ten parking spaces added to the alley off of Dunston Avenue. In 2021, this project was endorsed by the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association and the City Council approved a special-use permit, but that has since expired. The developer, One Parkwood LLC, is seeking to reobtain that permit and has visited recent FHNA meetings to take questions.

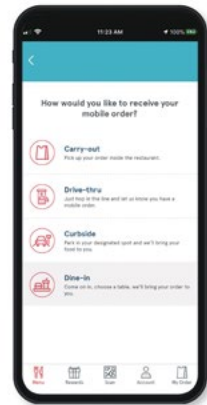
## 4701 Forest Hill Ave (former Bank of America)

After quickly demolishing the 1960s-era structure here, construction is underway on a three-story building that would add 40 apartments on top of 8,000 square feet of commercial space. Dodson Development is behind the project and sent local rep Adam Tiller to an FHNA meeting late last year. He presented renderings of a brick-clad structure with a patio, new trees, and 59 parking spots for cars plus 8 spots for bikes. Adam stated that his office is working to secure 4-6 commercial tenants — including a new restaurant on the corner — and expects construction to be completed in mid-2025.

SOURCES: GOOGLE EARTH;  
CITY OF RICHMOND;  
RICHMOND BIZSENSE;  
FOREST HILL NEIGHBORHOOD  
ASSOCIATION MEETINGS



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## Crooked Branch Trail will connect Crutchfield to 42nd Street

by John Murden, originally published on [SouthRichmondNews.com](https://www.southrichmondnews.com)

**M**ore than 50 people turned out for an informational meeting on January 24th about the proposed Crooked Branch Trail and Bridge at the Stone House at Forest Hill Park.

The Crooked Branch Trail will connect Crutchfield Street to 42nd Street, with a bridge over Reedy Creek. The trail will connect Forest Hill Park to the James River Branch Trail that will run from Crutchfield south to Richmond Highway.

The bridge over the creek will be 103 feet long and 12 feet wide, and designed to clear a 100 year flood. The design of the bridge was described as akin to the bridge at Pumphouse Park.

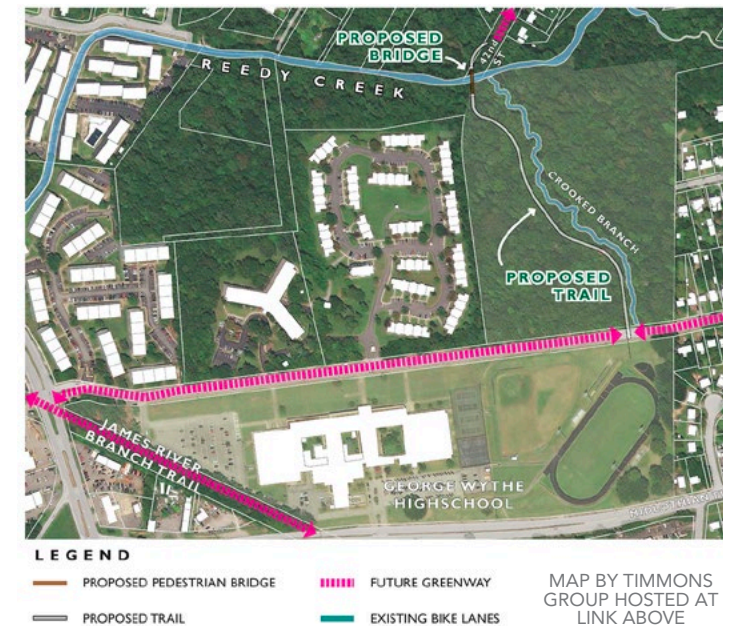
The Crooked Branch Trail and the James River Branch Trail are both being funded by the American Rescue Plan Act, and as such the funds must be allocated by the end of 2024.

A few folks expressed concerns with how the trail construction and access would impact 42nd Street, as the dead end there is quite narrow. There were also voices in support of keeping the area as natural as possible. There seemed to be some apprehension about more cyclists and pedestrian traffic through the neighborhood.

Other attendees spoke in favor of making the park more accessible, of having more woods paths, and of having a safe place for children to ride bicycles.

The plan for the Crooked Branch Trail is slated to go before the Urban Design Committee in June. This meeting will be open to public comment. 🌲

More info at [rva.gov/parks-recreation/capital-improvement-projects](https://rva.gov/parks-recreation/capital-improvement-projects)



## Bike races for kids return to Forest Hill Park in April

By Friends of Forest Hill Park  
and Virginia Outside

**T**hese races are designed to get new riders involved in the sport of cycling. Although these races will be timed, the purpose of this event is to Have Fun! And enjoy our wonderful park and its facilities. It also promotes being outside and meeting our neighbors in the community. All participants will receive a completion medal, and the top 3 in each race will receive medals. Proceeds from the race will go to Friends of Forest Hill Park to be used in the conservation and maintenance of Forest Hill Park.


**Registration for the event and  
training sessions is now open, visit:**  
[friendsofforesthillpark.org/spring-classic](https://friendsofforesthillpark.org/spring-classic)



### FOREST HILL SPRING CLASSIC

Sponsored by the Friends of Forest Hill Park and Virginia Outside

Bike races and activities for ages 2-12  
**Sunday April 21, 1-4 pm** (Rain Date: April 28)



### Thank you Forest Hill!

We appreciate all the support you've given us over the years. To show our gratitude, when you sign up for weekly mowing or refer a neighbor, **your first (or next) cut is on us.**

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## NEIGHBORHOOD GUIDE

### Four ways to give unwanted items a second life locally

#### 1. Donate to local thrift stores

Just a couple miles west on Forest Hill Ave, Stratford Hills is home to three thrift stores with a mission to serve the local community. Before donating, go online or call ahead to check each store's hours and whether they have restrictions on accepting certain items.

##### Furbish Thrift

2833 Hathaway Road  
(804) 505-3117  
[furbishthrift.org](http://furbishthrift.org)

Furbish helps supports animal welfare organizations in our area and hosts an adoption room as well as a pet food pantry. Furbish offers pickups on request with their truck — visit their website for details.

##### Nifty Thrifty

2821 Hathaway Road  
(804) 424-3308  
[niftythriftystore6.com](http://niftythriftystore6.com)

Nifty Thrifty Community outreach is dedicated to helping fight to end homelessness in the Richmond area. Check out their weekly sales which often offer items for a \$1 or 50% off.

##### Goodwill (Stratford Hills)

7101-A Forest Hill Avenue  
(804) 549-4002  
[goodwillvirginia.org](http://goodwillvirginia.org)

Goodwill is a network of nonprofits that operate nationwide and help folks with job training and other supportive surfaces. Their new location opened up next to Publix in October 2023.

#### 2. Sell items online (cautiously!)

**Facebook Marketplace, NextDoor, and Craigslist** are all examples of online platforms that can connect buyers and sellers in that live nearby. Users of these sites should be wary of fake accounts and attempts to steal personal information through these sites or messaging apps. Look up tips for safely selling items online before posting, and expect to receive dubious offers likely from bots.

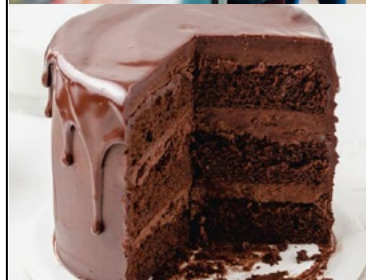
#### 3. Gift items on the local Buy Nothing group

The Buy Nothing Project promotes the gifting economy, where real-life neighbors give and receive items freely, without buying, selling or bartering. Forest Hill is part of the **Buy Nothing South of the James Facebook group**, which also covers Springhill, Reedy Creek, Woodland Heights, Forest View, as well as parts of Woodland Heights, and Swansboro. Members of the group must live in one of these neighborhoods and need to answer several questions before being admitted. Learn more about it on Facebook and at [buynothingproject.org](http://buynothingproject.org)

#### 4. Participate in the Neighborhood Yardsale event on June 1st

This year's Forest Hill Neighborhood Yardsale is set for Saturday June, 1st — the perfect time to cap-off spring-cleaning. The goal of this event is to have dozens of yardsales running simultaneously across the Hills and Heights area. Households planning on hosting a yardsale should register ahead of time to be promoted by the Neighborhood Association. Last year's event had 20 participating addresses.

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The Mug Show - an NCECA exhibition  
March 19-23, 10am-5pm  
Opening event with artists on March 21, 5:30-9pm

1410 W 43rd Street 804.938.1367  
43rdstreetstudios.com hello@43rdstreetstudios.com

## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT Janet Lambdin Ringle

by Andrew Beckman

As long-time *Forest Hill Flyer* readers know, we've begun an ongoing series dedicated to shining a spotlight on the brilliant artists of Forest Hill. This is a new feature, so you can imagine how pleased we were to receive an email nominating Janet Lambdin Ringle for a profile.

Believe it or not, Janet was only 5 years old when her father entered one of her pieces into an art show. It not only took home an award but started off her lifelong journey as an artist.

A resident of Forest Hill since the mid-nineties, Janet says the inspiration she needs is all around her. From the river, nearby mountains and beaches to the incredible street art, galleries, and museums of Richmond, everything that sparks her imagination is right at her fingertips.

Though both of her parents were prolific artists (her father's murals adorned many DC restaurants) Janet was self taught. She finds working in a single medium restrictive to her artistic process, and prefers mixed media. Over the years she's experimented with a myriad of different styles and mediums and many of her pieces incorporate everything from acrylics, oil sticks and pastels to cold wax, encaustic and more.

She loves the freedom abstract work allows her and it's no coincidence that's what she's best known for. Like any artist though, her passions run deep. She also paints landscapes and would love to branch out into collage and even pursue a past love of sculpting soapstone.

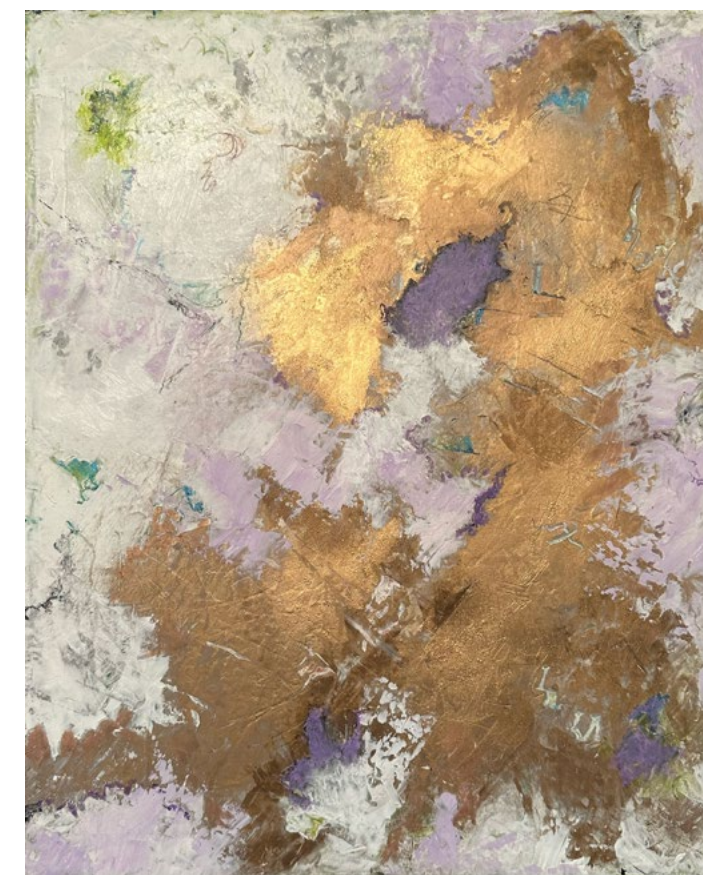
Besides her amazing art, Janet dedicates her time to a few different art groups around the city. She was recently appointed president of the Metropolitan Richmond Artists Association and also belongs to a small collection of abstract artists known as the Abstraktors.

You can see more work and purchase pieces at [janetringle.com](http://janetringle.com). She'll also be featured at Hanbury Architects in an exhibition for RVA First Fridays. 🌲

*This is a continuing series profiling the artists of Forest Hill. The nominations are starting to roll in, so if you want to be featured or want to nominate an artist you'd like to see in this space, please send us an email at [fhnaflyer@gmail.com](mailto:fhnaflyer@gmail.com)*



Janet (above) and a selection of her painted works.  
Top Right: *Pretty In Pink*.  
Bottom Left: *Cloud Euphoria*. Bottom Right: *Cold As Ice*



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## Update from Council President Kristen Nye

Greetings, Forest Hill friends and neighbors!

I hope this message finds you enjoying a productive and balanced start to 2024! We have certainly hit the ground running very quickly at City Council and I know there are so many great initiatives happening right here in our neighborhood as well. As always, my office and I remain accessible to answer any questions and/or assist with any of your City services-related needs, but in the meantime, I'm happy to provide a few community-wide updates:

**Forest Hill Lake maintenance:** This is one of the most popular topics in the neighborhood and I'm happy to share that the lake is on track to be worked on this spring! Howard Glenn, who oversees this project with the Department of Public Utilities, provided a comprehensive update at the February 20th FHNA meeting – I'm very grateful that he took the time to share his expertise with the community and that DPU shares our collective commitment to the lake.

**City Budget Season:** We are in the thick of the City's annual budget process. As you may know, the Mayor drafts the budget and submits it to City Council – we then amend the budget as needed and then formally approve it. The Mayor will introduce his budget to Council in late March and then we will hold a number of public hearings on it over the ensuing two months. Throughout my time on Council, I have said that I feel the budget is one of Council's most important responsibilities, so I will be sure to communicate about it with you regularly so you know how your City dollars are being spent.

**Meals Tax Issues:** I know many of you have seen reporting about the significant issues in the Finance

Department related to the collection of meals taxes. At our February 12th meeting, Council unanimously passed legislation to codify how certain meals tax payments are applied, which is the first in many steps to create a fair and transparent meals tax collection process. Richmond is a "foodie town" and we need to be doing everything we can to support our incredible restaurants, especially after many of them suffered so greatly during the pandemic. Please rest assured that Council cares deeply about our restaurants and is committed to ensuring we make the appropriate changes so they can continue to thrive.

**Next District Meeting:** My next District Meeting will be on Wednesday, March 20th from 6pm-7:30pm at Westover Hills Elementary School. The agenda is still in development, but please mark your calendars for some important discussions related to our district!

On a personal note, I wanted to share that I was honored earlier this year to be elected unanimously by my colleagues as President of City Council. I wouldn't be here without the support of the 4th District and I'm so thrilled to have even greater opportunities to amplify our incredible district. Thank you all for everything you're doing to make the 4th District such an incredible place to live – including bringing back the Forest Hill 5K and Forest Hill Spring Classic! I am honored to be a sponsor for both events and can't wait to cheer on all the participants!

*Kristen M. Nye represents the Richmond Southwest 4<sup>th</sup> Voter District. She can be reached by phone at (804) 503-1313, or emailing [kristen.nye@rva.gov](mailto:kristen.nye@rva.gov) and/or [timmy.siverd@rva.gov](mailto:timmy.siverd@rva.gov) (Liaison Timmy Siverd)*



**SUNDAYS YEAR ROUND**

**10am-1pm in Forest Hill Park (New Kent Ave & 42nd St)**





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[foresthillneighborhood.com/product/welcome-flag-2/](http://foresthillneighborhood.com/product/welcome-flag-2/)

### Forest Hill Neighborhood Association 2024

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**Join the FHNA and become part of a friendly and active group  
that works for the good of the neighborhood.**

Meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm

## Forest Hill Neighborhood Association Membership Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Household Membership \$15

☐ 2 Years \$25

☐ Corporate Annual Membership \$30

☐ **Yes**, I want to join the Neighborhood Watch and receive email updates about crime and safety in our neighborhood.

☐ **Yes**, please send me email updates on current neighborhood events.

☐ **No** emails please.

☐ **Yes**, I'm interested in volunteering with FHNA!

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