



THE  
**Forest Hill  
FLYER**

Published by the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association

## Fall 2024 Issue

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10 AM Saturday Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>!**
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MEET  
RICHMOND'S NEXT  
MAYOR  
@ THE SOUTHSIDE  
MAYORAL FORUM

**Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>  
7 PM**

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

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## Forest Hill lost a pair of giants this summer

by Greg Somerville, Forest Hill Neighborhood Association President

One of the oldest oaks in Forest Hill, which has shaded the Stone House for more than 200 years, had to be taken down this summer. Some of you hunted for Easter eggs around that tree when you were children, or got your engagement pictures taken there. As someone wrote on our neighborhood Facebook page, we lost a “grand lady.”



Anne Sidsel Moss Shelton  
October 3, 1936 – June 10, 2024

We lost another grand lady, Anne Shelton, on June 10. A lifelong resident of Forest Hill and Westover Hills, Anne epitomized neighborly engagement. She advocated for bike lanes and served with the Reedy Creek Coalition. She held officials accountable when drilling and blasting rattled homes on Southcliff. And years ago she single-handedly prevented city workers from tearing down Patrick Henry Elementary School, which was built in 1921.

Every morning while drinking her coffee, she read a quote from “The Lorax” taped on the wall behind her computer: “Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot / Nothing is going to get better, it’s not.”

Though no one could ever replace Anne, she’s not the only one showing a “whole awful lot” of care for Forest Hill. A neighbor sent me the following:

*Something wonderful is happening in our backyard! Alex Marten and neighbors Phil Licking, Lory Levy, and many others have worked to clean up and care for Reedy Creek for several years. Reedy Creek is a special part of our neighborhood filled with fish, frogs, deer, hawks, owls, and many more animals. And often, sadly, trash.*

*Most Saturdays, Alex pulls on his hip waders and gloves and heads to Bassett and W 46th to clean the culvert. He cleans his way downstream to W 42nd. If you hike the trail along the creek, you might come across dozens of white garbage bags piled high. Don’t worry, Alex piled them up and will dispose of them later.*

*Just before Presidents Day this year, Alex waded into a spill of approximately 100 gallons of transmission fluid. Realizing the potential harm, he reached out for help. He says he owes a debt of gratitude to Kristen Nye, President of Richmond City Council, Grace Larose and Rodney King, of Richmond DPU, Mercer Croneymeyer, Pollution Response Coordinator with the Department of DEQ, and Shannon Hryvniak, from Total Environment Concepts for getting clean-up underway. Quite quickly. Shannon and Mercer led the onsite clean-up team whose efforts stopped the contamination from flowing downstream to Forest Hill Lake.*

*Alex reports that the creek is full of fish this summer. He is seeing more ducks and other wildlife during his weekend visits. During the week, you might see him walking his pup, Willow, through the neighborhood. He’s out there Monday through Friday always ready with a trash bag.*

I’m sad that the Forest Hill canopy has lost some giants this summer, but do you know what that means? There’s now more sunlight and space for the seedlings to grow. Thank you, Alex, for leading the way! 🌲



Alex Marten, a leader in cleaning up Reedy Creek

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# ALEXIS THOMPSON

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## 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!



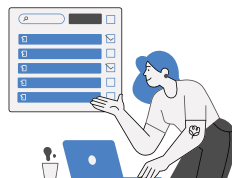
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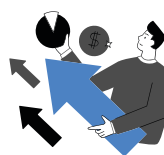
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## Celebrating the artists of Richmond by Robin Cage

We have turned the corner on summer and hope for a cooler September... which means your neighborhood festival returns! If it is not already on your calendar, join us on Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, from 10 AM to 4 PM. The streets will be closed, and folks from all over RVA and beyond will arrive to enjoy the fine art, music, and food.

We have 75 juried artisans setting up booths and welcoming your visits and purchases. A new Festival T-shirt will be available at the CARITAS booth. You can also get your raffle tickets there to win a wonderful array of artist-handmade donations. We consider CARITAS a partner in the festival, and their volunteers and support help make the show happen. Please make a donation as you enter the show.

When you are ready for lunch from our local vendors, we have everything from coffee, veggie bowls, and empanadas to tacos! Let's not forget the music! We have The Grateful Dads at 11:00 AM, Tin Can Fish Band at 1:00 PM, and Janet Martin at 3:00 PM.

While wandering the streets, we hope you will stop by the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street Studios, where pottery made on-site will be available for sale. Also, visit One Little World's fair trade retail store and support our local neighborhood business. This year, Forest Hill Presbyterian Church has offered their space as a cooling station and extra restrooms. They also offer parking for the neighborhood and artists, requesting that overnight parking is in the back first.

We can't say enough how much we appreciate the support of The Church of the Good Shepherd and all of you in the neighborhood each year. Last year, many of you helped artists quickly pack up when the torrential rains began. Despite the early closing of the show, most folks had a great experience and always speak highly of the enthusiastic crowds. We look forward to another great show with cooler temperatures and no rain! Hope to see you there. 🌳

*FYI, Robin Cage Pottery still exists! I have the back left studio at 43<sup>rd</sup> Street Studios. I am having a great time playing in porcelain and making new pots. Open by appointment and for special events. Call (804) 233-1758.*

## 43rd Street Festival of the Arts

PRESENTED BY Atlantic Union Bank

Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup> • 10-4  
West 43rd Street and Forest Hill Avenue, RVA



## Art and Fine Crafts

A BENEFIT FOR CARITAS

— Music Line-Up —  
11:00 The Grateful Dads  
1:00 Tin Can Fish Band  
3:00 Janet Martin





**SUNDAYS YEAR ROUND**

**10 AM – 1 PM in Forest Hill Park (New Kent Ave & 42<sup>nd</sup> St)**

## Three candidates seeking school board seat

On November 5th, residents of the Fourth District will vote for a new representative on the Richmond City School Board. The Forest Hill Flyer contacted each candidate for a statement and received the following responses:



**Angela Fontaine**

Angela Fontaine, a consultant and professional coach specializing in strategy, leadership development, and change management, is running for the school board with a clear mission: "Students First. Politics Last." As the mother of a first-grader at Patrick Henry School of Science and Arts, she brings a vested interest in the district's success. Angela's professional expertise in organizational strategy and leadership development uniquely positions her to address the challenges facing our schools. Concerned that the school board seat has been used as a political stepping stone, she aims to provide dedicated, student-focused leadership. Angela believes in fostering an educational environment where every child can thrive, emphasizing academic excellence, teacher support, and school safety. Her approach combines a parent's passion with a professional's insight, promising a fresh perspective on the board. To learn more, please visit [www.fontaine4thfourth.com](http://www.fontaine4thfourth.com).



**Wesley Hedgepeth**

Wesley Hedgepeth is in his 16th year of teaching high school social studies. In addition to teaching, he is a dedicated education advocate, serving as the immediate past president of the National Council for the Social Studies. In this role, he led a nationwide effort to improve social studies instruction, ensuring students learn a rigorous and inclusive curriculum. Previously, he served as the president of the Virginia Council for the Social Studies and as a board member and secretary of the Patrick Henry School of Science and Arts. As the only educator on the ballot, he has taught well over one thousand students and knows what it takes for students to succeed. His top three priorities are: (1) ensuring good governance and fiscal responsibility; (2) fully investing in our educators; and (3) increasing the physical, social, emotional, and mental safety of our school buildings. Wesley graduated from Hopewell High School, holds a bachelors and masters degree in education from James Madison University, and has a current post-professional teaching license from the Commonwealth of Virginia. Wesley is eager to serve as your next school board member and is ready to put his experience to work for every Richmond family.



**Garrett Sawyer**

*Appointed Interim 4th District School Board Representative on May 14th, 2024*

Garrett Sawyer is a lifelong resident of Southside Richmond, RPS Alumnus, and operations and human resources executive. In addition, Garrett has spent 16 years serving as a local nonprofit leader. In his capacity, he has been responsible for the annual back to school rally that supports the school division.

Garrett will ensure every child attends world-class schools that prepare them for a brighter future. Garrett is committed to ensuring that every teacher is valued, heard, supported, and compensated appropriately. Garrett brings significant experience in finance, operations, policy, and human resources, which are integral skill sets needed on the School Board.

Garrett is committed to:

1. Effective governance on the board;
2. Ensuring that every dollar allocated within the school board budget (general operating and CIP) is spent correctly to improve the school division
3. Formulating and amending policies to support positive outcomes for students, teachers, administrators, and support staff.

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SteppingStoneVA.com

## FHNA to host fourth forum for mayoral candidates

by Robley Jones

Mark your calendar for the 2024 Southside Mayoral Forum presented by the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association on September 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM. All five candidates have agreed to participate.

Sponsors for the event include:

- Willow Oaks/Clevedon Civic Association
- Traylor Estates Civic Association
- Westlake Hills Neighborhood Association
- Springhill Civic Association
- Greater Oxford Civic Association
- Westover Hills Neighborhood Association
- Forest Hill-Bliley Road Neighborhood Association
- Southampton Citizens Association
- Villas At Archer Springs

The League of Women Voters Richmond Metro will serve as timers for the event. Previous Southside forums held in 2012, 2016, and 2020 were well attended, and received considerable press attention.

### Event Format

- Questions can be emailed to [foresthillassoc@gmail.com](mailto:foresthillassoc@gmail.com) prior to the forum.
- A panel of screeners will screen all questions for the purpose of eliminating questions that do not relate to the office of mayor.
- Questions will be posed to all candidates — no individual questions.
- Candidates will field the questions on rotating order and will have two minutes to respond to each question.
- Candidates will be given an opportunity to make an opening statement not to exceed five minutes, and a closing statement not to exceed three minutes. The order of the opening statements will be determined by a draw, and the order of the closing statements will reverse the order of the draw.

If you have questions or suggestions regarding the forum, please contact Robley Jones at [robleyj@aol.com](mailto:robleyj@aol.com).

*The forum will be held in lieu of September FHNA meeting.*

## SOUTHSIDE MAYORAL FORUM

**Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>, 7PM**

**Forest Hill Presbyterian Church  
4401 Forest Hill Avenue.**

Email questions for the  
candidates before the event to  
[foresthillassoc@gmail.com](mailto:foresthillassoc@gmail.com)

### The Candidates\*



**Andreas Addison** has been a member of City Council since 2017, representing the West End 1<sup>st</sup> District. He owns Pure Fitness RVA in Scott's Addition and is an adjunct professor at the University of Virginia.



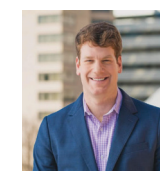
**Dr. Danny Avula** is a pediatrician at Chippenham Hospital. He served as Gov. Ralph Northam's COVID-19 vaccine coordinator and also as a commissioner for the Virginia Department of Social Services.



**Michelle Mosby** was a City Council member and president, representing the South Central 9<sup>th</sup> District from 2013–2016. She previously ran for mayor in 2016. Mosby is a realtor and founder of the Help Me Help You Foundation.



**Maurice Neblett** is a local entrepreneur, community organizer, and board member of a Federal Credit Union. He graduated from Virginia Union University with a degree in criminology and criminal justice.



**Harrison Roday** is an investor and the founder/chair of the non-profit Bridging Virginia. He has previously worked in private equity, investment banking, and on the campaign of Senator Tim Kaine.

# A Perfect “Park-nership” by Laura Bradlee

While the world may seem chaotic, some things just naturally fall into place. The special bond between Friends of Forest Hill Park (FFHP) and Good Shepherd Episcopal School (GSES) is a community partnership that appears to be a match made in heaven...or better yet, the park. This community “park”nership, which has been reinvigorated this past year with the reinstatement of the FFHP Junior Program under my leadership as the GSES Director of Outdoor Education, is a testament to the power of shared community goals. Our mission is clear: to promote connection, environmental activism, and service in our beloved Forest Hill Park.

FFHP began as a committee of the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association back in 1997 but quickly became its own group whose core mission remains to protect and preserve Forest Hill Park, which includes educating the surrounding community about the park’s historical significance as well as the ecological importance of the Reedy Creek Watershed.

GSES is a private, independent school located on the corner of Springhill Avenue and 43<sup>rd</sup> Street

that serves the children and families of the City of Richmond and surrounding counties by offering a robust core K-8 curriculum with a major emphasis on outdoor education and community service. I joined the GSES family three years ago and have taken on numerous roles and responsibilities which have included 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> homeroom advisor, 5th grade science lead educator, Spanish teacher, Outdoor Ed instructor, school garden coordinator, and Eco Club sponsor/facilitator. Following in the footsteps of Elizabeth Coleman, the founder of the Outdoor Education program at GSES, I transitioned into the role of Director of Outdoor Education in September 2022 and have been working diligently to take the program to the next level by engaging my students in environmental stewardship opportunities and strengthening community partnerships.



Laura Bradlee in the park

After connecting with Chris Catanzaro, President of Friends of Forest Hill Park, back in September 2023 and realizing how much potential there was to create a perfect “park”nership, I ambitiously took on the role as the Friends of Forest Hill Park Junior Coordinator and became an official member of the FFHP Board at the quarterly board meeting in November 2023. One of my first goals as FFHP Junior Coordinator was to organize and implement monthly trash pick-ups and

work days to help remove invasive species such as English Ivy from specific locations in Forest Hill Park. As the Eco Club sponsor, it was relatively easy for me to round up some of my students for the Saturday monthly trash pick-ups that aligned with the FFHP Saturday work days starting in October 2023 and ending in May 2024. In total, GSES participated in seven work days and thoroughly enjoyed helping the FFHP volunteers and making connections within the community.

In addition to the monthly park clean-ups, GSES Eco Club students and parents helped decorate the Stone House for the holidays with the FFHP volunteers. They also participated in the Stone House Christmas event on December 2, 2024 by



Decorating for Christmas at the Stone House

setting up an Eco Craft table where GSES students used materials they collected from the park such as pine cones and berries to make nature inspired Christmas ornaments. This was a highlight of the year for all those involved and GSES looks forward to collaborating with FFHP on future events in the park. On March 26<sup>th</sup>, a handful of FFHP volunteers joined dedicated GSES students and parents to assist in the maintenance of our native plant garden, and Suzette Lyon provided an environmental education lesson focused on the health of the Reedy Creek to middle school students during Team Green summer camp this past June. It has been such a mutually beneficial relationship thus far and working with Chris Catanzaro, Suzette Lyon as well as the other FFHP board members and park volunteers this past year has been extremely rewarding.

I am truly excited about making this “park”nership even stronger by encouraging youth from the surrounding community and schools such as Westover Hills Elementary and Patrick Henry involved this upcoming school year. For more information and to sign up your child to be added to the junior list, visit the Friends of Forest Hill Park Junior Program online at [www.friendsofforesthillpark.org/juniors.html](http://www.friendsofforesthillpark.org/juniors.html) or contact me, Laura Bradlee, Director of Outdoor Education, with any questions at [lbradlee@gses.org](mailto:lbradlee@gses.org). 🌲



Suzette Lyon provides a hands-on lesson



Good Shepard Episcopal School students after a trash pick-up

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## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT **Seth Bauserman** by Andrew Beckman

We're thrilled to have Seth as this issue's featured artist. Working out of his studio, the old Forest Hill post office, this neighborhood talent joined us for a Q-and-A. See more of his work at [sethbauserman.com](http://sethbauserman.com).

### How long have you been creating art?

Always? Can I say that? My mom went to art school and homeschooled me and my brothers for most of my life. Art was the subject she took most seriously. In grade school art class felt like a free hit. Me time.

### Any favorite artists?

Marria Pratts, in Barcelona. I look at her work with incredible envy. She may be my opposite or what my subconscious is trying to get me to be, but there is something about the expressiveness and irreverence of her work that I'm really drawn to. Marria: If you read the FHF, please know I'll be your studio assistant for free. Please give me a shot.

### What inspires your work?

For me it's more of an individual process than external inspiration. Working is time for self consideration and hopefully understanding. It's completely selfish and rarely drawn from others, specifically artists. The way people think appeals to me and excites me, but I'm usually drawn to writers and musicians rather than visual artists.

### What's your process?

I've always been drawn to marks. How they are made and presented. For that reason I became obsessed with paper. It captures small details that other surfaces can't. I often use semi-transparent



Photo by Ethan Hickerson



Left: "Sister / Mother". Right: "Spirit of the River"

mulberry paper as the surface I'm drawing on with various media. I layer the drawings and the transparency allowing a back and forth interaction. It's assembled like a collage but looks like a singular surface. I call them drawings but I use a lot of paint and they can feel more sculptural.

### Can you expand on how your pieces speak to the layered nature of identity?

It's me trying to understand myself, how I'm shaped and formed through experiences. I'm the composite of people and events. They're a part of me not always present on the surface. This is what I'm trying to engage with. Real things being under the surface shaping and reshaping what comes after. Trying to go back into everything in there and in me, the ugly and the beautiful, in hopes of learning from it.

### How has your work evolved?

Most recently my work is focused around being a father to two small children. I became fascinated with the way they approach their world. In this series I use their art as a reference point to

explore the space between their intent and mine as we create. This series manifested in large scale children's drawings, but slowly the children's drawings broke down and became obscured and abstracted. They are a piece of something. Hidden in the background or influencing what comes after. They are about me trying to understand my identity as a father, but they are also the result of where I am now and I think my work will always be that way.

Color is something that is developing in me and still feels new and unfamiliar. My work for a long time was sparse and used very specific and minimal color, but having kids around has helped me let go of a lot of those rules I had placed on myself. It's a bit of a cliché, the "kids change you", but it happened to me.

We're on the lookout for our next artist to spotlight.  
Writers and musicians are welcome too!

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## Update from Council President Kristen Nye

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

Greetings, Forest Hill Neighborhood Association! I hope this message finds you all well and enjoying the summer season! Summer is one of my favorite times in Richmond and I hope you've all been able to spend as much time in our beloved Forest Hill Park as I have! I know the biggest topic on many minds is the construction work on Forest Hill Ave, so I wanted to provide the latest updates as of August 1st.

- Water Main Replacement (Forest Hill Ave between Westover Hills Blvd and 41st St): This is a long-planned replacement project that commenced in mid-June and will be completed in December 2024.
- Emergency Sewer Replacement (FHA between Joe Brooks Blvd and Hathaway Rd): As you're well aware, this is an emergency repair project due to a sewer collapse in early April. DPU responded immediately and repairs are anticipated to be completed in December 2024. DPU has collected extensive feedback from residents and has already modified the traffic pattern to make it more palatable for area residents and businesses. DPU will be hosting another community meeting in



Scan for updates on the Forest Hill Ave Sewer Replacement Project

late August or early September, which we will publicize broadly as soon as we have that information. In the meantime, you can get the latest updates on the project page on DPU's website (please use QR code below) and can send feedback directly to foresthilldpu@gmail.com.

- Westover Hills Boulevard Bike Lanes: Construction started in late July and is anticipated to be completed by November 2024.
- Pedestrian Safety Improvements along Forest Hill Ave (34th St. to Semmes Ave) – although this is a bit outside the 4th District, I know this work is of interest to 4th District residents. The Department of Public Works recently announced a two-phase plan to install multimodal traffic infrastructure and increase pedestrian safety, including installing sidewalks, reducing traffic lanes/installing back-in parking, and adding crosswalks and curb ramps. Construction is scheduled to be completed in July 2025 and more information can be found on the DPW website.

Believe it or not, there are some non-construction updates to share as well! As many of you know, the City entered into an incredible partnership with Forest Hill Presbyterian Church wherein the City is leasing the dog park from the church – this allowed the dog park to remain open after the church's insurance provider declined to continue covering the dog park and even increased the City's ParkScore as this is the first public dog park on the Southside! We will be hosting a press conference/event to celebrate in September and hope to see many of you – and especially your dogs! – there (details forthcoming).

## Meet Sarah Abubaker — Forest Hill Neighbor, Council Candidate



Hi, neighbors! I'm Sarah Abubaker, and I'm excited to share that I'm running for Richmond City Council in the 4<sup>th</sup> District! I've proudly called this area home for over 13 years, living in Forest Hill with my spouse, Nick, and our son, Felix and dog Woody. As a long-time community organizer and advocate, I'm passionate about making our city an even better place to live. From being the former President of the Westover Hills Neighborhood Association to helping support economic development projects like The Hill Standard, I'm all about finding common-sense solutions that benefit everyone. I can't wait to hear what matters most to you—feel free to reach out! [www.sarahabubaker.com](http://www.sarahabubaker.com)

*Editor's note: At the time of publication, Sarah Abubaker is running unopposed.*

# Photos from the 5k — a triumphant return!

Over 250 participants showed up on March 16<sup>th</sup> for the 2024 Run for the Hills 5k, marking a successful return for the race after a five-year hiatus. Organizers Christine Waldron and Laura Taylor were especially impressed by the water stations set up by our local schools. More volunteers are needed for next year's event — contact [lataylor01@verizon.net](mailto:lataylor01@verizon.net) to get involved!



Photo from Laura Taylor



Photo from Laura Taylor



Photo from Facebook



Photos by Erin Van Vleet unless otherwise noted

## Forest Hill Neighborhood Association 2024

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Christine Waldron, Vice President  
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Sarah Champine, Treasurer

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Peter Myers Laura Taylor  
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