

PETERSBURG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Fashion show tickets  
to include luncheon



**Kristi K. Higgins**  
Petersburg Progress-Index  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The “Fashionable Melodies: A Scholarship Luncheon Fashion Show” is coming soon. The event, organized and hosted by the Women’s Committee for the Petersburg Symphony Orchestra (WCPSO), has a new venue. It will be held at the Gregg-Adams Club on Fort Lee from noon to 3 p.m. Sept. 13.

Fashions from Dillard’s of Stony

Point Fashion Mall will be featured, under the coordination of Petersburg’s own Jewel Lawrence, Dillard’s fashion sales manager.

Musical entertainment will be provided by Petersburg Symphony String Ensemble and jazz saxophonist James Holden Jr., a global studio musician. Richard Caple, a fashion coordinator of Petersburg, will share his talents again to coordinate the show and provide models with runway instructions.

Tickets, which include lunch, are \$50



**TOP:** Models at “Melodies of Fashion Scholarship Luncheon” in September 2024 take a selfie together.

**ABOVE:** Petersburg Symphony String Ensemble performs at “Melodies of Fashion Scholarship Luncheon” in 2024.

**LEFT:** Kenneth W. Lewis walks the runway at “Melodies of Fashion Scholarship Luncheon” in 2024.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY LEON HUGHES/PHOTOLEE, LLC

each. Proceeds from the tickets support music scholarships for high school seniors, college and post-graduate music students as well as Petersburg Symphony Orchestra’s community music programs.

For tickets contact Annette Smith-Lee at annesmith231@verizon.net or Joyce Junior at joycejunior69@gmail.com.

“We will be humbled and honored to

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Future of  
wastewater  
management  
in Virginia

**Bill Atkinson**  
Petersburg Progress-Index  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Calling it a frequent budget-cut target because of overall lack of visibility, Sen. Mark Warner told a roundtable discussion this week that the future of consumable water and wastewater management systems lies in more regional approaches, not just one locality shouldering all the burden.

“This is the easiest thing to punt on,” Warner, D-Virginia, said Sept. 2 at the meeting inside the John Randolph Foundation headquarters in Hopewell. “Because, you know, folks don’t see it. They turn on the tap, water comes out. It’s great to punt on until it’s not great.”

“Punting” the issue, as Warner stated, has led to numerous water crises in central Virginia this year. It began in January with a power outage at the wastewater treatment plant in Richmond, and spread in July with major flooding problems across Petersburg and a million-gallon sewage spill at the Hopewell Water Renewal Plant into the James River.

In each case, the problems could be traced to historical oversights in updating the cities’ aging water infrastructure systems. Unfortunately, those updates sometimes come with hefty costs that many cannot immediately afford.

For example, Hopewell was told by a consultant in late 2023 that it would cost north of \$23 million to bring its treatment plant up to par with part of that cost covering the 17-person understaffing there. Unfortunately for Hopewell, its fiscal management problems stemming back to 2015 means that for now, the city has no bond rating on which to get funding.

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**Sen. Mark Warner, D-Virginia, speaks during a roundtable discussion on improving wastewater services on Sept. 2 at the John Randolph Foundation office in Hopewell. Flanking him are Rep. Jennifer McClellan, D-Virginia, and the mayors of Hopewell, Petersburg and Richmond.**

BILL ATKINSON/PROGRESS-INDEX.COM

Inmate sentenced for possessing fentanyl

**Bill Atkinson**  
Petersburg Progress-Index  
USA TODAY NETWORK

An inmate at the Federal Correctional Complex-Petersburg has been given more prison time after guards discovered fentanyl hidden in his cell almost three years ago.

According to the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, Carlos Contreras, 45, of Laredo, Texas, was sentenced Sept. 3 in Richmond federal court to three years and three months on possession with intent to distribute the drug. He already was serving a 17.5-year sentence for conspiracy to traffic drugs along with 33 other defendants in

a group known as the Texas Mexican Mafia, or Mexikanemi.

Court records indicate the fentanyl was discovered in an Aug. 18, 2022, random search of Contreras’ cell at FCC. Authorities found a hidden compartment behind a mirror in the cell that

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