



The Arlington Connection

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PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

JUNE 14-20, 2017

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

ST. STEPHEN'S & ST. AGNES SCHOOL

CONGRATULATES THE CLASS OF 2017



We are proud of our 118 graduates and their accomplishments. Some highlights include:

- ◆ Accepted by more than 180 colleges and universities.
- ◆ More than one-third of the class was offered college scholarships or merit aid.
- ◆ Two National Merit finalists, two semi-finalists, and seven commended scholars.
- ◆ Won the National Latin Exam New Latin Educators Award and the Rockwell Collins Innovate Award at the Virginia state robotics tournament.
- ◆ Prepared thousands of sandwiches for Martha's Table; collected food items and volunteered at local food banks. Led supply drives for local agencies and our partner school in Haiti. Volunteered thousands of hours with local non-profits. Participated in international causes in Romania and Haiti.
- ◆ Received two Cappies nominations for "The Good Woman of Setzuan." Performed in all of our drama and musical productions, Evening of the Arts, Multicultural Night, and the Pit Orchestra; directed the One-Act Plays.
- ◆ Performed in the Virginia District 10 Music Festivals and invited to sing Evensong at the National Cathedral.
- ◆ Won two Gold Keys, seven Silver Keys, and 10 Honorable Mentions in the regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, two Honorable Mentions at the Congressional Institute Artistic Discovery Competition, and the Digital Design, Sculpture, and Best of School Awards at the All City Alexandria Art Exhibition.
- ◆ Thirty-one to play collegiate athletics next year, representing 11 sports.
- ◆ Led the boys lacrosse team to a VISAA state championship and won an individual and relay state championship in boys swimming. ISL championships in field hockey and girls lacrosse. IAC co-championship in ice hockey. Participated in league finals or state tournaments in boys basketball, girls basketball, cross country, field hockey, golf, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, swimming & diving, boys tennis, indoor and outdoor track & field, and wrestling.

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ENTERED BY THE CLASS OF 2017

American University ◆ Auburn University ◆ Babson College ◆ Boston College ◆ Brown University ◆ Catholic University of America (2) ◆ Christopher Newport University (2) ◆ College of Charleston ◆ College of William & Mary (5) ◆ Colorado College ◆ Dartmouth College ◆ Davidson College ◆ Denison University ◆ Dickinson College ◆ Drexel University (2) ◆ Duquesne University ◆ Elon University ◆ Emerson College ◆ Garden City Community College (KS) ◆ George Mason University ◆ Georgetown University (3) ◆ Georgia Tech ◆ Gettysburg College ◆ Hamilton College (3) ◆ Harvard College ◆ High Point University (3) ◆ James Madison University (4) ◆ Kenyon College (2) ◆ Lafayette College (2) ◆ Lehigh University (2) ◆ Loyola University (MD) ◆ Marquette University ◆ McGill University ◆ New York University (2) ◆ North Carolina State University ◆ Northwestern University ◆ Penn State University ◆ Pennsylvania State University (2) ◆ Pepperdine University ◆ Potomac State College ◆ Princeton University (2) ◆ Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute ◆ Rhodes College (2) ◆ Salisbury University ◆ San Diego State University ◆ Spelman College ◆ Temple University ◆ Trinity College (CT) ◆ Trinity University (TX) ◆ U.S. Air Force Academy ◆ U.S. Naval Academy Prep School ◆ University of Alabama (2) ◆ University of Arizona ◆ University of California at Los Angeles ◆ University of California at Santa Barbara ◆ University of Colorado at Boulder (3) ◆ University of Denver (2) ◆ University of Georgia ◆ University of Mary Washington ◆ University of Maryland at College Park ◆ University of Michigan ◆ University of Mississippi ◆ University of Pennsylvania ◆ University of San Diego ◆ University of South Carolina (3) ◆ University of Southern California ◆ University of Tennessee ◆ University of Virginia (10) ◆ Virginia Commonwealth University ◆ Virginia Military Institute ◆ Virginia Tech (5) ◆ Washington & Lee University (2) ◆ Wesleyan University ◆ West Virginia University ◆ Yale University

Refugee Stories — Different But the Same

Learning to look
at the long term.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

Fazela Mahmoodi came to the U.S. from Afghanistan at the end of 2015 because the security situation got very bad. Civilians had the worst time of anyone. She was safe here but found “life in America to be very, very difficult.”

“They think
when they get
to America,
everything
will be OK.”

— Nouf Bazaz

Jessi Calzado-Esponda woke up one night when she was 7-years-old to find her aunt secretly packing her bags to flee Cuba. In the blink of an eye Calzado-Esponda ended up on a raft with 16 other people and a dog.

Augustin Ntabaganyimana came to America from Rwanda. He awoke one morning after the genocide to find them trying to kill his stepmother. “Life was not pretty.”

Jessi Calzado-Esponda woke



Fazela Mahmoodi, Afghanistan.

“I’d lost all my connections with no plan.” The panel of former refugees discussed their experiences resettling in this country at the Ethiopian Community Development Council’s 23rd National Convention on June 1. Their program stated, “the conference comes at a crucial time for refugees, both abroad and domestically. The world refugee crisis continues to be one of the defining issues of our time.”

Each refugee had a story.

Mahmoodi explained that to live in Afghanistan is not only dangerous but the “situation is even worse” for women. She says if you had a good family you could have a normal life but a lot of women didn’t have



Augustin Ntabaganyimana, Rwanda.

that support and were abused. “And the security situation was so bad that they were dependent on foreign powers to maintain security.” Mahmoodi says that personally she only had one incident when her office was bombed. “The physical experience was very different than watching it on the TV. It was mentally very damaging. Thank God I survived.”

Mahmoodi applied for a visa and it took two years to get results from the U.S., “and that was fast tracked.” Then in the middle Congress issued new visa requirements so it took another six months. “I wasn’t sure I would ever get a visa.” Then after the long wait and anticipation, she found it wasn’t



Jessi Calzado-Esponda, Cuba.

easy at all to establish a new life. “It was really difficult.”

Ntabaganyimana said after the Congo genocide he wasn’t a target

but his stepmother was. “I awoke one morning and they were trying to kill my stepmother and it went downhill.” He said his father was middle class so each time they tried to kill his stepmother, his father gave them money. But the money could only last so long. They ended up in a refugee camp. “Living in a tent in the heat was terrible and going from three meals a day to two and finally to one. “When it was discovered that some families were harboring refugees

SEE REFUGEES, PAGE 10



PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

A Splashing Good Time

The nearly 90 degree temperatures didn’t bother the children at Lyon Village splash park on Saturday, June 10. “Push the button; push it hard.” Suddenly spray was popping out sideways, from the ground and across the circles. The rules read: “Don’t run, no pets, no food, no horseplay.” How could anyone have any fun? But the shrieks as the children ran through the spray, filled their buckets and jumped in the puddles was evidence of the contrary.

Toss and Tip

Simple precautions will avoid
mounting Zika cases in the area.

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

A few weeks ago, the first of the Asian tiger mosquitoes (*Aedes albopictus*) starting biting. Arlington County’s Public Health Division had already distributed a notice about “tossing and tipping (and covering)” any standing water from garbage cans, house gutters, downspout extenders, pool covers, flower pots, coolers, or any other containers or objects where rain-water or hose water could collect. They specifically suggested tossing old tires, drums, bottles, cans, broken appliances or other items outside that aren’t being used, in order to stop the Asian tiger mosquitoes from living and multiplying around homes and businesses.

A concerned Arlington resident, Jake McGuire, reported the stash of used tires at the Red Top Cab parking lot behind the Liberty Tavern to a Connection journalist on May 30. “Yesterday I drove down the alley behind Liberty Tavern in



PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

Water sitting in tires and oil drums outside Red Top Cab’s offices. The Asian tiger mosquito only breeds in standing water, not in swamps and ponds like other mosquitoes.

Clarendon and saw that Red Top cab had a large pile of discarded tires outdoors hidden between a couple of buildings if the people

SEE TOSS, PAGE 11

Fundamental Freedom to Choose to Marry

Virginia is historically slow in extending rights.

In 1967, Virginia was one of 16 states that banned interracial marriage and had criminal penalties for violators. Mildred Jeter, an African-American woman, and Richard Loving, a white man, were married in 1958, were convicted and banished from living in Virginia for 25 years to avoid serving a one-year prison sentence. On June 12, 1967, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Loving v. Virginia*, overturned the convictions of Mildred and Richard Loving, declaring the ban on interracial marriage unconstitutional.

Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote the opinion: "Marriage is one of the 'basic civil rights of man,' fundamental to our very existence and survival. ... To deny this fundamental freedom on so unsupportable a basis as the racial classifications embodied in these statutes, classifications so directly subversive of the principle of equality at the heart of the Fourteenth Amendment, is surely to deprive all the State's citizens of liberty without due process of law. The Fourteenth Amendment requires that the freedom of choice to marry not be restricted by invidious racial discriminations. Under our Constitution, the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides with the individual, and cannot be infringed by the State."

This week, Gov. Terry McAuliffe celebrated

Loving Day, June 12, with a new state historical marker to commemorate the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the landmark case. The dedication marked the 50th anniversary of the 1967 ruling that overturned all state laws restricting interracial marriage. The ceremony was held at the former site of the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals, where the case was heard before it reached the U.S. Supreme Court. The Lovings' story is told in a movie of the same name.

On Valentine's Day, 2014, Judge Arenda Wright Allen, ruled that Virginia's ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional. In the opening of her order, Allen quotes Mildred Loving in a statement she made in 2007 on the 40th anniversary of *Loving v. Virginia*:

"We made a commitment to each other in our love and lives, and now had the legal commitment, called marriage, to match. Isn't that what marriage is? ... Today's young people realize that if someone loves someone they have a right to marry. Surrounded as I am now by wonderful children and grandchildren, not a day goes by that I don't think of Richard and our love, our right to marry, and how much it meant to me to have that freedom to marry the person precious to me, even if others thought he was the 'wrong kind of person' for me to marry. I believe all Americans, no matter their race, no matter their sex, no matter their sexual orientation, should have that same freedom to marry. Government has no busi-

ness imposing some people's religious beliefs over others. ... I support the freedom to marry for all. That's what Loving, and loving, are all about."

Judge Allen's written decision begins:

"A spirited and controversial debate is underway regarding who may enjoy the right to marry in the United States of America. America has pursued a journey to make and keep our

citizens free. This journey has never been easy, and at times has been painful and poignant. The ultimate exercise of our freedom is choice. Our Declaration of Independence recognizes that 'all men' are created equal. Surely this means all of us. While ever-vigilant for the wisdom that can come from the voices of our voting public, our courts have

never long tolerated the perpetuation of laws rooted in unlawful prejudice. One of the judiciary's noblest endeavors is to scrutinize laws that emerge from such roots. "Plaintiffs assert that the restriction on their freedom to choose to marry the person they love infringes on the rights to due process and equal protection guaranteed to them under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. These challenges are well-taken. ...

"The Court is compelled to conclude that Virginia's Marriage Laws unconstitutionally deny Virginia's gay and lesbian citizens the fundamental freedom to choose to marry."

Adapted from an editorial published by Connection Newspapers in February 2014.

Government has no business imposing some people's religious beliefs over others.

— Mildred Loving, in 2007

"FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

"Flourishing After 55" from Arlington Office of Senior Adult Programs for June 19-24.

Senior centers: Lee, 5722 Lee Hwy.; Langston-Brown Senior Center, 2121 N. Culpeper St.; Walter Reed, 2909 S. 16th St.; Arlington Mill, 909 S.

Dinwiddie St.; Aurora Hills, 735 S. 18th St.

Senior trips. Wilton House Museum, Richmond, Tuesday, June 20, \$15; Baltimore Basilica and Walters Art Museum, Thursday, June 22, \$15. Call Arlington County 55+ Travel, 703-228-

4748. Registration required.

NEW PROGRAMS:

Geomotion workout with music, Monday, June 19, 1 p.m., Walter Reed. Register, 703-228-0955.

Explore the works of unknown Impressionists, Monday, June 19, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills, \$6. Register, 703-228-5722.

Informal current events discussion, Monday, June 19, 10 a.m., Walter Reed. Register, 703-228-0955.

Aging in place using Universal home design, Monday, June 19, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown. Register, 703-228-6300.

Armchair tour of Iceland, Tuesday, June 20, 11 a.m., Arlington Mill. Details, 703-228-7369.

Rubber stamp workshop, Tuesday, June 20, 11:30 a.m., Lee. Register, 703-228-0555.

Moving to a retirement community tips, Tuesday, June 20, 1 p.m., Lee. Register, 703-228-0555.



Me & My Dad

Olivia and Emma Di Leonardo enjoy Sunday Brunch with their Dad, Al Di Leonardo, at Tupelo Honey on June 11. The girls are looking forward to celebrating with their Dad next Sunday for Father's Day.



Young Entrepreneur

Wakefield High School senior Tasnim Alam was named one of the top six entrepreneurs in the country at the the Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) Saunders Scholarship Competition in Rochester, N.Y. on May 5. Tasnim is the founder and CEO of Heatless Hotness, a business that sells heat-free hair curlers that are convenient to use and create salon-like results, which she launched while participating in the Arlington Chamber of Commerce's YEA! program.

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Connection

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News

Arlington's 12th annual Gang Prevention Soccer Tournament takes place June 25 at Washington-Lee High School.

PHOTO
CONTRIBUTED



Bringing Community Together

Tournament helps youths feel less isolated.

BY MIRACLE PARISH
THE CONNECTION

The 12th annual Gang Prevention Soccer Tournament will be held at Washington-Lee High School on June 25. The tournament is hosted by the Arlington Gang Prevention Task Force, to prevent at-risk youth from joining local gangs. The coordinator of this event is former probation officer and former Washington-Lee graduate, Robert "Tito" Vilchez.

The tournament began 2005 in Arlington County as a way to combat gang activity in the Latino community. Vilchez thought soccer would be a great way to bring the Latino community together. It began as an initiative to help youth feel like they are a part of something, which research shows as the main reason youth join gangs. The tournament gives youth ranging from ages 12 to 17 the opportunity to participate in positive recreational activities such as sports and after-school clubs as alternatives to gang participation.

The Gang Prevention Task Force hosts this event to appeal to youth in Northern Virginia that emigrated from gang-infested and soccer prevalent countries. The youths coming from other countries tend to feel iso-

lated from others in the community, and the tournament gives them an opportunity to be a part of something, he said.

But, Vilchez warns that no community is immune from gang violence. Vilchez also applauds the Arlington community's participation in the previous soccer tournaments.

"That's what's amazing about Arlington County, we come together," Vilchez said.

Vilchez attributes the success of the previous tournaments to the community and the generous contributions of local businesses. Vilchez and the rest of the Gang Prevention Task Force expect the same turnout for this year's event.

Vilchez hopes that this tournament can encourage people to get involved and become mentors for these children. The taskforce will also be providing lunch for the local volunteers as a token of their appreciation.

"It only takes one hour a week to make a difference," Vilchez said.

Vilchez and the rest of the task force will be hosting a table on tournament day for the community to get involved and sign up to be mentors.

The tournament will be held Sunday, June 26, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Register by emailing Vilchez at rvilchez@arlingtonva.us or call 703-274-2699.

Apply for Citizen's Police Academy

The Arlington County Police Department is now accepting applications for the fall Citizen's Police Academy. The 21st Citizen's Police Academy will begin on Thursday, Sept. 7. The Academy will consist of 12 sessions that meet on Thursdays from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at police headquarters located at 1425 North Courthouse Road.

The Citizen's Police Academy is designed to create better understanding and communication between citizens and the police through education and provide comprehensive information about the operations of the Arlington

County Police Department. Some of the topics of discussion include: police hiring, legal considerations, use of force, vehicle operations, community engagement, K9, SWAT and mental health crisis intervention.

Individuals who wish to apply will be subject to a background check. Applications are due no later than Friday, July 7. Individuals seeking additional information about the Citizen's Police Academy may contact the Training and Career Development Unit at 703-228-4247 or by email at ACPDTTraining@arlingtonva.us.

Enjoy the Sounds of Summer

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\$1,000 off purchase of a pair of Signia level 5 or 7 hearing aids. Everyday retail price for Signia level 5 Cellion is \$3,845 each. Sale Price \$3,345 each. Offers cannot be combined. Excludes previous purchases. Not valid with any other discount health plan. Offer expires 6/30/17

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*An independent clinical study in the US has shown that primax provided a significant improvement in ease of listening in demanding listening environments. A newly developed methodology using objective brain behavior measures (Electroencephalographic data), showed a significant reduction in listening effort for mild to moderate hearing impaired subjects using primax hearing aids in speech-in-noise situations applying advanced features such as Narrow Focus and EchoShield.

**Two clinical studies have shown that binaural provides better than normal hearing in certain demanding environments (University of Northern Colorado, 2014; Cullenburg-Herzentrup, 2013). Speech Reception Thresholds (SRT) in cocktail-party situations improved up to 23 dB for wearers with mild to moderate hearing loss using Cerat binaural or Pure binaural hearing aids with narrow-directivity, compared to people with normal hearing.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

ONGOING

Rosslyn Rocks Concerts. Through June 29, 6-8 p.m. at Central Place, N. Moore Street at Rosslyn Metro Station. Free live music every Thursday evening in June at Central Place Plaza. Each week will feature a different cover band. Beer and wine will be available for purchase. June 1 features local band White Ford Bronco. Visit www.rosslynva.org for more.

Summer Bootcamp. 2-7 p.m. Monday and Wednesdays through July 1; 9:30-10:30 Saturday at Gateway Park, 1300 Lee Hwy. \$35. Visit www.rosslynva.org/do/summerbootcamp for more.

“Jesus Christ Superstar.” Extended through July 9 at the Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave. Visit www.sigtheatre.org for more.

“King Lear.” Various times through June 25 at Gunston Arts Center, Theatre Two, 2700 S. Lang St. Shakespeare’s mature classic with local actor Rick Foucheux. Visit wscavantbard.org, or call 703-418-4808.

Rosslyn Cinema and Pub in the Park. Fridays through August 25, 6 p.m. at Gateway Park, 1300 Lee Highway. On Fridays, Rosslyn Cinema brings you games, drinks, dinner and free outdoor movies this summer. Visit www.rosslynva.org for more.

Arlington Farmer’s Market. Every Saturday, 8 a.m.-noon at the corner of N. 14th Street and N. Courthouse Road. A weekly celebration of local food including fresh produce, meats, dairy, cheese, baked goods, free range eggs, specialty items, cut flowers, plants and herbs. Email csingiser@cfwdc.org or call 917-733-6402.

Cycling Volunteers Needed. The 20th annual Armed Forces Cycling Classic needs volunteers for the June 10-11 race. Email info@arlingtonsports.org for more.

Outdoor Zumba. 6-7 p.m. on Wednesdays through May 24 at Freedom Park, Entrance on Lynn St. at Wilson Blvd. \$20 for all five classes. Visit www.rosslynva.org for more.

FRESHFARM Market. 3-7 p.m. on Tuesdays at 1900 Crystal Drive. Shop from local farmers and producers

with seasonal fruits and vegetables, fresh-cut flowers, container plants and herbs, farm-raised eggs, all-natural meats, artisan baked goods, and specialty foods. Visit www.crystalcity.org for more.

Mobile Bike Repair. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. on Thursdays at 1900 Crystal Drive. Drop off your bike on Thursday morning and have it tuned up and ready to ride before heading home. Email DC@velofix.com, or phone 855-VELO-FIX for more.

Food Truck Thursdays. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at 1900 Crystal Drive & 201 12th St. Actual truck schedules are subject to change so be sure to follow your favorites. Visit www.crystalcity.org for more.

Crystal Ball: Street Hockey. 6:30 p.m. Thursdays at 1900 Crystal Drive. A coed social league, in partnership with the DC Fray, hockey enthusiasts compete competitively and recreationally in Crystal City. Games are played weekly and champions are crowned at the end of each season. Visit www.crystalcity.org for more.

Healthy Lifestyle Runs. Saturdays, 9 a.m. at Roosevelt Island, George Washington Memorial Parkway. American Cancer Society partners with parkrun USA to promote fitness in the fight against cancer. Free. Visit www.parkrun.us/rooseveltislanddc/ for more.

Friday Night Live. 8 p.m. Fridays at the Church at Clarendon, 1210 N. Highland St., Suite A. Local musicians perform. Free. Visit 1bc.org for more.

Culinaire’s Winter Lunch. Tuesdays through Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at The Art Institute of Washington, 1820 N. Fort Myer Drive, 12th floor. Culinaire, the student-run restaurant of the Art Institute of Washington, is now serving lunch from their winter menu on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Visit www.artinstitutes.edu/arlington for more.

Arlington’s Historical Museum Open on First Wednesdays. The Arlington Historical Museum is open to the public on the first Wednesday of every month from 12:30-3:30 p.m. The museum consists of exhibits chronicling Arlington County’s history from Native American settlements up to the present day. The museum will continue to be open on Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. Admission is free. The museum is located in the former 1891 Hume School building at 1805 S. Arlington Ridge Road. Contact Garrett Peck at

571-243-1113 or at garrett.peck@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org.

LGBT & Straight Friends Social.

Tuesdays. Happy Hour, 3-7 p.m.; Mikey’s “Bar A” Video Wall, 7 p.m.; start time at 8 p.m. IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. For 21 years and older. Free. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com for more.

Open Mic Comedy. Wednesdays 8-10 p.m. at Ri Ra Irish Pub, 2915 Wilson Blvd. Doors open at 7 p.m. Age 21 and up only. Free show, \$25 cash prize for best joke. Call 703-248-9888 or Visit www.RiRa.com/ Arlington for more.

Food Truck Thursdays. 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the corner of North Irving St. and Washington Blvd. Find a round-up of regional food trucks. Free to attend. Visit www.dmvfta.org.

Invasive Plants Removal. Work parties are held every month to keep the parks free of destructive invasive plants. Teens, adults and families welcome. Every second Sunday of the month 2-4:30 p.m. at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Road; call 703-228-3403. Every third Sunday of the month 2-5 p.m. at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Road; call 703-228-6535 or Visit registration.arlingtonva.us. Free, no registration required.

Poetry Series. 6-8 p.m. second Sunday of the month at IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Hosted by poet Miles David Moore. Featured artists share their poetry followed by open readings. Free. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com or call 703-522-8340.

Open Mic Nite. 8 p.m.-12:30 a.m. every Wednesday at IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Sign-up times are 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. Bring instruments, fans and friends. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com or call 703-522-8340.

Karaoke. 8 p.m. on the first Sunday every month at Galaxy Hut, 2711 Wilson Blvd. Visit www.galaxyhut.com or call 703-525-8646.

Pub Quiz. 8 p.m. every Sunday at Whitlow’s on Wilson, 2854 Wilson Blvd. Prizes for first place. Free. Visit www.whitlows.com or call 703-276-9693.

Storytime. Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:30-11 a.m. at Kinder Haus Toys, 1220 N. Fillmore St. Storytime with Ms. Laura. Call 703-527-5929.

Lego Club. Monthly on the first Wednesday. 4-5 p.m. Glencarlyn Branch Library, 300 S. Kensington St. The library provides tubs of legos and a special challenge and after the program the creations are displayed for everyone to see. No registration required. Call 703-228-6548 for more.

Crystal City Sparket. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. on Wednesdays at 1900 Crystal Drive. Sparket — A Creative Market is an extension of DC’s Eastern Market with arts, crafts, and handmade goods. Free to attend. Visit www.crystalcity.org.

Open Mic Night. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., sign ups are at 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m., at Iota Club & Café, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Free. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com/.

Art for Life. Third Thursday of each month. The Hyatt Regency Crystal City’s “Art for Life” Partnership with National Kidney Foundation brings a new artist each month to The Hyatt for a reception. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org.

Brunch at Freddie’s. Third Saturday of every month, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Freddie’s Beach Bar, 555 23rd St. The Arlington Gay and Lesbian Alliance gathers for an all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet (\$9.99). All are welcome. No reservation is required. Visit www.facebook.com/events/700174390103305.



Concert

Tuesday, June 20, Frank Herman Martin Concert, 8:30-9:30 p.m. at Ireland’s Four Courts, 2051 Wilson Blvd. A resident of Silver Spring, Md., Frank is a winner of the 2016-2017 Artist and Scholars Grant, sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, Maryland. Visit www.irelandsfourcourts.com/ for more.

THURSDAY/JUNE 15

Film Screenings. 6:30-8:45 p.m. at the Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. Screening of three short films illuminating the experience of Syrian refugees. Call 703-228-5990 for more.

DEADLINE JUNE 16

Gang Prevention Through Soccer Registration. at Washington-Lee High School, 1301 N Stafford St. A fee of \$7 per player includes a t-shirt and lunch for each participant. Further details are available in English and Spanish. Register through Robert “Tito” Vilchez, coordinator of the Arlington Gang Prevention Task Force and supervisor of the Detention Diversion Program. Arlington’s 12th annual Gang Prevention Soccer Tournament takes place Sunday, June 25 at Washington-Lee High School, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Email rvilchez@arlingtonva.us or call 703-274-2699.

FRIDAY/JUNE 16

Outdoor Concert Series. 8 p.m. at Lubber Run Amphitheater, N. Columbus Street & 2nd Street N. Series kicks off with The Grandsons in concert. Concerts run through

Sept. 27. Free. Visit www.arlingtonarts.org for more.

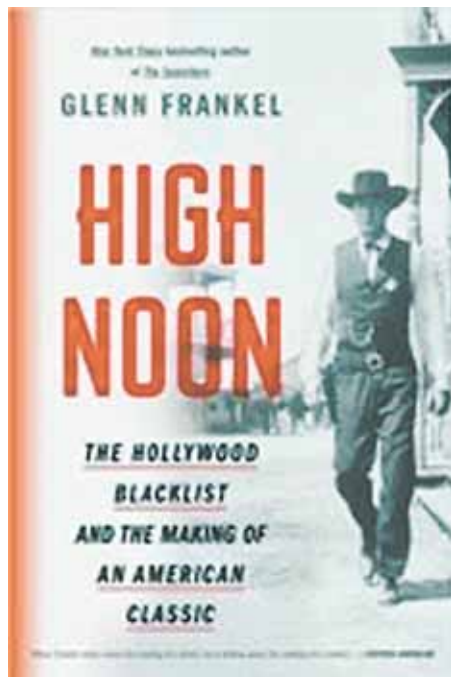
SATURDAY/JUNE 17

Champion Trees Bike Ride. 10 a.m.-noon at the Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Road. Marvel at some of Arlington’s trees on this ride while stopping at points of natural and environmental interest along the way. Visit parks.arlingtonva.us/ for more.

Columbia Pike Blues Festival. 1–8:30 p.m. at 2611 Columbia Pike. Musicians such as Bettye LaVette, Rufus Roundtree and Da B-more Brass Factory; Full Power Blues Band; Sol Roots with Carly Harvey, and Jonny Grave. Visit www.stayarlington.com or call 703-892-2776.

Arlington Community Chorus. 7 p.m. in the Kenmore Middle School Black Box Theater, 200 S. Carlin Springs Road. Directed by Mary-Hannah Klontz and accompanied by Diane Carsten-Pelak, the concert will feature choral, solo and ensemble performances. Free. Visit www.apsva.us/adulted or call 703-228-7200.

Outdoor Concert Series. 8 p.m. at Lubber Run Amphitheater, N. Columbus Street & 2nd Street N. Cubano Groove in concert. Concerts run through Sept. 27. Free. Visit



Author Event

On Wednesday, June 28, at 7 p.m. in the Arlington Central Library, Arlington resident and Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Glenn Frankel explores the story of “High Noon,” and the political era in which it was made. Frankel is author of “High Noon: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic.”

ENTERTAINMENT

www.arlingtonarts.org for more.

SUNDAY/JUNE 18

Mr. Knick Knack Concert. 11 a.m. at Lubber Run Amphitheater, N. Columbus Street & 2nd Street N. Concerts run through Sept. 27. Free. Visit www.arlingtonarts.org for more.

Father's Day Auto Festival. 2-6 p.m. at 220 20th St. S. This family-friendly festival features a variety of automobiles including sports cars, electric vehicles, classic muscle cars, antiques and more. Free. Visit www.crystalcity.org for more.

Beekeeping Lecture. 6:30-8 p.m. in the Shirlington Branch Library, 4200 Campbell Ave. Master beekeeper Dr. Frank Linton has been keeping honey bees on his deck in Fairfax for over 10 years. He also keeps honey bees in a glass observation hive in his house, and published a beekeeping book. Visit www.novabees.org/ for more.



TUESDAY/JUNE 20

Project Linus Blankets. 2-3:30 p.m. in the Shirlington Library, 4200 Campbell Ave. Learn how to make a Project Linus blanket for a child in need of comfort, and work on it for the rest of the summer to finish it, before dropping it off at the library for donation. Visit www.projectlinus.org/about/ or call 703-228-6545 for more.

Frank Herman Martin Concert. 8:30-9:30 p.m. at Ireland's Four Courts, 2051 Wilson Blvd. A resident of Silver Spring, Md., Herman is a winner of the 2016-2017 Artist and Scholars Grant, sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, Maryland. Visit www.irelandsfourcourts.com/ for more.

Art

On Saturday, June 24 "Meet the Artists," 6-9 p.m. at the Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd. Featuring 10 contemporary artists with backgrounds rooted in a variety of fields and disciplines from natural history, ecology and botany to technology, dance, and music, called INTERDISCIPLINARIUM. Visit arlingtonartscenter.org/ for more.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 21

Project Linus Blankets. 2-3:30 p.m. in the Westover Library, 1644 N. McKinley Road #3. Learn how to

make a Project Linus blanket for a child in need of comfort, and work on it for the rest of the summer to finish it, before dropping it off at the library for donation. Visit www.projectlinus.org/about/ or call 703-228-5260 for more.

Summer Solstice Celebration. 6:30-

8:30 p.m. at Bluemont Park, 601 N. Manchester St. Celebrate the longest day of the year with Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (ACE). Volunteers will have a variety of service projects including trash and litter cleanup and invasive plant removal. Call 703-228-6418 or email joslin@arlingtonenvironment.org for more.

FRIDAY/JUNE 23

Jogo Project Concert. 8 p.m. at Lubber Run Amphitheater, N. Columbus Street & 2nd Street N. Concerts run through Sept. 27. Free. Visit www.arlingtonarts.org for more.

JUNE 23-24

Dance Presentation. 5 p.m. at the Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave. Dancers will celebrate the life of Arlingtonian, Rita Andelin. Visit www.SIGtheatre.org for more.

SATURDAY/JUNE 24

Meet the Artists. 6-9 p.m. at the Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd. Featuring 10 contemporary artists with backgrounds rooted in a variety of fields and disciplines from natural history, ecology and botany to technology, dance, and music, called INTERDISCIPLINARIUM. Visit arlingtonartscenter.org/ for more.

Caz in Concert. 8 p.m. at Lubber Run Amphitheater, N. Columbus Street & 2nd Street N. Concerts run through Sept. 27. Free. Visit www.arlingtonarts.org for more.

SUNDAY/JUNE 25

Arlington Philharmonic Concert. 6

p.m. at Lubber Run Amphitheater, N. Columbus Street & 2nd Street N. This performance, their 3rd Annual "Pops for Pets" is a benefit for both the Arlington Philharmonic and Animal Welfare League of Arlington Free. Visit www.arlingtonarts.org for more.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 28,

Meet the Author. 7 p.m. in the Arlington Central Library, at the Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. Arlington resident and Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Glenn Frankel explores the story of High Noon, and the political era in which it was made. Frankel is author of "High Noon: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic."

JULY 11-AUG. 29

Drawing: The Natural World. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd. This eight-week course will focus its attention on the natural world, and teach you to record what you see, using materials like graphite, charcoal, and ink. \$250. Ages 18 and older. Call 703-248-6800, or visit www.arlingtonartscenter.org for more.

JULY 12-AUG. 30

Drawing and Painting: The Figure. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd. Beginning, returning, and advanced students learn drawing and painting in this course on the human form. \$280. 18 and older. Call 703-248-6800, or visit www.arlingtonartscenter.org for more.

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

JOBS PORTAL

Hire Autism Now Open. The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) today announced the launch of its new employment initiative, Hire Autism, for its test run in Northern Virginia. Hire Autism is an online jobs portal that helps individuals with autism of all capacities connect with businesses and employers willing to consider them as candidates for competitive employment. Visit HireAutism.org or www.researchautism.org for more.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 14

Gardening Talks & Demonstrations. 7 p.m. at the Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. The Arlington Food Assistance Center and the Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia will sponsor a series of talks and demonstrations about gardening. In addition to basic gardening techniques, topics will include wild edibles, pollinators, food preparation and preservation, and more. For a complete schedule, visit www.afac.org/.

DEADLINE JUNE 16

Make a Difference. 6:30-8 p.m. at Arlington Campus Founders Hall, 3351 Fairfax Drive. Arlington County's Neighborhood Complete Streets Program is encouraging the public to submit nominations of

"problem streets" for project funding consideration. Visit projects.arlingtonva.us/ for more.

SUNDAY/JUNE 18

ZERO Prostate Cancer Run/Walk. 8:15 a.m. at Pentagon Row Courtyard, 1101 S Joyce St.. The End of Prostate Cancer joins forces with Potomac Urology. Visit www.zeroprostatecancerrun.org/dc for more.

DEADLINE JUNE 19

Public Art Master Plan. The Public Art Master Plan is getting an update. Check out the project site for more info and help update the plan by filling a questionnaire here, www.surveymonkey.com/.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 21

Gardening Talks & Demonstrations. 7 p.m. at the Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. The Arlington Food Assistance Center and the Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia will sponsor a series of talks and demonstrations about gardening. In addition to basic gardening techniques, topics will include wild edibles, pollinators, food preparation and preservation, and more. For a complete schedule, visit www.afac.org/.

SUNDAY/JUNE 25

Guest Pastor. Various times at Rock Spring Congregational UCC, 5010 Little Falls Road. Dr. Leonard Hamlin, Senior Pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church Arlington, will offer fresh and varied perspectives on the Bible and issues facing the community and the world in a series

called "Other Voices." Visit www.rockspringucc.org for more.

TUESDAY/JUNE 27

Information Session. 6-7:30 p.m. Leadership Center for Excellence is now accepting applications and holding an information session for the Young Professionals Program Fall Class of 2017, a program that aims to develop leaders in various sectors across the D.C. Metropolitan area over a four-month period. Interested parties may RSVP for info sessions and apply for the program online at leadercenter.org/ypp-information-session/. The application may be found online at www.leadercenter.org with a rolling admission deadline until Aug. 4, 2017.

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PEOPLE

Selected for Grammy Camp

Local singer-songwriter to release her EP.

BY BEATRIZ DA COSTA
THE CONNECTION

For people who prefer the music of the '60s and '70s, they can find a kindred spirit in young up-and-coming singer-songwriter Calista Garcia. An Arlington native, the 16-year-old has performed more than 100 gigs in the northern Virginia area, and written more than 100 songs influenced by her favorite artists, such as The Beatles and Hozier.

Not only have her vocal talents and songwriting capabilities captured the attention of the Washington, D.C. metro area citizens, but nationwide as well. Garcia is one of 119 high school students who have been selected to attend a Grammy Camp, hosted by Belmont University and University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music, from May 30-June 4. She and 11 other teens have the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of the music industry, and perfect their areas of interests.

"It's really crazy," Garcia said about the Tennessee-based camp, "I didn't think I was going to make it, honestly. It's really cool." At the camp, students can choose from four career tracks to focus on during their six-day program. Some may prefer audio engineering, vocal or instrumental performance, however, Garcia picked songwriting. She also hopes to "gain connections and skills, and learn more about the [music] industry," as well. To attend this camp, Garcia, a rising high school junior, will have to miss out on a week of school, at H.B. Woodlawn in Arlington, but for the singer-songwriter who has been performing at least one gig every two weeks for the last couple of months, learning how to balance school and her career, has become second nature. Of course setting time for homework and her studio sessions means that Garcia has to give up a couple of things, one of them being high school theatre.

"I used to do more theatre at my school, but I haven't been able to do as much of it, I can't stay for rehearsals." Despite this, she has still been able to contribute to her school's arts program by creating music for the theatre's musical that found its way onto the music streaming app, Spotify. Not only does she balance her career, her academics, and theatre, but she has also been a part of her school's Songwriting Club since June 2015. Run by H.B. Woodlawn teacher, Daniel Paris, who currently teaches Garcia in a songwriting class offered at the school, Paris considers Garcia a "natural frontwoman," and that she has "great banter with the crowd" when performing live.

Paris began teaching Garcia in September 2016, and although he believes that she has improved since being in his class, he does not believe it was due to his teaching. "She has improved since working with



Calista Garcia in performance.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

me, but not because of me. I just enable, encourage and help record. She doesn't require my assistance to be successful as a songwriter. I just stand back and let the magic happen."

While Garcia may describe her music being "versatile, artistic-based" and having a "folk side" to it with a "pop element," Paris was more hesitant to describe her music. "Not to slap a genre label, she can stretch her own boundaries." He said. "She can write a fun song, I've heard her write great rock songs."

Rock isn't such a far description of her music. Her father, Juan Garcia, an avid rock fan, passed down his passion for music, and the guitar to his daughter. Furthermore, she holds rock artist Stevie Nicks as one of her inspirations for her sound and lyrics, along with Alanis Morissette.

Her mother, Denise Garcia, also played a role in her daughter's creative growth, and said that, "You know how some people don't know what they want to do? From a young age, it was so clear that [music] was what she [Calista] was focusing on. It just kind of comes with her."

Sooner rather than later, Garcia fans will be able to hear just how focused she is in regards to music. She won the 2017 Bernard /Ebbs Young Songwriter of the Year Award in Bethesda, Md. in March. Performing at the Live Well Loudon Festival back in April and at the Parallel Wine Bistro in Broadlands a month

ago has led to the upcoming release of her EP. It'll be accessible to anyone with an Apple I.D., and listeners will be privy to the artist's self-written ballads, her favorite songs, and recordings she has compiled over the years.

Garcia's EP will give the young singer-songwriter the chance to show others the potential her family and teacher believe she has. "She [Calista] has a number of songs that if you heard it on the radio it would not be out of place." Paris said.

"If it were available on iTunes one would buy it happily. I truly hope she is successful because it seems like something she would hope to do. Her songs speak to people."



PHOTO BY BEATRIZ DA COSTA
THE CONNECTION

Calista Garcia at BeanGood.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Patio Ready for Summer? The latest trends for entertaining alfresco.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

The warm days and nights of summer lend themselves to outdoor entertaining. From colorful pillows and cozy throws to textured fabrics and jewel-toned tableware, local designers offer ideas for creating a festive space for an alfresco soiree.

Consider the way an outdoor space will look when it's viewed from inside your home, says Madeline Fairbanks, product development director, Country Casual Teak.

"Choose fabrics that coordinate and accent the colors used indoors to create a seamless transition between the spaces," she said. "Add texture with fabrics, from gauzy sheers to the heaviest brocades, to bring the textures of indoor upholstery outdoors. An added plus is that they help hide dirt and stains."

The transition from a home's interior to its exterior should be fluid, advises Jim Rill of Rill Architects. "It shouldn't just be an outdoor patio, but an extension of the indoor spaces," he said.

Rill suggests using outdoor walls, fireplaces and trellises to create a sense of scale and comfort. "For instance, stone walls, hedges, pools and ponds help give an out-



PHOTO BY STACY ZARIN GOLDBERG

Todd Martz of Home on Cameron in Alexandria advises using colorful table accessories to set the stage for a festive gathering.

door setting scale and coziness," he said. "Think of the outdoor space as a room and consider how it's organized with furniture and materials like you would an indoor room. Patterns in the patio materials also organize the area."



PHOTO COURTESY OF COUNTRY CASUAL TEAK

Outdoor furniture pieces like these by Country Casual Teak help define the outdoor atmosphere of this Potomac, Md., home.

Outdoor entertaining is often food-centric and for an upbeat outdoor table setting, Todd Martz of Home on Cameron in Old Town Alexandria suggests acrylic table accessories. "Incorporate colorful pitchers, glasses and plates to set the stage for a fes-

"It shouldn't just be an outdoor patio, but an extension of the indoor spaces."

— Jim Rill of Rill Architects

tive gathering," he said.

Have a few key pieces for hosting, whether you entertain weekly or just once a year, recommends Fairbanks. "Keep a bar cart near an entrance for wheeling refreshments to guests, or an outdoor sideboard near a dining area for easy buffet-style service," she said.

For chilly nights, drape throws on the outdoor seating for guests, advises Martz. "With the popularity of fire pits, add comfortable seating with indoor-outdoor cushions around them to enhance the experience," he said.



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News

Refugees Share Their Stories

FROM PAGE 3

he had to run away again and he ended up walking "I googled it later ... I think about 1,000 miles. Many people died along the way."

After the second Congo War, he was heading toward the Zambian border, was caught again and imprisoned "just for being a refugee." But Ntabaganyimana had some luck because he interacted with an individual from the U.N. who convinced the authorities there was no cause to hold him. He still remembers the date. "I was released in Sept. 23, 1999."

He entered the U.S. as a refugee from Rwanda in 2000. Now he currently serves as acting director of grants management at the Maryland Department of Human Resources where he oversees the Office for Refugees and Asylees.

All three of the panelists agreed about the generosity of the American people. Ntabaganyimana said the resettlement agency sent someone who spoke French to meet him at the airport. "I was surprised. I was wondering how I was going to make it with the language barrier and we'd learned that White people kill Black people." But he found Americans would offer help for anything. "We will help you learn to drive." They assisted him to enroll in college which was difficult because he didn't have his high school diploma. "You don't take it with you when you are running for your life." He said "People were really going out of their way."

Calzada-Esponda said she ended up in Miami "where we automatically had a community willing

to show us the ropes, to explain things like Thanksgiving and why you eat turkey instead of pork." She said one of the biggest challenges is adapting to this country from Cuba because countries all do things differently. "My aunt was not able to assimilate as well as I was and committed suicide a year after she had come to the U.S." Calzada-Esponda said in 2012 she had a terrible car accident and suffered traumatic brain injury. "But this country has taught me you can overcome anything." Calzada-Esponda is currently CEO of Cuba Inspires and a former Capitol Hill staff member. She said, "We have to get out the success

stories of the doctor who was a refugee, the lawyer who was a refugee and let people know that refugees aren't terrorists. "We have to change the world and that's that."

Mahmoodi says she found people who actually work in this refugee field like the caseworkers and counselors are very much open to refugees. "That makes a big difference." She continued, when you are new in this country, it is important to help refugees integrate. Mahmoodi has more than five years of experience with US-AID funded programs focused on economic development in Afghanistan.

The program moderator moderator, Nouf Bazaz, asked what advice the panel would have for refugees having difficulty integrating into the community. She said, "Folks don't expect it to be as hard as it is. They think when they get to America everything will be OK."

Ntabaganyimana said, "They have high expectations in the beginning. But they need to learn to think

SEE REFUGEES, PAGE 11

Obituary

Obituary

Alice Elizabeth Lee "Julie" (Age 76)

Peacefully passed away on June 5, 2017. She was born in Washington, DC on June 27, 1940 to the late Edward and Catherine English. Julie graduated from Mary Washington College in 1962 with her bachelor's degree. She went on to work as a social worker then an administrative assistant with Northrup Grumman. Julie married her husband on August 17, 1963 and had 2 children. Her memories will be cherished by her beloved husband Ronald, sons Andy and Ned, grandson Aaron, nieces, nephews, and a host of other relatives and friends. A memorial celebration will be Monday, June 12th from 4-7 pm at Crystal City Sports Pub in Arlington, VA. A second memorial celebration will be held in Raleigh, NC on Wednesday, June 21st from 4-7 pm. Online condolences may be made at www.murphyfuneralhomes.com.

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Refugees

FROM PAGE 10

2, 3, 10 years down the road. Once they learn English and get to know the community, life gets better. Down the road they will have integrated."

Calzada-Esponda advised, "Learn the language." She remembered

her first words were "mister, mister, give me candy," to the soldiers. "Have patience as you are trying to get that job." She said, "The more you try to fit into the community, the better it will be. "Figure out what makes you happy as an individual because in America there is a little bit of everything."

Mahmoodi adds one thing to help refugees integrate is to welcome them and make them feel comfortable. In the beginning they feel inferior, shy. Let them know it's OK to make mistakes in the beginning.

The moderator asked, "What is the one thing you would like the U.S. to know about being a refugee?"

Ntabaganyimana said, "The refugee program works. It saves lives. Without it I would be dead or forced to join rebel groups to survive."

Calzado-Esponda said, "America was built by refugees. This is not new. To deny this is to deny America."

Mahmoodi said, "They are hardworking and are after a safe normal life. They are normal people."

The ECOC was established in 1983 as a non-profit organization with a mission to resettle refugees. Recently it was added as the third official resettlement agency, along with Catholic Charities and Lutheran Services, to serve the Northern Virginia area. ECOC specifically assists Special Immigrants from Iraq and Afghanistan. ECOC is headquartered in Arlington.

This is part of an ongoing series of articles focused on refugees and immigrants.

Toss and Tip

FROM PAGE 3

in all those new condos in Clarendon knew they were in for a terrible summer of getting eaten alive because of this ...", McGuire said.

Red Top Cab was contacted on June 2 and 3: in one phone call they indicated they were not aware of tires on their lot; a second call was not returned. The tires remained on the lot, full of water, as of June 12.

A call on June 12 to follow up was answered more proactively. Red Top Shop Manager Andy Chao said they had called a removal company to take the tires away "sometime by the end of this week."

Asian tiger mosquitoes can carry the Zika virus, as well as other harmful mosquito-borne diseases such as West Nile Virus. Twenty-five Virginians have now contracted the Zika virus, the Virginia Department of Health reported on its website in early June, up from 20 reported cases the previous week. Fourteen of those cases were in Northern Virginia.

For more information see ehhealth@arlingtonva.us and www.ZikaVA.org.

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Spontaneous Confusion



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Since I have some alone-time; just me and the cats, I thought I'd try to write my next column a few weeks ahead and take a bit of the time-sensitive deadline pressure off. Not that meeting my weekly commitment has been too much of a problem over the years (nearly 20 in fact), still, I thought I'd put pen to paper, literally, and see what comes out.

So far what has come out is that I'm having creative difficulty writing something that's to be published two weeks hence. It seems/feels that writing in the present about something to be published in the future is awkward, sort of. It's somewhere between wishful thinking and a prediction. Neither of which is characteristic of who I am or how I think. I guess my writing nature is that I like to react to reality and then address it in print, rather than anticipate it and then respond to it. Typically I prefer to be current in my thinking and honest in my prose. Apparently, I have nothing else to share so trying to explain that void is the semi point of this column.

And I suppose, without being too self-indulgent, that if a stage IV cancer patient — yours truly, who shares everything with you regular readers; highs, lows and in-betweens, has nothing of particular interest to share, perhaps it's because I'm experiencing a comparatively easy fortnight between 24-hour urine collection, pre-chemotherapy lab work, every-five-week infusions, and quarterly scans followed by my quarterly face-to-face appointment with my oncologist, so I have minimal cancer-related business to preoccupy my life. It's almost as if I'm unencumbered by my underlying problem: non-small cell lung cancer. And I have to admit, it's a heck of a feeling to not have my conscious and unconscious minding my business and reminding me that I have an incurable form of cancer. Which of course I never need reminding of; as opposed to ending a sentence with a preposition which obviously I do need to be reminded of.

Getting back to the substance — if you can even call it that, of this column: my difficulty writing weeks ahead of publication. What's puzzling about this difficulty is how uncharacteristic of my personality it is. I am not spontaneous. I rarely do anything spur of the moment other than getting off the couch, changing the channel on the television, switching radio stations in the car, deciding what to wear, eating/drinking/going to the bathroom and/or miscellaneous other household-type duties and responsibilities. Yet the problem I'm experiencing now — related to my June 14 column, is that since I'm not being spontaneous, I'm unable to create?

How can that be a problem? That's who I am all the time. I do everything in advance — of consequence, that is. Maybe I'm making too much out of nothing? (Oh, really.) Maybe I'm simply stuck in my head and need to get out of my own way. Not that I make mountains out of mole hills but sometimes, and I've told by my oncologist that I can blame my having cancer for everything, I might not think so clearly and get bogged down emotionally. Ergo, I will lay the blame for this column and it's lack of substance, on having "terminal" cancer.

Cancer doesn't work in mysterious ways (well, perhaps it does to researchers), it works in destructive ways: physically, mentally and spiritually. Logical becomes illogical — and vice versa; rational becomes irrational — and vice versa; and manageable becomes unmanageable — and vice versa. For cancer patients/survivors, expecting that one's life will go merrily along is totally unrealistic. Expecting the unexpected is the path of least resistance.

This week's column/dilemma is simply another example/reminder of how cancer intrudes and deludes and affects those of us who naively thought we would be unaffected.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

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