

The Arlington Connection

Sgt. Tom Rakowski and Detective Shawn Blow unload Anne Smith's trunk, which she says loaded "with everything I knew I would eat."

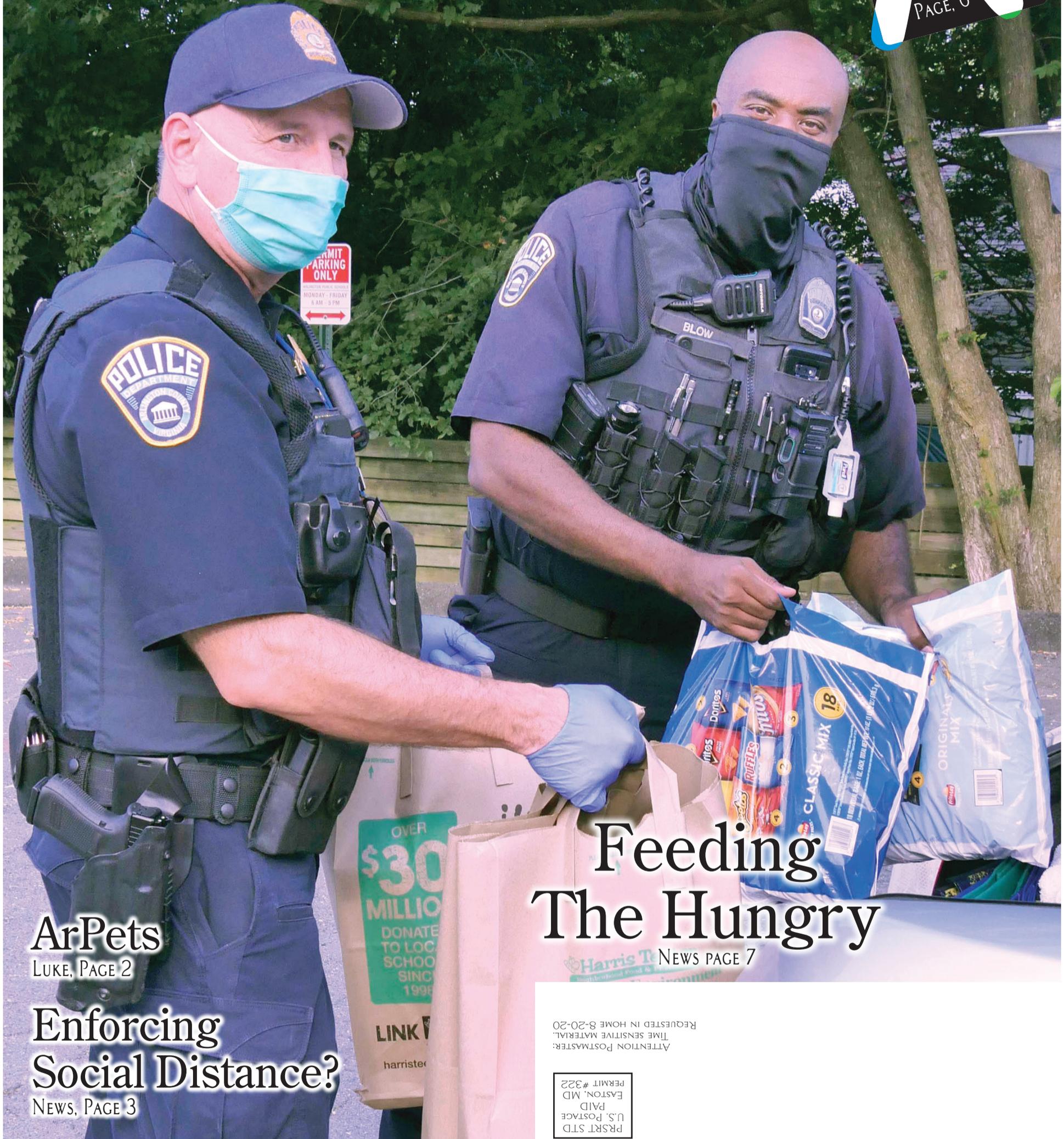


PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/ARLINGTON CONNECTION

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NEWS



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ArPets: Luke

BY JOAN BRADY

I hail from West Virginia and traveled to the Animal Welfare League of Arlington so that I could have a better chance at finding my forever family. I don't remember much before being found, but I really, really appreciate having a cool, safe place to live, with lots of treats.

I was at the shelter for a while, but then

they found me a great foster home. Because of the virus, I get to hang out with my foster family all day long and I love that.

I don't have much experience with other dogs, cats or kids, but I think I would love to have a big family to snuggle up with. I'm a happy guy and enjoy playing, hiking, swimming and best of all, napping on the couch.

You can find out more about me on the

SEE ARPETS, PAGE 3

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JOURNEY



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New Ordinance Targets Groups of Pedestrians

Action to prevent COVID spread in high traffic areas.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Arlington takes coronavirus restrictions seriously. The County Board passed an ordinance July 31 that targets groups of more than four in public places who don't adhere to physical distancing requirements.

The ordinance requires signs to be posted and pedestrians to obey the signs and signals erected on highways, streets and sidewalks. Pedestrians are prohibited from congregating in groups of four or more (including family members) and must maintain a 6-foot distance from others at all times.

Libby Garvey, Chair of the Arlington County Board, says some of the signs have been put up in target areas, and a map will be posted on the Arlington County website soon. She says this is not meant to target neighborhoods where people are running or walking with their families and kids without face masks.

The ordinance was passed due to the threat of COVID-19.

It states "since the inception of Phase Three Arlington has experienced significant crowding inside restaurants and on the sidewalks, rights of way and adjacent public spaces where patrons wait for long periods of time awaiting admission to the restaurants" without wearing face coverings and practicing social distancing. The Virginia State Department of Health statistics records 3,196 cases of coronavirus with 437 hospitalizations and 135 deaths in Arlington as of Aug.



Sign posted outside Whitlows on Wilson announcing new Arlington County physical distancing ordinance.

15.

Garvey says the Board could see that social distancing could be a problem back in Phase Two as Virginia was getting ready to enter Phase Three. The coronavirus cases went up at that time as people started relaxing the social distancing and mask wearing requirements. "People were saying "oh, good we're done." But she says logic plus science and experience from everyone else around the world tells you coronavirus will spike if you don't continue social distancing and wearing masks.

Garvey continues, "We just need everyone to comply. We have bars open and schools closed and have done incredible damage to businesses. This is backwards."

She points to what is happening around the world.

"We know we have coronavirus in Arlington. It is not currently spiking but it is not under control. We have to be preventative."

Matt de Ferranti, a County Board member, says that where he lives in the Clarendon area people seem to be abiding by the social distancing guidelines. But he knows some areas at night are a concern and he sees a lot of social media with videos of the crowds on sidewalks. He explains the ordinance is about targeting where people are congregating.

This ordinance was adopted to become effective immediately on an emergency basis. In accordance with state law it will be adver-

tised for public hearing to consider adoption of a permanent ordinance at the Sept. 12 meeting of the County Board.

The goal is to educate people and gain voluntary compliance so implementation will be delayed while County Public Health officials, the Police Department and Fire Marshall provide information to the public. Violations constitute a traffic infraction and will be punished by a fine not exceeding \$100.

Garvey says the County health officials have been visiting businesses to let them know about the new ordinance, and there has been pretty good compliance by restaurants inside the dining areas.

"Our public health officials have jurisdiction inside the restaurants

but the issue is with the sidewalks outside where this is considered a traffic violation and the Arlington County Police Department has jurisdiction."

A spokesman for ACPD says educational efforts to date have included proactive checks of restaurants with teams of ACPD, Public Health, the Fire Marshall's Office and ABC to educate and ensure compliance; distribution of educational flyers as well as social media; a virtual information session with businesses and a Town Hall with Board members.

"Enforcement is only to be used if needed and will not occur until signage is posted. The county is first focused on a public education campaign and hopes enforcement may not be needed."

Garvey adds, "Late at night people are more relaxed and may not be wearing face masks. I am hoping overall people agree with voluntary compliance. That's what we want." She says most people move on the sidewalks when the police ask them. "Our police don't want to escalate this." Garvey says the County has the option to go to curfews. "That's not good but people wouldn't be on the streets so there you go." Garvey expresses frustration. "We're not being strict enough; we're in a really bad place to get the political will to make sure we do this."

"People may complain about losing their freedoms but we make people wear seat belts; we have rules about the clothes high school kids can wear. What is the difference having rules about face masks?"

PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/ARLINGTON CONNECTION

ArPets: Luke

FROM PAGE 2

Arlington Animal Welfare League Website. And you can check out some of my adoptable friends there too!

Interested in going on a virtual date with Luke? Email awla.foster.lorena@gmail.com to set up a virtual meet & greet.

To learn more about the adoption process, go to www.awla.org/adopt/process.

ArPets is a weekly feature by Joan Brady, an award winning Connection Newspapers columnist and local photographer specializing in pets, children and families and contemporary business portraits. Contact Joan at joan@joanbradyphotography.com



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY AWLA

BULLETIN BOARD

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

FRIDAYS THRU SEPTEMBER

Fridays at the Fountain. 5-8 p.m. At The Stand at the Crystal City Water Park, 1601 Crystal Drive, Arlington. National Landing's weekly outdoor live music series, Fridays at the Fountain, is back for the summer. Pack a picnic, grab a beer or a bottle of wine (and your mask) and head down to the Water Park for live music and a good - socially distant - time. Visit the website: <https://nationallanding.org/do/fridays-at-the-fountain>

Upcoming music programming includes:

- ❖ August 21: Mars Rodeo
- ❖ August 28: Flippin' Eyelids
- ❖ September 4: N2N
- ❖ September 11: Collective a'Chord

FRIDAY/AUG. 21

Native Grasses, Sedges and Rushes for the Home Landscape. 10 - 11:30 a.m. Online Class. This class explains how native grasses, sedges and rushes can add structure and beauty to your garden all year long. Explore the landscape uses for native grasses and sedges, learn how to maintain them, and appreciate the important ways that these plants support wildlife. The speaker is Extension Master Gardener Elaine Mills who researches and writes the resources for the Tried and True Native Plant Selections for the Mid-Atlantic at <https://mgnv.org/plants/>. Free. RSVP at <https://mgnv.org/events/> to receive link to participate.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 26

Learn about Amazon HQ. Clark Construction is hosting a Virtual Small Business

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 4

OPINION

In the Interim

BY SEN. ADAM EBBIN

Normally, the end of the legislative session allows time for legislators, staff, and advocates alike to regroup and catch their breath. However, though the 2020 General Assembly session officially adjourned on March 7th, things are still busy. After adjournment, cases of COVID-19 mounted rapidly, accompanied by tri-weekly calls with the Governor's office, Health Department briefings, and evenings working to stay informed of the constantly-evolving virus and to share information with constituents.

After the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery reignited a call to action to reform our nation's policing practices, I listened to and stood with Black Lives Matter protestors, and worked with Senate colleagues to build a comprehensive framework to end these tragedies and the culture that has made them so devastatingly commonplace.

As so many are painfully aware, an eviction crisis is looming in Virginia. The statewide eviction moratorium ended in July and the weekly \$600 federal stipend for unemployment lapsed at the end of July, leaving many Virginians at risk of not being able to pay their rent. Although Governor Ralph Northam has implemented a statewide rent relief program, the initiative is not yet scaled up to prevent many Virginians from losing their housing during a public health crisis. I have been working closely with advocates and legislators to address this. To that end, over

the last three weeks, I met with the Virginia Poverty Law Center, Tenants and Workers United of Alexandria and faith leaders from Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement (VOICE) to hear issues and seek

solutions. During a Special Session that Governor Northam has called to begin on Aug. 18, Del. Cia Price (D-Hampton) and I will be introducing legislation to require landlords who plan on evicting tenants to first enter into a payment plan for a missed rent payment, ensuring that one financial crisis will not push tenants out of their housing and ensure landlords do not lose income or go through the costly and unsettling process of evicting a family. I am also working with advocates to extend the eviction moratorium.

I serve on a number of interim Committees and Commissions between sessions which provide oversight of ongoing state programs, review potential legislation, and plan one-time special projects.

Two weeks ago I was elected the Vice-Chair of the Joint Commission on Technology & Science. Later that week the Alexandria General Assembly Delegation spent several hours interviewing and selecting a new Circuit Court Judge to replace retired Judge Nolan Dawkins. We chose Kathleen Uston from a pool of extremely distinguished candidates.

The next week I joined the newly-minted Commission on Unemployment Insurance, where we received reports on the Unem-



Adam Ebbin

ployment Trust Fund balance and projections for the rest of the year. I also attended two meetings of the Senate Privileges and Elections Committee, which I serve on as the Vice-Chair, where we finalized the wording for a

pamphlet for voters on a proposed Constitutional Amendment which would create a redistricting commission that will appear on the November ballot.

In addition to these scheduled duties, I regularly meet with constituents and work to solve day-to-day issues for those in the 30th District. Working with Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson, I intervened with Dominion Energy to stop power from being cut from 158 customers in Old Town Alexandria overnight on one of the hottest days of the year and joined state and local staff from the Health Department and Alcoholic Beverage Control to help constituents who are seeking to open a "cat cafe" and wine bar in Old Town.

Legislative offices have also been helping the Virginia Unemployment Commission triage a previously-unfathomable deluge of unemployment cases. In 2019, 130,000 unemployment claims were made in Virginia. Since March of this year, there have been over one million. My Chief of Staff, Chris Leyen, personally fielded hundreds of the most complicated cases amid scores of other constituent concerns.

I also joined a number of constituents and interest groups to discuss pressing legislative mat-

ters. Along with some Delegates, I gave a report on criminal justice reforms to Social Action Linking Together (SALT) including discussing my work to ban private prisons and the damaging practice of solitary confinement in Virginia.

I am working with a constituent and Alexandria Commonwealth's Attorney Bryan Porter to draft enabling legislation for a new non-profit which would serve as an advocate for inmates within the prison system. The organization would increase oversight of issues from healthcare and safety to access to healthy food.

In late July, I joined Virginia First Lady Pam Northam at the Torpedo Factory for a news conference announcing \$860,000 in funding for Virginia Tourism projects, including the Duke Street Black History Trail.

The next day I joined the governor in Richmond as he signed The Virginia Values Act, my legislation to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations based on sexual orientation or gender identity, and to expand protections for all protected classes in public accommodations.

In addition to these projects, my office continues to prepare for the special session, keeping our nose to the grindstone reviewing edits to the biennial budget, drafting legislation, and reviewing bills as they are introduced. We are also here to take up your concerns, serve as a liaison with state agencies, and listen to your thoughts on upcoming legislation.

It is my continued honor to serve the citizens of the 30th District.

The
Arlington
Connection

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FROM PAGE 3

Outreach event on Wednesday, Aug. 26 from 3 - 4:30 p.m. The event will provide an opportunity for local small businesses to learn about the first phase of Amazon's Arlington HQ development, upcoming bidding opportunities, and how they can seek to become a partner on the Met Park Project. There will be a host of subcontracting opportunities available for bidding in the coming months, and this event will assist interested small businesses in pursuing inclusion in this exciting project. Visit the website: www.alexandriasbdc.org

THURSDAY/AUG. 27
Fall Course Preview. 9:30-11:30 a.m. Encore Learning -- Virtual,

2110 Washington Blvd., Arlington. Join the Fall 2020 Course Preview. They'll give a brief overview of the organization, then the instructors will share information about their upcoming courses. Visit the website: <https://encorelearning.net/join-us-august-27-2020-virtual-fall-course-preview/>.

THURSDAY/AUG. 27
History Trivia Challenge. 7-9:30 p.m. Online via Zoom. Presented by the Arlington Historical Society. Think you know local history? Join us for an evening to put your knowledge to the test. Win prizes! Win boasting rights and applause! Even enjoy a historic cocktail recipe as if you were in a bar trivia game! Register for Zoom meeting access by August 26. Visit the website: <https://arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org/events>

TELL ARLINGTON' STORY OF THE PANDEMIC

Arlington Public Library announces the COVID-19 Archives project, designed to create a comprehensive picture of Arlington during an extraordinary period in our history. The Center for Local History (CLH) seeks donations of journals, photos, and objects to help document this time of difficulty and struggle, but also of resilience and hope. Who can submit: Individuals, local businesses, government agencies, schools, health care agencies, civic associations, and other community organizations. Donations may include anything that illustrates how Arlington life has been affected and altered by the pandemic. Examples include: photographs of your neighborhood, including signs or temporary artwork; personal papers such as diaries, journals,

notes, lists or school lesson plans; meeting notes from civic associations, etc., on how to support neighbors; revised restaurant menus for pick-up, notification of special shopping hours.

AFAC NEEDS FOOD DONATIONS

The Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) needs food items to support families during this critical time. Food can be dropped off at the corner of 4th and Oakland Streets in Ashton Heights by the Little Free Library. The most needed foods are: canned tuna and chicken, canned soups, canned vegetables, canned tomatoes and peanut butter.



Cooking for Their Own Wedding Leads to Restaurant, Catering

Finding the BBQ way in the pandemic with summer supper series and more.

By SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Joe “Hogmaster” Newman picks up a glistening pink crawfish from a pile of crawfish and snaps off the head. “Look at that. That crawfish came out. It means it is cooked perfectly.” Newman is the owner of Sloppy Mama’s Barbeque on Lee Highway.

Since the coronavirus closed down his indoor dining in March Newman has become inventive by adding featured items to his regular barbeque menu which includes brisket, turkey and ribs, beans and coleslaw. His summer supper series each Thursday night during August features a different menu each time “and gives regular customers a change. And we like doing it because it is different and fun for us.” Tonight is a crawfish boil and next Thursday is steak special followed by a crab feast. “We sold out with 38 of our crawfish suppers tonight.”

Newman and his wife Mandy had been experimenting with barbecue since their wedding 11 years ago when they catered their own wedding with a pig pickin.’ “We wanted good food and we didn’t want to pay \$55 a head.” Then people started asking them to do a pig pickin’ for them and it grew into a food stall at Union Market and Ballston and a local food truck in 2019. Finally they opened their own restaurant on Lee high-

way on July 4, 2019. And the pandemic hit.

“We closed our restaurant before everyone else. We thought our daughter was sick and by Saturday March 14 we all had the sniffles, and then by Monday her cough was worse. We couldn’t find a place to get her tested and much was still unknown so we quarantined for 6 weeks.” He said by closing they could figure out what to do. “You can’t both operate and figure out what to do at the same time. We went into emergency mode.” He said they knew Federal assistance would be coming so they concentrated full time on what to do. “We were focused on being first in line. Our application was number 54,000 for the Economic Injury Disaster Loans of three million applications nationwide.” He said although they also got a government Paycheck Protection Program loan, the way it worked out it helped the business just a little.

By the weekend of May 17 they felt they could reopen safely for curbside delivery. “We couldn’t stay closed until the pandemic was over. There was no end in sight.” They opened up with a limited menu in the height of the supply chain disruption. And the brisket, their most popular item, was priced sky high by the supplier.

Then on July 5, a year after their opening, the day was super hot, and there were power surges all day. They decided to close



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Joe Newman pulls the tail off a crawfish boiled in a 20-gallon pot of water with potatoes and corn and his own “happy sprinkles” BBQ rub. “It’s all about grinding your own spices, and the ratio makes it what it is.”

early at 5 p.m. because the electricity would turn off just as they would get everything going again. But at 4:58 p.m. they smelled smoke and called 911. The firemen arrived “with their thermal sensors out” but couldn’t locate a fire despite the enveloping smoke.

Turns out their HVAC had caught on fire on the roof. Sloppy Mamas shut down for a week.

Gradually they started to expand once they got going again. Neuman says they reached out to the community to ask, “what does the community need.” The answer was family meal kits such as the most popular Number 2, with pulled pork, brisket, ribs, mac and cheese and beans for four. Just last week he added breakfast biscuits, which he hasn’t advertised heavily yet. “We had to be sure we could standardize the biscuit making. We make all of our food from scratch — all the sauces, rubs and sides.”

Newman says their restaurant revenue is currently down about 10 percent due to the pandemic but closure of their two food court stalls and catering has led to their overall business being down by 60 percent.

But he and Mandy continue to look forward. “We plan to open up outdoor dining once we have the permits and should have our full ABC license by then.”

He says if he had to choose one item from the menu to eat himself it would probably be the brisket but “I eat here every day. Sometimes I want sausage and if I want to go lighter, I have the turkey.” He says growing up in southern Virginia, every family occasion called for a pig pickin.’ Now they have one every day.

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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg

Distance Learning for Children with ADHD

Decreasing stress and increasing success in a virtual classroom.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Voncia Hartley and her 10-year old son Kelvin are dreading the first day of school this year. Remote learning means that this Alexandria mother of three will not only oversee the education of her children, she will also have to help Kelvin stay focused and organized. He has attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

"When we changed to online learning last spring, I almost felt like I needed to duct tape him to the chair so that he could stay still long enough to complete his assignments," said Hartley. "We both shed a lot of tears and did a lot of screaming."

While home-schooling or managing distance learning can be challenging for many parents, for those with children who have ADHD, it poses more complex demands. In addition to attending virtual classes and completing assignments, students with ADHD might need help locating lost pencils, notebooks or other supplies, keeping track of and completing homework or staying focused and away from video games during the school day.

"ADHD is a brain disorder that includes difficulty maintaining focus, hasty actions, and excessive body movements that interfere with daily functioning," said Jerome Short, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychology at George Mason University. "It includes a pattern of inattention, impulsivity,



Keeping children focused and away from distractions like video games can be challenging for parents of those with ADHD.

ty, and hyperactivity [and] affects about five to seven percent of children."

Students with ADHD often need latitude with regard to the pace and method at which they learn. For example, children might need to sit in a rocking chair or on an exercise ball while doing schoolwork.

"Homeschooling kids with ADHD can actually have its benefits," said Carol Barnaby, LCSW-C, a therapist in Bethesda, Md. "ADHD kids often do better with being able to have more freedom and flexibility in their schedules. They can have movement breaks when they need them and can modify their environments."

Parents can make distance learning less stressful by creating a schedule and helping their child to follow it each school day. Recreating classroom rituals like holding morning meetings with children to discuss the day ahead can create the structure that those with ADHD need.

"Parents can help by putting out a consistent schedule for the kids to work around [and] helping kids make a plan for their day to complete work," said Barnaby. "Finding a distraction free working space;

using a computer that doesn't have distracting apps to lure kids away from work. If that isn't possible using a website blocker during school hours."

Breaking down that schedule into manageable chunks and knowing how long a child can work on a particular task before needing a break can decrease anxiety and create a supportive environment. Once that is determined, Barnaby suggests "setting a kitchen timer so kids are aware of when break time happens. ... This helps them to work on beating the buzzer. If your child becomes stressed then take a break. They can come back to the work when they feel better."

For students with ADHD, sitting at a desk for long periods of time can be grueling, so Barnaby advises parents to build physical activity into the day and adjust their expectations about their child's learning for the coming school year.

"Mostly, remember that even if your child isn't performing great during virtual schooling, things will be okay," she said. "Kids are resilient. Many kids have missed school because of family crises in the past and have done fine catching up to their peers."

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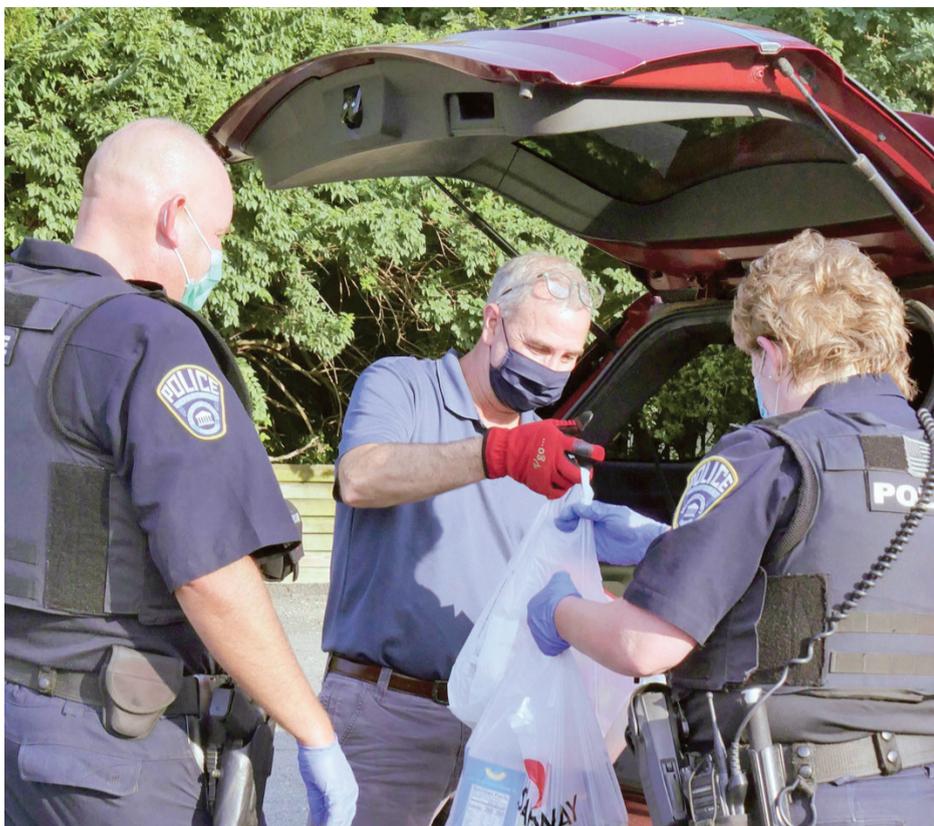


PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Corporal Mike Lennon and Corporal Beth Lennon unload a trunk full of food donations wedged in between the fishing gear.

6,509 Pounds Fills the Cruisers to Overflowing

AFAC says need is greater than usual during pandemic.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

“Customers are comin’.” Corporal Mike Lennon urges the cars to move forward in the Westover Baptist Church parking lot on August 11. As the cars keep streaming in, “We’ve got to get ‘em up here so there isn’t a backup onto Washington Blvd.”

Anne Smith opens the trunk of her shiny Acura. “It is loaded with plastic bags full of ‘everything I could find; if I would eat it, I bought it.’” It took both Sgt. Tom Rakowski and Detective Shawn Blow of the Arlington County Police Department to unload the bags for Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) and carry them to the police pick-up truck. Drivers call out the window, “Thanks for what you’re doing.”

The police held a “Fill the Cruiser” food donation event at three locations including the Westover Baptist Church Parking lot at Patrick Henry, the Giant on S. Glebe and Courthouse headquarters from 6-8 p.m. on Tuesday evening to restock the AFAC food supplies.

Charles Meng, Executive Director and CEO of AFAC, says, “When the pandemic started in mid-March food donations dropped to almost nothing — the grocery stores were dealing with folks stocking up and individuals were holding food.

“But,” he continues, “Individual donations quickly picked up when folks found out we needed help, and as the grocery stores have restocked, they have returned to donating food to us.” Meng says they are almost back to normal but the number of families served is up so the need is great. The number of families served in July averaged 2,283 each week. This number includes some families who come more than once each week. This translates into 3,198 families who come at least once during a month including 5,743 individuals.

Only 15 minutes have passed. The police pick-up truck is already getting full. “Oh wow, wow; give me a hand over here.” Colonel Beth Lennon says, “Is your cruiser empty? Pull it over here.” They discuss what to do when the cruiser is full, too.

Some people pop open the car trunk to deliver their contributions contact free while others, with or without masks, roll down a car window to hand over their purchases. “People seem to be looking for the opportunity to give.” Two cases of Healthy Choice chicken with rice soup get stacked beside ten boxes of Crispy Oats and a bag of rice. One man pulls up in his metallic red Ford and walks around to open his trunk full of cans wedged in between his fishing gear. He jokes he needs it handy at all times.

AFAC had requested high priority items including low sugar cereals, tuna and low salt vegetables and beans. AFAC is a non-profit organization that serves low-income families in Arlington by providing supplemental groceries.

When the evening was over, ACPD had collected 6,509 pounds of food at the three locations.

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Narratively Speaking



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

After 11 years and almost exactly six months since being diagnosed with stage IV, non small cell lung cancer, the party is apparently over. Now we're on to the after-party: stage IV, papillary thyroid cancer, the more aggressive version, the one that doesn't respond to the radioiodine therapy/nuclear medicine treatment that yours truly recently completed. What seems to be semi clear, at least according to my endocrinologist, is that I never had non small lung cancer, but rather a very slow growing thyroid cancer. So slow in fact that it wasn't until approximately two years ago, nine years or so after my initial diagnosis, that the mass began to take shape in my neck; my "Adam's Apple tumor" as I called it, as some of you regular readers may recall. In effect, I was thyroid-cancer-treatment-free for nine years until it presented.

And it was during these years that I became my oncologist's "third miracle" a lung cancer patient who didn't succumb to his disease. Originally given a "13 month to two year" prognosis by my oncologist, I was not expected to live. I can still recall when my oncologist responded to Team Lourie's question about what percentage of lung cancer patients live beyond two years: Less than two percent. Could you be the one? Sure." I didn't realize then that his comments were to be taken literally. Yet here I am, a testament to modern medicine or perhaps an anomaly of random proportions. Throughout these years, my oncologist would often bring his students in to see the "amazing Mr. Lourie" ("Kreskin" has nothing on me.) I wasn't exactly the Energizer Bunny, but neither was I/am I chopped liver.

But today's phone call with my endocrinologist changes my story/narrative and puts an end to my previous stature. No longer will I be someone who survived lung cancer, rather I'll be someone who survived "the friendly cancer," as papillary thyroid cancer is anecdotally described. And not that I'll take any of it personally, but I will have to make it part of my resume, if you know what I mean? So I'm not special or lucky or blessed. It simply may be that I was misdiagnosed and survived in spite of my oncologist's efforts to do no harm, even if he was treating a non-existent cancer.

Though from what I heard today, I am hardly out of the woods. In fact, it appears as if I'm in real danger. The type of papillary thyroid cancer that is confirmed that I now have, the type that doesn't respond to radioiodine therapy has been characterized as "aggressive" and "incurable." Treatable of course, but with a list of potential side effects that is hardly endearing to me and doesn't exactly bring joie to my vivre. Quite the opposite if you'll allow me an honest expression of my apprehension treating forward.

That being said, right now, those effects are on paper, they're not yet on my person. And until that happens, I will proceed with caution but remain cautiously optimistic. As my oncologist answered in reply to our general question about which cancer is better to have, non small cell lung or papillary thyroid? "Thyroid cancer is better," he said. That's something, I suppose. And even though I can't take it to the bank and invest it in my future, I'd like to think that I'll be able to take it - in pill form as it happens. After all, who has more experience living with the ups and downs and all-arounds - and the side effects that cancer treatment can produce, than yours truly? The patient who survived stage IV non small cell lung cancer for 11 and 1/2 years only to find out that it may have been untreated thyroid cancer all along.

On balance, I suppose it's a good thing that we finally got a more definitive diagnosis. I just hope we haven't totally missed the party because I'm not at all certain that I'll be able to attend next year.

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

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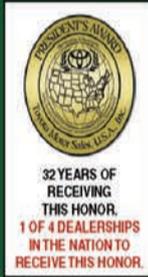
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