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Two couples enjoy a socially-distanced Thursday evening meal in front of Zamarod. "We love this kind of food, and we love the owner," said Sue Holberger (back right).

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News

Reforming the Police

Lawmakers consider sweeping set of proposals to change policing in Virginia.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

Only a few hours into a special session of the General Assembly earlier this week, members of a Senate panel passed a sweeping bill on policing reform that does everything from banning no-knock warrants and limiting chokeholds to creating use-of-force standards and requiring de-escalation training.

The special session was called partially in reaction to the killing of an unarmed Black man by a white police officer in Minnesota, which set off protests across the country against police brutality. Now lawmakers in Richmond are poised to pass landmark legislation that has the support of associations representing police chiefs and sheriff's offices across Virginia.

"It raises the bar for professionalism in the state," said Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36), who is leading the criminal-justice reform effort in the Senate. "And I think that's why they supported all this."

The way Virginia law currently works, officers can resign in the middle of a decertification process as a way to terminate the proceeding. Not only does that undermine accountability for bad cops, it also opens the door for them to get new jobs at other police departments that don't have access to disciplinary records outlining their actions. Police agencies in Virginia say launching a decertification process is difficult, and the rules for how they work allow bad cops to slip through the cracks.

"If they couldn't perform up to standards in my agency, they shouldn't be allowed to work at another agency doing the same job," said Herndon Police Chief Maggie DeBoard, a vice president of the Virginia Chiefs of Police Association who worked with senators to craft the legislation.

"We would conduct the investigation to sustain a finding, which would then allow the state to decertify that officer so that they could not work anywhere in the

"It raises the bar for professionalism in the state."

— Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36)



Police agencies in Virginia want to make it more difficult for bad cops to move from department to department without facing consequences for bad behavior.

state as a sworn law-enforcement officer."

THE POLICING REFORM BILL now heads to the Senate Finance Committee, where lawmakers will determine if they can find the money to pay for the new hearing officers that will be needed at the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services to handle the increase in decertification proceedings.

The Senate bill also requires the department to create a new code of conduct for police, and the department will need to dedicate staffers to develop the code over the next two years.

"We understand it's a lot, but we also believe that this is what's necessary in order to get the transformational change that we've all been seeking," said Kofi Annan,

former president of the Fairfax NAACP and founder of an advocacy group known as The Activated People. "People have been marching

through the streets for months literally risking their lives, and they didn't do it in order to just get one piecemeal kind of bill."

House members are taking a different approach to policing reform, splitting the issue into its component parts that can be debated in-



Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36) is overseeing the Senate's package of criminal justice reform bills.

dividually rather than as part of an omnibus package. One of the advantages of the Senate's approach is that the omnibus bill has the support of law enforcement agencies because it has several provisions that they've been asking for on decertification, among other things. But if the prohibition on no-knock warrants is separated from the rest of the bill, as the House plans to do next week, it might be opposed by police agencies who feel no-knock warrants are required in some circumstances.

"You don't throw 100 bills into one omnibus bill. We're not going to do that. I think that's ridiculous," said Del. Mark Levine (D-

45). "We're going to have many of the same reforms, but we're going to have it in 25 bills or maybe 30 bills."

IN THE WEEKS leading up to the special session, senators have been working with law enforcement agencies for peace in the valley. Language banning chokeholds was softened to allow them in certain life-threatening situations. Provisions requiring judges to sign off on nighttime search warrants allows magistrates to approve them if judges aren't available. And a ban on military equipment was softened to allow for police agencies to receive some items through

the Pentagon's 1033 Program. Law enforcement agencies say they should be able to receive some of the military surplus items available through the program, including camouflage uniforms.

"Sheriffs do use that for rescue and protection," said John Jones, executive director of the Virginia Sheriffs' Association. "As far as we're concerned, you fixed the concerns we had about military equipment."

Senators also worked with law enforcement agencies to address their concerns on data collection. The compromise language requires the collection of information about the race and ethnicity of drivers who are stopped and searched. But it also provides some flexibility for departments to avoid detailing a list of everyone they questioned at a checkpoint.

The bill that got out of the Senate Judiciary Committee also includes a way for officers to shield statements they make during some internal investigations from prosecutors.

"We should always work well with our commonwealth's attorneys in the best interest in criminal justice," said Ashland Police Chief Douglas Goodman, who worked with senators to craft the legislation. "But we're just concerned about statements officers may provide that are compelled."

QUALIFIED IMMUNITY may end up being a sticking point between the House and the Senate as the special session moves forward. House members say they want to move forward with finding a way for police officers to be sued individually, which is currently prohibited under a legal doctrine that has its roots in English common law.

Senators did not include the issue of qualified immunity in their policing reform bill, and Gov. Ralph Northam did not include the issue in his agenda for the special session.

"You're less likely to misbehave if you know there's going to be adverse consequences to you if you misbehave," said Victor Glasberg, attorney in Alexandria.

"If there's all the reason in the world to believe that if somebody hauls you into court you're going to get off on qualified immunity, it just makes it easier for you to misbehave."

PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/THE CONNECTION

VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Demand for Food Assistance Doubled, Financial Assistance Skyrocketing

Leaders of the Share of McLean say that widespread unemployment is driving demand for their services to unprecedented levels.

BY LAURA GERSONY
THE CONNECTION

Share of McLean is seeing twice its usual demand for food assistance, and several times its usual demand for emergency financial assistance, as the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to exact a heavy toll on the country's most vulnerable populations.

Nicki Watts, Office Manager and Co-Chair of the Food and Clothing Program, told The Connection that Share is now serving between 100 and 130 clients per week, most of whom are families. Asked how it was able to meet the surge in demand, Watts' answer was simple: the generosity of its donor and volunteer base.

"We go out on our Facebook page, and our communications networks, and people come through for us," she said. "It's an amazing community."

The volunteer-run and community-funded nonprofit has been conducting their twice-weekly food distribution program with socially distant, "grab-and-go" protocols since mid-March. Rather than having clients walk through the food pantry per usual, Share volunteers now bring allotments of food and supplies to clients' cars.

Like the rest of Share's stockpiles, each allotment of food consists entirely of donations. Clients receive meat donated by the local Walmart; desserts and bread donated by Giant; bagels donated by the Chesapeake Bagel Bakery in McLean; and bread donated by Balducci's. The boxes also include miscellaneous materials such as cooking oil, hygiene products, and cleaning supplies, which often come from individual donors, Watts said.

However, though Share is reaching more clients than ever, it is also taking extra outreach measures to reach populations that are less accessible due to the pandemic. Watts said that Share has started delivering food to its senior clients and others unable to leave home.

"I deliver the boxes to them, so that they don't have to leave [home] if they don't want to," Watts said. "We have helped some folks out that just couldn't come in."

THE DEMAND for Share's Family Assistance Program, the nonprofit



Grab-and-go food containers await distribution on Wednesday morning. Share volunteers now carry boxes to clients' cars to maintain social distance on the twice-weekly distribution days.

To contact Share

Share of McLean Food Pantry and Clothing Room
McLean Baptist Church
1367 Chain Bridge Road, McLean, VA 22101
(703)229-1414
info@shareofmclean.org
www.shareofmclean.org

its emergency financial assistance fund, has also soared in recent months. Carol Mournighan, Family Assistance Coordinator at Share, told The Connection that the fund's budget prior to the coronavirus was \$12,000 to \$15,000 a month, and it was upwards of \$100,000 in both May and June.

Share's costs have been offset by \$200,000 in federal funding provided by the CARES Act passed by Congress in March 2020. But even these funds are starting to run out, Mournighan said.

"We are about three-quarters of the way through our [funding]," Mournighan said. "We expect, once this CARES money runs out, we will be hit again with the high numbers." While families request financial assistance for a wide range of reasons—medical bills, rent, health care needs among them, according to Watts—Mournighan identified widespread unemployment as the underlying cause of this rise in demand.

"These are the people whose jobs were lost first...People just don't have the reserves," she said. "They're busy trying to make sure their kids get school supplies, that

their kids go to college. They're working like crazy just to make ends meet."

In addition to its food pantry and Family Assistance fund, Share also operates a school supplies distribution program. Share volunteer Sherry Heile said that the school supplies program has seen an uptick in demand as well, as it is expected to serve upwards of 240 students this year.

The program is tailoring each school supply kit to suit the needs of at-home learning, outfitting each with earbuds or headphones for remote education, and it is reconditioning used laptops for families with limited computer access. It is also gathering extra school supplies in their storage area in anticipation of a possible return to in-person learning later this year.

According to Share's website, the organization's operations require more than 1,000 volunteer hours per month.

VOLUNTEER Carol Sanders, who is involved with several local food pantries, encouraged community members to get involved with



A sign in front of Share's headquarters at McLean Baptist Church explains the new food distribution protocols, which minimize contact between clients and volunteers.

Share, noting that they also offer volunteer "homework" for people who want to help but are reluctant to leave home.

"You could do stuff at home, you could go and shop. There's just a lot of different ways you can fit it into your money means, or your time means, or however you feel comfortable," Sanders said.

Heile agreed.

"We're very lucky; Share as a community has a very strong volunteer base. We could not do what we do without people," she said. "A lot of people."



PATRICK KILLORAN VIA THE ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH FACEBOOK PAGE.

Father David Lucey preaching to a virtual audience from the altar at St. Francis on Sunday, July 12. The staff at St. Francis has been holding remote services since mid-March, with help from their “tech/communications” assistant Patrick Killoran.



Pastor Hank Langknecht of Christ the King Lutheran Church live streams a daily devotional on the church’s Facebook page every morning; he has posted more than 100 since mid-March. Each devotional highlights an author who was born or died on that date, a relevant biblical text, and a closing prayer.



PHOTOS FROM FACEBOOK PAGE OF CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH
Pastor Hank Langknecht and Shirla Langknecht sing together in a live-streamed service on Easter Sunday. Ms. Langknecht sang the congregation’s parts in the hymns to help viewers follow along.

‘God Will Be Present However We Gather’

Religious organizations find community, despite distancing.

BY LAURA GERSONY
THE CONNECTION

To Pastor Hank Langknecht of Christ the King Lutheran Church, the pandemic has meant more than just working from home. It has meant preaching to a “green dot” on his iPad, rather than to an in-person congregation; conducting confirmation programs over Zoom; and, at its most distressing, comforting grieving parishioners from a painful six feet away.

Religious communities across Great Falls are grappling with the pandemic’s changes to their spiritual practice—leaving many leaders wondering how to foster community in a time of physical isolation.

Some are finding connections in unexpected nooks of their remote practice. Pastor Langknecht has started a daily devotional morning podcast, which he streams from the church’s Facebook page, where community bonding has found a new locus: the comments section.

“There’s lots of back-and-forth and conversations going on there,” he said. “I’m leading worship, so I’m not sitting right in front of the screen, but there’s a very active community.”

Similarly, Reverend David Lucey of St. Francis Episcopal Church found that Zoom “breakout rooms,” in which participants of a Zoom meeting are subdivided into smaller videoconferences, have prompted parishioners to befriend others they ordinarily may not have.

“During virtual coffee hour, we break out into breakout rooms, and everybody says hello,” he said. “It has actually been joyous to watch people get to know each other.”

The remote setting may have even been conducive to community growth at St. Francis on Easter, when the church’s Zoom meeting drew a crowd even larger than their typical turnout.

“It was a really overflowing crowd, and I didn’t have to worry about where to seat them!” Lucey

said.

Kimiya Sprengart, a member of the Great Falls Baha’i local spiritual assembly, said that the virtual setting has allowed the community’s outreach to reach a wider audience, causing it to grow both in terms of size and connectedness.

“It’s forced our community to be flexible in the ways that we invite people—for example, posting on Nextdoor...So, the level of participation has stayed the same or increased,” she said. “We haven’t

SEE FAITH, PAGE 7

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NEWS



PHOTO BY LAURA GERSONY/THE CONNECTION

Dor Niaz, owner of Zamarod, thanks his customers for supporting the restaurant during the pandemic. "I want to thank all of you in a way that words cannot tell," he said.

Zamarod Needs a Spark

Afghan restaurant is struggling in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic and needs its customers' support.

WHERE AND WHEN

Zamarod Afghan Restaurant
10123 Colvin Run Rd, Great Falls, VA 22066
Hours: Weekdays 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., 5-10 p.m.; Saturday 5-10 p.m.; Sunday 5-8 p.m.;
703-757-9300; zamarodafghancuisine.com

"We need a spark," he said. "We're not a chain. If we go down, this place is going down, the household goes down, the kids go down, without college or anything else. We have to do whatever it takes to stay afloat."

Niaz immigrated to the US as a teen in 1980, fleeing the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. His family came to the United States in search of opportunity and stability, "knowing that this is the best there is."

It was after working at Giant Foods for several years that Niaz decided to open his first restaurant in Northern Virginia. Heartened by its success, he opened a second restaurant in Vienna, and another in Herndon, both of which also succeeded, he said. Then, after working as an interpreter for the Department of Defense following the September 11th attacks, he opened Zamarod: its name the Dari word for "emerald."

BY LAURA GERSONY
THE CONNECTION

Second in a series on Great Falls restaurants in a pandemic time.

Asked how his business was faring during the pandemic, Dor Niaz, owner of Zamarod Afghan Restaurant, did not mince words: "painful, painful, and painful."

Niaz told The Connection that the restaurant has struggled to get "on the map" since it was established in 2014. But this year, after it finally achieved a higher profile, the pandemic dealt the restaurant a blow that Niaz is not sure Zamarod can withstand.

SEE ZAMAROD, PAGE 11



Two couples enjoy a socially-distanced Thursday evening meal in front of Zamarod. "We love this kind of food, and we love the owner," said Sue Holberger (back right).

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NEWS

Faith Communities Adapting to 'New Normal'

FROM PAGE 5

really seen anyone in person, but we do feel closer in a way, because it's a lot easier to participate from your own home."

SINCE THE PANDEMIC HIT, the Baha'i community has started doing weekly devotional gatherings, in which members congregate for communal prayer and meditation, over Zoom. These meetings have been filling a social need in many practitioners' lives, she said.

"The devotional gatherings are thriving," she said. "People are really seeking another way to connect with other people, and one of the best ways to do it is through sharing writings, and poetry, and song, and praying together," Sprengart said.

Still, operating remotely has its challenges. Rev. Lucey said that the virtual setting requires "more intimacy" in each of his sermons.

"The [virtual] medium lends itself to almost being personal, as opposed to the usual preaching moment, where you're standing in front of a group of people. It's physical presence, yes, and yet it doesn't require the same level of personal attention to each person that you think you're talking to," he said.

Some elements of the church's usual spiritual life are lost in translation, he said, but not all.

"I have parishioners who are hungry for communion, and this is the longest I've gone, since I started taking communion, to be without it," he said. "I'm hungry too, and yet I have been fed in many different ways."

Pastor Langknecht said that the lack of an in-person Sunday mass has made it difficult to keep in touch with church members who do not attend remote services.

"Sunday morning, gathering at church, was really central to keeping a community sense about us," he said. "It's not hard to keep the core community together, but it's the second rim of people, who are not as active in community work, that we really don't know where they are or how they're oriented."

In response, Christ the King is taking new measures to maintain connection. The church's leadership council is about to hold its second "every-member check-in," in which it calls all of its member households "just seeing what's up." It also mails materials to congregation members who do not have the computer literacy to attend remote services.

St. Francis has also been making outreach efforts, Rev. Lucey

said, but there are certain scenarios when the closeness of human contact just has no substitute. Four of his congregation's parishioners, or parents of parishioners, have passed away in the past few months, and the requirements of social distancing have been agonizing.

"What goes on at a Christian funeral, is that people connect to each other. They want to embrace, and they want to be close; they receive comfort in their loss," he said. "The kind of saying goodbye that all four of these parishioners would have had is just diminished in many ways."

Also weighing on Rev. Lucey is the need to balance self-preservation with a desire to connect with those around him—a dilemma made even more difficult by his status as a religious leader.

"I want to be there for [my family], and I also want to be there for my parishioners," he said. "This is a very difficult time to negotiate the pastoral sensitivity to being connected and the real issue about putting people in danger."

SEVERAL MONTHS into remote operation, communities have already started adapting to the new normal. Rev. Lucey said that the congregation has modified the Episcopal practice of dismissal for a remote setting: parishioners unmute themselves on Zoom and say their traditional "alleluia" at the end of a service.

The Baha'i community is also growing accustomed to the online format, now using Zoom's "screen-sharing" function to display worship texts during devotionals and Feasts. This is just one of the many silver linings that Sprengart sees in the online format. "It's definitely a difficult time, but I think that it's allowed us to become a lot more creative in the ways that we worship. So it's a blessing in some ways, too," she said.

In some ways, Pastor Langknecht has even found it "energizing" to adapt to the new situation.

"It has been energizing and interesting to figure out how to do all the things you need to do—with feeding the hungry, and being involved in social action, and getting the Christian message out there—under these circumstances," he said. "It's been fun to rise to the challenge."

And, as the months of physical isolation draw on, Rev. Lucey said, his conviction grows stronger that despite the pandemic, "God will be present however we gather."



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Softball players sit in front of a GFL sign during Great Falls' "Drive-Thru" 4th of July celebration this year. From left: Amelia Lochhead, Emma Ryan, Eva Medina, Taylor Schlegel.



The Great Falls Astros celebrate a championship victory in Spring 2019. Back row (from left): Dan Ryan, Trey Donovan, Clay Rossen, Morgan Rossen, Lachen Singh, Ian Byrd, Dominic Gaudiano, Mike Byrd. Front row (from left: Connor Sarin, Tyson Armah, Emma Ryan, Owen Conrad, Jude Miller.

GREAT FALLS LITTLE LEAGUE FACEBOOK PAGE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FRANCINE ROSSEN

Great Falls Little League Gears Up For Gameplay

The baseball and softball league is set to proceed with practices and games later this month.

BY LAURA GERSONY
THE CONNECTION

When Julie Ryan broke the news to her children, they were devastated.

The Great Falls Little League's spring season had just been cancelled, meaning that one of her sons would have to miss his very last season in GFL—a season when interest in baseball and softball was surging due to the Washington Nationals' World Series win earlier in the year.

"It was a serious disappointment," said Ryan, the league's Communication Director.

But now, adopting protocols to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, GFL is gearing up to start its fall season later this month, with games beginning in early September.

The league's plans for reopening are laid out in its recently released COVID-19 Return To Play guidelines, which Ryan said are modeled after guidance from public health experts and other youth leagues across the country which have already returned to play.

"We've spent the past several months monitoring how youth sports are returning to play in local areas as well as nationally," Ryan said. "Using all of that information, plus the best practices that we've been able to pull together, we felt like it was the right time to reopen."

The resumption of youth sports that involve only incidental contact between players has been permitted since Fairfax County entered Phase 2 of the "Forward Virginia" plan on June 12.

THE NEW GUIDELINES require players, coaches, and their family members to take their temperatures and otherwise screen themselves for symptoms for COVID-19 prior to attending any league event.

Additionally, rather than using dugouts as



GFL Morgan Rossen holds his Little League championship trophy in Spring 2019.

Great Falls Little League Softball player Amelia Lochhead steps into the batter's box.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KRISTIN LOCHHEAD

in normal seasons, the guidelines mandate that a field's bleachers be used as an extended "player area," where each player will be designated their individual zone. Spectators must bring their own seats and are not permitted on the bleachers.

The guidelines require players to wear masks while in transit on or off the field, and they encourage mask-wearing "whenever they can be safely and effectively worn." However, players are not required to wear masks while in their designated zone in the extended dugout, or during gameplay.

This is consistent with guidance from public health officials, Ryan said, as baseball is considered an "incidental contact" sport.

The home plate umpire will call balls and strikes from behind the pitcher's mound, rather than behind the catcher per usual, to reduce crowdedness behind home plate during at-bats. There are currently no guidelines pertaining to the closeness of the batter and catcher.

Each team will also have a designated "COVID coach" responsible for ensuring that protocols are followed. Kristin Lochhead,

who is planning to coach her son's t-ball team this season along with her husband, said that she plans to recruit other team parents to enforce COVID safety precautions.

"I think that parents will be more than willing to step up and help be the safety police, so that my husband and I can focus on the baseball piece," she said. "I think it's gonna work, it's just gonna take a little bit more people and a little bit more mindfulness than in the past."

Lochhead's two oldest children have continued to play travel baseball and softball all summer, taking similar precautions to GFL, and their leagues had no incidents involving COVID-19. "That's given us a lot of comfort that Little League can do it, too," she said, which has made the decision for her family to return to play a "no-brainer."

Mike Byrd, a coach and parent of two players in the league, told The Connection that the feeling of community within GFL will motivate its community members to abide by the guidelines out of mutual regard for each others' well-being.

"We are all neighbors and friends. All the kids I coach, I know them, and I know their mothers and fathers. We're genuinely a community," he said. "It's easier to be careful around your fellow community members, because you don't want to get anybody sick."

IN THE MEANTIME, though she is preparing for curveballs this season, Ryan remains cautiously optimistic for the months to come.

"We are excited to get back out on the field, we are ready, and the protocols are going to be refined as necessary," she said. "We're not going to stop paying attention to what's going on in the local area, and any guidance that comes forward from expert-level organizations."

SENIOR LIVING

For Seniors, Love Is Not Cancelled

This region is a prime location for meeting and dating other singles of all ages safely.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Even during the current coronavirus pandemic, the need for healthy human emotions like intimacy has not disappeared, particularly for seniors.

The lack of positive social connections, which is linked to physical and mental illnesses, has increased during COVID. In fact, 43 percent of adults aged 60 or older, report feeling lonely, according to a study by the National Academy of Sciences pandemic, particularly by those who are widowed or divorced.

While seniors are often reluctant to use online dating services, this year's pandemic has made finding meaningful companionship a priority, says Barbie Adler, Founder and President of Selective Search, a matchmaking firm.

"The restrictions and safety precautions put in place by the pandemic has allowed relationships to evolve at a slower pace," Adler said, a pace older people are more likely to be comfortable with. "Our couples are forming strong bonds over Zoom wine tastings, book discussions, sharing past travel mementos and planning future adventures, and venturing out for picnics in the park," she said.

"Without overlooked schedules and quick dinner reservations, clients are recognizing their own desire to connect, and are enjoying the process of getting to know someone. The first date-second date-third date playbook is no longer obvious."

"Moving toward intimate connection requires trust, the ability to be vulnerable, and the courage to try something new. However, during a pandemic, these are the very things that we are encouraged not to do," said Carolyn Lorente, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at Northern Virginia Community College, Associate Psychologist at Outpatient Addictions Services in Montgomery County, Md. and a private practitioner.

The need for romantic and even sexual relationships persist during COVID, says therapist and former geriatric nurse Barbara Rubenstein, LCSW-C. "Many people might be surprised to know that 57 percent of adults over the age of 60 are sexually active," she said. "Obviously chronic illnesses, which increase as a person gets older, can affect that figure, but I would say that sex, when practiced safely, will have a positive affect on the mental and possibly physical health of seniors."

Older adults have a higher risk of serious COVID-19 complications, and safety measures are critical. But wearing a mask and maintaining a 6-foot distance is a

likely obstacle to romance at a certain point.

"COVID-19 is not a sexually transmitted disease, [but] it is spread through respiratory droplets when someone with the virus coughs, sneezes or talks," said Dr. Benjamin Schwartz, M.D., Division Director of Epidemiology & Population Health for the Fairfax County Health Department. "It can be spread by touching someone's eyes, nose and mouth."

While researchers at the Mayo Clinic encourage abstinence among seniors who are a greater risk for a serious illness because of pre-existing medical conditions, Lorente believes in creating a healthy balance.

"Many folks, particularly those who live alone and have been practicing physical distancing as encouraged by the CDC, are experiencing feelings of depression, isolation, and cheerlessness," she said. "Sure, staying in your own bubble in your house is the best way to protect yourself from the virus, but the negative impact of [depression and isolation] is real too."

It's possible to maintain a romantic and intimate relationship while also maintaining a safe social distance. "Many of my older clients are also quite comfortable using technology such as Zoom and Facetime to connect too," said Lorente. "I've been doing

talks over Zoom where people can attend and meet and are way more intimate than let's say a big lecture hall. Interestingly, we may see a move toward longer courtships in order to build trust, which may be really fun." In fact, those video conferencing platforms allow partners to dress up and go on virtual dates, watch movies or listen to music together. "I have encouraged my clients that physical distancing is not social distancing," said Lorente.

"I have a client in her mid-sixties who lives by herself," Lorente said. "Last session I was checking in with her, worried about possible isolation. She sounded energized." The client had just finished playing a game of bocce ball in the morning with her new friend.

A 67-year-old widower who lives in Old Town, met a woman who is divorced and 65. They met on eHarmony, getting together before COVID. Both were looking for someone their own age who was healthy, active, attractive and interested in a relationship. They hike and bike together in Rock Creek Park and Great Falls. They traveled together until COVID, and were supposed to go to Italy this summer. They've been together for a year and divide their time between her place and his, but they do stay together during COVID-19. They say that they couldn't imagine being alone and socially isolated during this period.

"Many people might be surprised to know that 57 percent of adults over the age of 60 are sexually active. I would say that sex, when practiced safely, will have a positive affect on the mental and possibly physical health of seniors."

— Barbara Rubenstein, LCSW-C

"I have encouraged my clients that physical distancing is not social distancing. When it comes to dating, I'm thinking that getting creative in connecting without putting ourselves at too much risk is the way to go."

— Carolyn Lorente, Ph.D, a professor of psychology

Friends of Riverbend Park to Receive Philanthropy Award

The Friends of Riverbend Park (FORB) is being honored by the Fairfax County Park Foundation (FCPF) for its generous support of Riverbend Park programs and projects. The group of dedicated volunteers will receive a 2020 Eakin Philanthropy Award in the Fairfax County Park Authority Friends Group/Park Volunteer Team category at a virtual ceremony in November.

FORB has donated more than \$85,600 through the Park Foundation since 2016 to support a variety of Riverbend Park programs and projects. Its donations have funded valuable forest restoration and environmental field trips to Riverbend Park for the educational enrichment of Title I school students. FORB has paid for numerous summer intern awards and underwrites unfunded needs of Riverbend Park staff and volunteers. FORB has helped purchase much-needed canoes, equipment and interpretive signs that teach and inspire many who retreat to this stunning park located on an isolated bend of the picturesque Potomac River.

The organization formalized

its role by ratifying a Fairfax County Park Authority Friends Group Memorandum of Understanding with the Park Authority Board in 2018.

The FCPF is a charitable organization, which supports the Fairfax County Park Authority. Its Eakin Philanthropy Award, established in 2009, is named in honor of the Eakin family, donors of the first parcels of parkland to the Park Authority more than 50 years ago. The annual award recognizes individuals and organizations whose financial or in-kind contributions have significantly enhanced Fairfax County parks through the Foundation. The impact of Eakin awardee-supported projects has long-term benefit to the community, and visionary contributions create new programs or facilities and provide a creative approach to addressing community needs.

To learn more about the Fairfax County Park Foundation, contact 703-324-8581 or visit the Fairfax County Park Foundation website.

For more information, contact the Public Information Office at 703-324-8662 or at park-mail@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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.

SUMMER CONCERTS ON THE GREEN

The Celebrate Great Falls Foundation announces a schedule of five Summer Concerts on the Green beginning August 30, 2020. Each concert will begin at 6 p.m. on the Village Centre green (in front of the gazebo).

August 30 - The New Thirty;
September 6 - Mike Terpak Blues Explosion;
September 13 - The Oxymorons;
September 20 - The Unfinished;
September 27 - Wes Tucker and the Skilleets.

Celebrate Great Falls Foundation organizers are putting in place several new protocols to help ensure a safe, socially distant evening. After each concert, they will assess whether to proceed with the remaining concerts and implement any needed changes in our protocols. This will be announced on the Monday prior to each concert. The safety and wellness of our bands, volunteers and the Great Falls community is of paramount importance in all of our decisions.

SEPT. 11 CEREMONY CANCELLED

The annual September 11 Ceremony at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial will not be held this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

MCC HOLDS VIRTUAL FINANCE MEETINGS

The McLean Community Center (MCC) Governing Board will use Zoom.us to hold two budget meetings in September. MCC is seeking input and suggestions on the Center's fiscal year 2022 budget from Dranesville Small District 1-A residents. The first meeting, the Finance Committee Meeting of the Whole, will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 8. A second meeting, the Public Hearing on the FY 2022 Budget, will be held virtually at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 23. All meetings of the Governing Board are open to the public; participation in this meeting by the public, MCC Board members and staff, will be virtual only. Call the Center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, or visit the Center's website, www.mcleancenter.org.

PAINT GREAT FALLS PLEIN AIR COMPETITION

The 6th Annual Paint Great Falls: Plein Air Competition sponsored by The Arts of Great Falls will take place Sept. 9-13, 2020. This year they are expanding the borders; participants may paint anywhere in Northern Virginia (location ideas available) starting 5 p.m. Wednesday, September 9 through 3 p.m. Sunday, September 13, "en plein air" (outside) without the assistance of photography. In addition to the daily paintings, there will be a Quick Draw Event in the Great Falls Village Center on Friday, September 11,

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

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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

FUN THINGS TO DO THIS SUMMER

GIRLS WHO MATH

Girls Who Math is a student-run charity started by high schoolers at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. They provide free individual tutoring and group classes to students of all ages. Although initially created as a way to empower girls with interest in STEM, they have opened up their programs to students of all gender identities to encourage all students to keep learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The classes they offer cover a wide variety of STEM topics from computer science to biology, and are held once a week. The one-on-one tutoring is suitable for students with a wide variety of needs. In the time that they have been established, they have helped over 600 students from over 25 different countries. They also often host seminars and information sessions to inform students of competitions, career opportunities, and scholarships. To learn more about Girls Who Math and programs that are currently offered, visit their website at <https://girlswhomath.net/>

ALEXANDRIA DRIVE-IN THEATRE

The Alexandria Drive-In Theatre, presented by Alexandria based businesses ALX Community and The Garden, will kick off on Saturday, Aug. 29. The six-part movie series will run on Saturdays through October 3 and will feature a popular collection of movie classics and family favorites. The drive-in theatre will be located in the Eisenhower section of Alexandria in the parking lot connected to commercial space owned by real estate developer and event partner Stonebridge. The lot can comfortably accommodate up to 215 cars per screening. To help support our food truck vendors who have been hit hard by the pandemic, event organizers have partnered with Curbside Kitchen who will be on-site providing a rotating selection of sweet and savory food truck cuisine from local truckers, such as The Chewish Deli, Gemma Gelato, Capital Chicken & Waffles and Bangkok offering mobile ordering. Movie patrons can also bring their own food.

Alexandria Drive-In Movie Line Up:
Saturday, Aug. 29, 2020-- "Jurassic Park"

Saturday, Sept. 5, 2020 -- "Back to the Future"

Saturday, Sept. 12, 2020 -- "Trolls"

Saturday, Sept. 19, 2020 -- "Field of Dreams"

Saturday, Sept. 26, 2020 -- "ET"

Saturday, Oct. 3, 2020 -- "Mamma Mia"

Website: www.AlexandriaDriveIn.com
Cost: \$30 per car/per screening. No refunds. 100% ticket costs goes to two local Alexandria based charities

DRIVE-IN THEATERS AT WORKHOUSE

The Workhouse Drive-In Movie Theatre is set up with a 40 foot screen on campus and is limited to 75 vehicles at \$30 per vehicle. All tickets will be purchased online and parking location will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Options to purchase a packaged snack box will also be available. Alternatively, movie goers may bring their own snacks or meals purchased from local restaurants. Showtime is 9 p.m. and gates open at 8:15 p.m. At 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Visit the website: www.workhousearts.org.
Thursday, Aug. 27 -- "A League of their Own"

Friday, Aug. 28 -- "Hot Fuzz"

Saturday, Aug. 29 -- "The Dark Crystal"

Sunday, Aug. 30 -- "Moana"

TYSONS CORNER DRIVE-IN MOVIES

Tyson's Corner Center is hosting Drive-In Movie Nights, in partnership with the Hyatt Regency Tysons Corner Center, on the second weekend of each month. Located along Fashion Blvd. between Nordstrom and Bloomingdale's, will open for parking, be sure to bring your ticket. Show starts at 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 12 -- "Mrs. Doubtfire"

Reserve your spot - space is limited. Reservation and movie details are located at <https://www.tysonscornercenter.com/Events>

MOSAIC DEBUTS OUTDOOR DRIVE-IN MOVIES

EDENS Mosaic has launched a new outdoor drive-in movie series this summer. Located on the top level (7) of Market Garage across from Mom's Organic Market and Hyatt House. Check-in is on level 6. Address: 8295 Glass Alley, Fairfax. The films begin at 8 p.m. The lineup includes:

Friday Aug. 28: "Sonic the Hedgehog" at 5:15 p.m.

There is a \$28 fee to reserve a des-

ignated spot in accordance with the new social distancing guidelines. Tickets can be purchased at https://mosaicdistrict.com/events/event/drive-in-at-mosaic/?event_id=8599 Visit www.mosaicdistrict.com.

COLUMBIA PIKE DRIVE-IN

Pull up to the Columbia Pike Drive-In Movie Nights at the Arlington Career Center for some free retro-style family fun. All movies start at sunset (between 8 and 8:30 p.m.) and are shown in English with Spanish subtitles. Space is limited and new protocols are in place to keep everyone safe. Address: 816 S Walter Reed Dr, Arlington, VA 22204. Visit the website: <https://www.columbia-pike.org/movienights/>
Saturday, Aug. 29 -- "Mary Poppins Returns"

SUMMER ENTERTAINMENT SERIES

The Fairfax County Park Authority will livestream 25 free summer concert events featuring a mix of nationally known performers and singer-songwriters. These virtual events provide a new way to enjoy great performances from the safety of your home. To view a livestream concert, go to the Fairfax County Park Authority's Summer Entertainment Series main page at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance, select the date on the calendar for this performance, and click on the links for the livestream video.

Schedule

Saturday, Aug. 27 -- The End of America, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 27 -- Mount Vernon Nights:: Los Texmaniacs, 7:30 p.m.

<cal1>Online Coding Classes for Kids
<cal2>CodeWizardsHQ is offering online after school coding classes for kids and summer coding classes for kids with a structured curriculum that is comprehensive, developmental, challenging, and fun. Students get to code a project in every class. Expect the most fun and effective live, teacher-led coding classes for kids with support, including live office hours and 24/7 access to their proprietary coding platform.

Their teachers take a students-first approach to teaching Python, Java, HTML/CSS, and JavaScript that guarantees students will reach their potential. Visit www.CodeWizardsHQ.com.

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Let us know about an upcoming event

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

NEWS

Reston Hospital Center Achieves Two Healthgrades Excellence Awards™ for Women's Care

Reston Hospital Center is a recipient of the Healthgrades 2020 Labor and Delivery Excellence Award™ and the 2020 Obstetrics and Gynecology Excellence Award™ for the fourth consecutive year.

The Labor and Delivery Excellence Award distinction places Reston Hospital Center in the top five percent of all hospitals evaluated and recognizes the exceptional care of mothers during and after labor and delivery, according to Healthgrades, the leading resource that connects consumers, physicians, and health systems.

"We are delighted to be recognized by Healthgrades again this year," said John Deardorff, president and chief executive officer of Reston Hospital Center and HCA's Northern Virginia Market. "Our care team is committed to providing women in our community with the highest quality of care, close to home. We are also proud to partner with the nation's leading neonatology providers from Children's National Hospital to offer top-tier newborn care. We work hand-in-

hand to be our community's trusted health provider for women and growing families."

"Today, expectant parents are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of hospital quality and understand that it needs to play a factor in selecting where to deliver their baby," said Brad Bowman, MD, chief medical officer, Healthgrades. "The 2020 Labor and Delivery Excellence Award recognizes those hospitals that provide high quality care for mothers during labor and delivery, so parents can have confidence in their decision."

"Our women's care team strives for excellence," said Irene Williford, chief nursing officer of Reston Hospital Center. "We want the best outcomes for all of our patients. Our team of doctors, nurses, and care professionals work collaboratively every day to achieve this goal. This is an exciting recognition of their efforts."

For more information about Reston Hospital Center visit www.restonhospital.com or follow them on Facebook and Instagram.

Zamarod Needs a Spark

FROM PAGE 6

THE RESTAURANT took a few years to build a high profile, Niaz said, but it had in recent years gained traction and a broad base of loyal customers. He views Zamarod as more than just a restaurant: he also sees himself as an "ambassador of food," healing antagonism between the US and Afghanistan.

"When you put the name of a nation on your restaurant, the load on your shoulders is twice as much," he says. "There's enough negative propaganda on the TV about the nation [of Afghanistan], but in the meantime, I repair damage as I work."

Niaz has invested "everything" in the restaurant, he said.

"I don't have a backup to rest assured, for a rainy day. At the middle of the night, sometimes I wake up, asking myself, 'what if, what if, what if?'...because we don't have it," he said. "We put all our eggs in one basket, hoping this will survive."

These days, Niaz is the lone employee of the restaurant, spending "ten, twelve, fifteen hours a day" working there. He also proofreads and sells real estate to supplement earnings from the restaurant. Niaz does this with his children's education in mind, he said; his daughter is training to become a Physician's Assistant, and his son is studying

design. "I'm afraid, if this goes south, their education will go south," he said. "I'm willing to give up the house, but not the kids' education." To his customers, Niaz sends a message of genuine appreciation.

"God, when this thing is over one day, if it could come back to normal—hugging, high fiving, low fiving, and all that—I want to thank all of you in a way that words cannot tell," he said. "But right now, it is very hard. It is very, very hard."

ONE ZAMAROD CUSTOMER, Dennis Berg, drove from his home in Maryland to meet a friend for dinner at the Afghan restaurant. Zamarod is not close to either of their homes; but Berg, a self-described "food fan," said that the quality of food makes the long commute worthwhile.

"There are two Afghan restaurants in Northwest DC, and this kicks their butt," he said. "I want to see it stay around, so I'll keep driving out here...even though I live like thirty miles away!"

At the end of the day, Niaz is resolute in his decision that if the restaurant is not to survive the pandemic, then it will go down fighting. "We will not let this thing put us down," Niaz said. "If it does, God forbid... you give it everything you have."

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 9

2020 from 6-8 p.m. All competition paintings are eligible to win prizes. Judge TBD. Prizes are 1st place (\$500), 2nd Place (\$250), 3rd Place (\$100) and Quick Draw (\$150). The first 25 artists to register (\$35 fee) are eligible to participate. Registration the day of the event is (\$45 fee) if spaces are open. See all the event details and guidelines at www.greatfallsart.org/paint-great-falls or contact Julie Casso with questions, julie.casso@greatfallsart.org.

DRIVE-THRU DRAMA

The Alden in McLean is bringing back its Drive-Thru Drama performances in September. The new show, "From the Ash Baxter Files: The Search for the Stolen Spyglass," will be performed Friday through Sunday over three weekends on Sept. 11-13, Sept. 18-20 and Sept. 25-27. Show times are from 4-7 p.m. Tickets are \$20, \$15 for MCC tax district residents. A limited number of timed tickets are available and must be purchased in advance at www.aldentheatre.org. The Alden is a division of the McLean Community Center (MCC), located at 1234 Ingleside Ave.

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The Doggone Truth



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I don't remember much substance from my freshmen-level, psychology 100 class at the University of Maryland in 1972 except that the lecture hall sat approximately 600 students, tests were graded on a bell curve (with which I was totally unfamiliar), the professor always wore black leather pants, and he brought his dog to every lecture. Sitting as far away as I did (my choice), I can't even tell you what kind of dog was at the end of his leash. Content-wise, I remember Pavlov's dog, B.F. Skinner, behavior modification and conditioned reflex (something to do with saliva). And that's about it. Oh, and I received a "D," my first-ever below-"C" grade. Still, it is my first-ever memory of classes while attending college. As such, it has stuck with me for years. As has predictable behavior.

What I am referring to is how I can be predicted to behave after my wife, Dina, doles out my daily Nestles Crunch bar allotment. As you regular readers may recall, due to the pandemic and my status as a primary Covid risk: over age 65, lung disease and compromised immune system (the trifecta of trouble), I am not allowed to go to the grocery store, pharmacy or wholesale outlets and mix with the masses and risk exposure. What this means is that, for the first time in 40 or so years, I am not doing the in-store shopping. My wife, Dina is. Moreover, she is ordering our food on-line, rather than risking her own exposure - and mine indirectly, by shopping in store since it's unlikely we'll be social-distancing once she's back at home. Ergo, she is in control of the food, from it's initial order to its ultimate put-away at home. As a result, either I'm not getting what I crave/need, or I'm getting it with strict controls. Controls which involve some of my requirements (chocolate) being out of site, but unfortunately not out of my mind, and then having Dina distributing it very judiciously - and not according to my demands either. Particularly so for the candy. Dina is hiding it - in plain sight, she claims, for weeks now, and try as I most definitely have, I can't seem to find it.

Now back to Pavlov and Skinner and the dog. Every day, in the morning, before I get up and walk downstairs to the kitchen to begin my morning pill routine, Dina will have placed two Nestles' Crunch fun-size bars in an empty candy dish in the dining room, same time, same place as the day before. So I know where and when to look and I do every day. To invoke these famous psychologists, a conditioned response has been created. I have anticipated her behavior and accordingly I walk into the dining room and reach for these two Nestles Crunch bars. My behavior has become absolutely predictable. Moreover within a minute or so of finding them (more like 10 seconds), I will have unwrapped and eaten them - without fail. My reaction is as reliable/instinctive almost as if I were hit on the front of my knee with a mallet. Just as the knee reflexively jerks forward, so does my mouth pop open ("Oh boy") in anticipation and confirmation of the candy allocation.

However, this has not been any kind of controlled experiment. Dina is not learning anything about my behavior that she hasn't witnessed first hand dating back to 1978. She's not portioning out these hidden treats to see how I'll react. She knows. If I don't get my candy, I'll fuss about it (that's a polite description of my reaction). Rather she is attempting to manage my behavior/chocolate consumption (even though to quote my brother, Richard: "The weight looks good on me") because I'm pre-diabetic and have already been diagnosed with two types of cancer: non small cell lung cancer and papillary thyroid, both stage IV - in a pandemic, no less, and in consideration of the fact that it's unhealthy for me to maintain my present pace.

Dina may not be able to exactly set her watch by my appearance in the dining room, but she certainly knows it's only a matter of time before I'll grab the bars; time she hopes she's helping to guarantee that I'll have after the candy has been eaten.

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



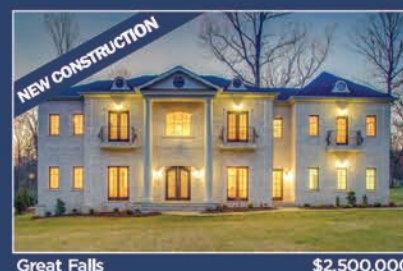
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