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The Pandemic Election

Virginia voters support Biden, Warner and a new redistricting commission.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Twenty years ago, Virginia was a red state. Republicans scored Virginia's electoral votes in every presidential election since LBJ was reelected in 1964. Republicans held both U.S. Senate seats. The Grand Old Party had all the statewide offices, a majority of the congressional delegation and both chambers of the General Assembly. That was the environment when Mark Warner and Tim Kaine, both Democrats, ran for governor and lieutenant governor.

"Over the last 20 years, we've engineered the biggest political turnaround in the United States of any of the 50 states," said Sen. Tim Kaine as he watched voting totals on election night. "Partly it's our population. Partly it's Democrats in Virginia. We govern in a way that we're practical progressives. We're solving people's problems, and that's a good model."

The 2020 presidential election has yet to be resolved. But Virginia is now a solidly blue state, delivering 13 electoral votes to Joe Biden and handing Mark Warner a third term in the United States Senate. Election officials will continue receiving mail-in votes until Friday at noon, although the results of all the key races have already been determined. One result that is clear, though, is the success of a constitutional amendment creating a new 16-member redistricting commission to draw political boundaries for the General Assembly and Congress.

"Tonight is historic," declared FairMapsVA executive director Brian Cannon and campaign co-chairs

Fairfax County Unofficial Results		
PRESIDENT		
Joe Biden:	405,000 votes,	70 percent
Donald Trump:	162,000 votes,	28 percent
Jo Jorgensen:	7,000 votes,	1 percent
SENATE		
Mark Warner (D):	401,000 votes,	70 percent
Daniel Gade:	172,000 votes,	30 percent
HOUSE DISTRICT 8		
Don Beyer:	124,000 votes,	72 percent
Jeff Jordan:	48,000 votes,	28 percent
HOUSE DISTRICT 10		
Jennifer Wexton:	70,000 votes,	60 percent
Aliscia Andrews:	46,000 votes,	39 percent
HOUSE DISTRICT 11		
Gerry Connolly (D),	198,889,	72 percent
Manga Anantatmula,	82,044,	28 percent
AMENDMENT 1 (redistricting)		
Yes:	301,000 votes,	54 percent
No:	259,000 votes,	46 percent
AMENDMENT 2		
Yes:	508,000,	77 percent
No:	156,000,	24 percent
COMMUNITY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BOND		
Yes:	508,000 votes,	77 percent
No:	156,000 votes,	23 percent
PARKS BOND		
Yes:	408,000 votes,	72 percent
No:	155,000 votes,	28 percent
LIBRARY BOND		
Yes:	372,000 votes,	66 percent
No: 1	91,000 votes,	34 percent
TRANSPORTATION BONDS		
Yes:	381,000 votes,	68 percent
No:	182,000 votes,	32 percent

SOURCE: Votes cast in Fairfax County only. Congressional Districts include other jurisdictions. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/sites/elections/files/assets/result/resu1120.pdf

Wyatt Durrette and Bobby Vassar. "Virginia has now become the first state in the South to create a bipartisan redistricting commission to draw electoral district lines."

AT THE TOP of the ticket, Warner

SEE THE PANDEMIC, PAGE 3



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/THE GAZETTE

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Chief John Butler, left, and Battalion Chief Willie Bailey, right, accept a check from Apple Federal Credit Union during the Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue coat drive distribution Oct. 29 at Penn Daw Fire Station 11.

Coats for Kids Firefighters and Friends give away 3,000 new coats.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Chief John Butler joined volunteers at Penn Daw Fire Station 11 Oct. 29 to organize and distribute thousands of new winter coats for children in need as part of the Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue annual coat drive.

"We gave away over 3,000 coats for children and families in need," said Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Battalion Chief Willie Bailey. "We had 67 schools, non-profits and shelters participate in collecting coats to distribute throughout the region."

Tables were piled high with coats, all Made in the U.S.A.,

that had been sorted according to age and sex. Volunteers selected and bagged coats for each organization with representatives waiting in vehicles for a curb-side pickup.

"Willie printed up sheets for each location," said Jennifer Tillet, Mount Vernon branch manager for Apple Federal Credit Union, a major sponsor of the coat drive. "We are organizing the coats by school then labeling the bags so that social workers can easily and safely pick everything up without getting out of their vehicles."

Bailey founded Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue 18 years ago as a holiday toy drive. In 2011, Firefighters and

SEE FIREFIGHTERS, PAGE 4

"We gave away over 3,000 coats for children and families in need."

— Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Battalion Chief Willie Bailey.

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www.CrouchRealtyGroup.com



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The Pandemic Election

FROM PAGE 1

ner scored a solid victory against Republican Daniel Gade although Biden had more votes and a larger margin of victory. Appearing at his campaign headquarters in Del Ray, Warner called on Republicans and Democrats to put the divisive campaign in the past and look ahead to surviving the health risks posed by the pandemic and the economic uncertainty caused by the downturn.

“The only way we’re going to be able to defeat that and truly build back better is if Americans become united,” said Warner, speaking to a room of journalists and staffers. “That means ending the kind of attack rhetoric and mean-spiritedness that too often has infected our political discourse.”

For now, though, the political discourse remains at a fever pitch. At press time, the presidential election is unresolved. Two hotly contested congressional seats in Virginia are too close to call. And lawyers are preparing for a season of legal challenges and trench warfare in the courts challenging state election laws on signature matches and late-arriving mail-in absentee ballots. Nevertheless, Republicans are facing an uncertain future in a state that has gone from ruby red

to deep blue.

“They have to denounce Trumpism,” said former Republican Del. David Ramadan (R-87), who is now at the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University. “They have to denounce white supremacy and go back to the basics of conservative principles versus winking at white supremacy and nationalism.”

FOR VIRGINIA, the most important result of the election might end up being the amendment creating the new constitutional amendment. It was an issue that split Democrats in Virginia, with Senate Democrats supporting the amendment and House Democrats mostly in opposition. FairMapsVA, which supported the amendment, raised more than \$2 million to support the ballot initiative. Fair Districts, which opposed the amendment, accused the campaign of using big money donors to tilt the outcome.

“Our campaign was truly a grassroots campaign that was outspent over 50 to 1 by out-of-state dark money groups and was fighting an uphill battle against biased language on the ballot meant to gain votes for the measure,” the statement said. “The people who pushed Amendment 1 know of

its flaws, and it is now incumbent upon them to seek real solutions to fix those flaws, not just lip-service efforts like ‘consideration’ of Virginia’s diversity.”

Now that voters have approved of the new Virginia Redistricting Commission, retired circuit court judges from across Virginia will be sending resumes to the Virginia Supreme Court. The chief judge of the court has until Nov. 15 to select a list of 10 judges to submit to the General Assembly, where Democrats in the House and Senate get to pick two judges and Republicans in the House and Senate get to pick two judges.

Those four judges will select a fifth judge to complete the panel, and they will select citizen members from a list submitted by the General Assembly. The deadline for candidates to file for office is March 25, which means maps must be finished by then.

“The legislators cannot control or override the citizen voices as six of the eight citizen members must vote for any map for it to be approved,” said state Sen. George Barker (D-39), who was one of the leading voices in support of the amendment. “Additionally, the voting rules also preclude the types of outcomes we have had previously



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Speaker of the Virginia House, Eileen Filler-Corn called it the “cutest idea” and “most fun event” as she greeted participants at “Barks for Biden,” here with James Migliaccio, Alexandria, and his dog Maia.

because the maps cannot unduly favor either political party.”

The redistricting amendment was not the only successful ballot initiative on the ballot. Voters across Virginia also approved an amendment creating tax breaks for veterans. Voters in Fairfax ap-

proved bonds for transportation, libraries, parks and health and human services. In Norfolk, voters approved a new waterfront resort and casino, which will be built by the Pamunkey Indian Tribe on the Elizabeth River next to Harbor Park.

Polls Were Busy in Mount Vernon

Parks, libraries and redistricting were small issues compared to the presidential contest.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The blue sky and winds swirled around the election tables at Whitman Middle School, causing the sample ballots to fly into the parking lot, but there were issues in many minds that were bigger than that.

“We want stability, peace, calm,” said Tammy McClimans, a resident of Gum Springs who was an election volunteer at the Democratic table out front. “They want to bring us together,” she said of the Democrats on the ticket, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris.

Harold Pepper voted at Riverside Elementary School in Mount Vernon, and felt the issues of taxes, military readiness, economy and education are big issues that the current president has addressed over the last four years.

Was this election as big as the hype he’s heard? “They’re all big, every election is big,” he said. Pepper has lived in Mount Vernon, where the democrats are in the majority, and he said this leads to a problem when it comes to elections. “Most of them vote straight democratic, so I have no idea what



Curbside election service for people with disabilities and older people.

their issues are,” he said.

A few feet away at Riverside, John Ring

was at the table for the Democrats. “I think our national soul is at stake here,” he said.

A representative from the World Kitchen was handing out breakfast sandwiches and water to everyone as the winds continued. Ring’s wife Adriana Van Breda was also seated at the table. “People that are coming to vote have made up their minds,” she said.

A few feet away at the Republican table, Carmen Trummer was talking to the people arriving. She’s been a Republican Party volunteer for 20 years, but with this election, she felt the Democrats had the advantage of the media to push their agenda. “I think they’ve crossed the line on being press,” she said.

By 9:15 a.m. at Whitman Middle School, they had about 200 voters come up to vote, but more were expected at lunch time and a push about 5 p.m., the volunteers expected. This year, the pandemic caused many to vote early, so that likely impacted the numbers on Election Day.

Carlo Silva, who uses a walker, pulled up in a car driven by his daughter. Election officials brought out the ballot, and took it back in after Silva filled it out. The streetside election service is a new feature this year too, due to the pandemic. “It helps because I am handicapped, it’s a good idea,” said Silva.



Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Battalion Chief Willie Bailey gives instructions to volunteers at the Oct. 29 Firefighters and Friends coat distribution at Penn Daw Fire Station 11.



Apple Federal Credit Union volunteers Jennifer Tillet and Katie Knight organize coats for distribution during the Oct. 29 Firefighters and Friends coat drive at Fire Station 11.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/THE GAZETTE

Firefighters and Friends Give Away 3,000 New Coats

FROM PAGE 1

Friends joined forces with Operation Warm, a national nonprofit that has provided coats to more than 1.4 million children in need. Since that time firefighters across the country have helped expand coat distribution while supporting American manufacturing jobs.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted everyone, some more drastically than others,” Bailey said. “For many families the pandemic has led to a loss of income, childcare and social support. With so many families struggling to make ends meet, fire department events like this are more important

than ever.”

Sponsors for the 2020 coat drive include: Progressive Firefighters Inc.; Local 2068; Apple Federal Credit Union; Fairfax Retired Firefighters Association; Medocracy Inc.; Ken & Kelly Savittiere Family Fund; Nationwide Credit Corporation; Promax Management Inc.; Fairfax Education Association; and Primo Family Restaurant.

“We are working hard and staying safe to make sure children in need have school supplies, warm winter coats and holiday gifts,” Bailey said. “Throughout the pandemic, we continue to live by our motto: Teamwork makes the

dream work.”

For more information or to make a donation to Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue, visit www.ffandfriends2therescue.org or call Deputy Chief Willie Bailey at 571-641-0036.

“Because the need is so great this year, any help in assisting those less fortunate families will make an impact,” Bailey added.

Vehicles wait in line for curbside pick-up of new coats for underserved children as part of the Firefighters and Friends coat drive distribution Oct. 29 at Fire Station 11.



Volunteers load new coats into a vehicle as part of the Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue coat drive distribution Oct. 29 at Fire Station 11.



Volunteers place new coats in bags during the Firefighters and Friends coat drive distribution Oct. 29 at Fire Station 11.



Volunteers select coats to distribute to local nonprofits during the Firefighters and Friends coat drive distribution Oct. 29 at Fire Station 11.

Matrix, Sunlight Discussed At Public Safety Committee

Community, advocacy groups and police give more than 2,500 suggestions on police reform; Governor signs reform bills from special session.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Police reform includes improving morale for police officers. “I’ve met with hundreds of Fairfax County police officers in recent months, in group settings and individually,” said Public Safety Chairman Rodney Lusk (Lee), “and to a person they have told me morale within the police department is the lowest that it has ever been.”

“This is a public safety issue that must be addressed in order to ensure that our officers are performing at the highest level possible, and that we are retaining the highly skilled law enforcement professionals that we have invested so much time and resources in training,” said Lusk.

“I’m glad to see that here, formally, as you know,” said Supervisor Pat Herity (Springfield). “We’re already a little late.”

Last Tuesday, Oct. 27, Lusk announced a Community Input Matrix, a database of 32-pages of policy suggestions from residents, advocacy groups and law enforcement on the topic of police reform. These are suggestions from the community and groups, not official positions of the Board of Supervisors.

Lusk received and sorted more than 2,500 submissions over the last three months.

At the Board’s Public Safety Committee meeting he shared the suggestions he has received with the greatest frequency and items the Board of Supervisors could address in the near term.

ACCURACY AND ACCESS to public safety data was highlighted, including the need for FCPD to ensure its technology vendor has the capability to meet current needs, including gathering ethnic and demographic data.

James Walkinshaw (Braddock) said immediate re-release of data is critical. “Sunlight is the best disinfectant,” he said. “My view on data is to put the data out there and let people discuss it.”

Some advocates suggested the quarterly release of arrest and use of force data rather than waiting for annual reports issued by police.

“It’s important for all of us to know that both sets [use of force and arrest data] show disproportionate numbers,” with Black and Latino people overrepresented, said Walkinshaw. “That doesn’t mean that all of our police officers are racists; the world isn’t quite that simple. But it does mean that there are structures in our society, including here in Fairfax County, that push us towards a justice system that is disproportionate and unequal.”

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

SOME SUGGESTIONS came from the Fairfax County Police Civilian Review Panel. Newly passed legislation at the state level could allow the Board of Supervisors to give new authority to the Civilian Review Panel, including investigative power. Lusk said the Board could also authorize hiring of an Executive Director for the review panel.

“We have a pretty big grouping and a serious number of requests and recommendations that have come in, so the idea here is to figure out how do we start to disaggregate them and take steps to act on them,” said Lusk. “We’re going to have to make a decision pretty much on each of them and will have some sort of response.”

Some matrix items will be referred to existing working groups to report back to the Public Safety Committee, for example the Body Camera Working Group and the Chief’s Data Working Group.

Included are some of the other near term possibilities:

- ❖ Consider and discuss implementation of state legislation related to the decertification of law enforcement officers who have been terminated or resigned for misconduct.
- ❖ Review training, recruitment and retention standards
- ❖ Accelerate the expansion of crisis intervention training for first responders.
- ❖ Build upon existing department efforts to expand cultural sensitivity and implicit bias training.
- ❖ Review entry level pay and benefits standards that may be affecting recruitment.
- ❖ Conduct a joint review with the School Board of student diversion programs to address inequities.
- ❖ Direct staff to undertake a review and update of the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendations.

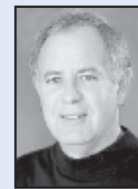
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Chairman Jeff McKay called the Matrix “a parking lot of ideas” that, in the future, “must be adjudicated by this Board based on data, input, conversation, and each of these would have to be acted on in some form.”

“Some of these will go off to other committees, some will go through this committee, but none of them will go anywhere before they come to the full Board for adoption,” said McKay.

View the draft “matrix” of community suggestions here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/sites/topics/files/assets/documents/police-reform/police-reform-suggestions.pdf>

AT THE STATE LEVEL, Gov. Ralph Northam signed

SEE PUBLIC SAFETY MATRIX, PAGE 10



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Alex/Riverside Estates \$599,900
8402 Bound Brook

Come check out this beautiful “Virginia” model, offering a 5BR, 3BA Split w/large 2 car garage & a lovely deck off the kitchen overlooking a private & fully fenced bkyd. Many updates including roof, vinyl siding, & double pane replacement windows in ‘04, furnace & A/C replaced in ‘19, HWH in ‘12. Beautiful refinished hwd floors on the main level which offers 4 spacious BRs, & 2 full BAs. The lower level offers a 5th BR, 3rd full bath & spacious family room w/a cozy gas FPL & walkout to the bkyd, all perfect for an in-law suite. This wonderful community is a short walk to Mt. Vernon Estate, 5 min drive (S) to Ft. Belvoir, 15 mins (N) to Old Town, 25 mins (N) to Reagan National Airport, 30-35 mins to D.C. and the Pentagon.



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OPINION

Legislators Revised the Budget to Address Many Needs

Land conservation funds could potentially be used to help purchase and preserve River Farm.

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL

Part 3 of a series.

The General Assembly met over the last few months in a special session to finalize our state budget. We had to revisit the budget because in the last week of our regular, winter session, the COVID-19 pandemic started to flare up, the shutdown began shortly after and the economic damage and uncertainty made it impossible to build a two-year budget. Gov. Ralph Northam proposed amendments that the General Assembly approved in April putting all new spending on hold until we had reliable revenue estimates. Two weeks ago, we approved a revised budget that takes a more modest approach than our original budget, but it still has some significant investments.

First, we balanced our budget as required by the state constitution.

Second, the budget leaves over \$1 billion unspent in reserves because of continued economic uncertainty. It is a very fiscally pru-



Surovell

dent budget.

Confronting COVID-19 and More

The budget allocates over \$300 million in new dollars to K-12 education to help with COVID-19 related expenses, like short-term technology needs, and it provides new flexibility to spend funds on virtual education. We are investing \$37.3 million to expand early childhood education for three and four year-olds and \$35 million for at-risk youngsters. Expanding preschool pays long-term dividends because giving children a strong start early is important to their lifetime success.

We also provided \$94 million in new funding for colleges and universities, including an additional \$7 million for George Mason University.

We funded dental benefits for Medicaid recipients for the first time and increased funding for mental health, Medicaid personal care attendants and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). We included major mental health investments including nearly \$100 million for community mental

health services, safe discharge practices and supportive housing for Virginians with mental illnesses.

The budget includes \$105 million for rental relief from CARES Act funds. We also are making an \$85 million deposit to the Housing Trust Fund, the largest ever, to help with affordable housing. We put into law a utility disconnection moratorium until 60 days after the end of our state of emergency and are requiring Dominion Energy to forgive \$127 million of customer utility debt by crediting it against company over charges. The budget also provides \$100 million from CARES Act funds for utility assistance for Virginians who are in arrears.

The pandemic has truly highlighted our broadband shortcomings and we appropriated \$85 million for new broadband infrastructure, plus \$30 million short-term broadband projects.

We provided the Commonwealth Transportation Board flexibility to reprogram up to \$1.1 billion from existing projects and authorized temporarily shifting mass transit capital funds to ridership incentives. We authorized the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to extend the validity of drivers' licenses and vehicle registrations for up to 90 days after the end of the state of emergency and authorized DMV customers over age 75 to obtain legally allowable services either electronically or through the

mail.

We also are providing \$300,000 for additional staff at Mason Neck State Park, new funds for water quality improvement grants, and \$11 million for land conservation investments.

The land conservation funds could potentially be used to help purchase and preserve River Farm, which, its owners have announced, will be sold.

The criminal justice reforms that I reported on last week require an additional \$22.8 million in implementation funds. We also allocated \$14 million to a new body camera fund that will provide one-time grants to law enforcement agencies that have not purchased these cameras yet.

The budget provides funding for a new General District Court judgeship in Fairfax County that was authorized two years ago and 120 new and desperately needed deputy clerks across the state. The budget also funds 59 new public defender positions.

We also funded a \$1,500 one-time bonus to all state employees and a \$500 bonus to state-responsible law enforcement such as our Virginia State Police.

Virginia is in better shape than many other states. We accomplished all of this without tapping our Reserve or "Rainy Day" Fund which could very well be needed in the future.

Please share your views with me at scott@scottsuovell.org.

Stay Vigilant to Fight COVID

BY DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK

One of the most important and meaningful elections in history has just concluded and I am happy that so many people in our Mount Vernon and Lee community turned out and had their voices heard and votes counted. I want to thank everyone for working very hard to prepare for and run the election, and for those that campaigned for their candidates. It is always heartening to see so many people give of their valuable time and treasure to make this process work as well as it does. We can all be proud of our vibrant democracy in action.

As I write this I do not yet know the results of the election but I am sure that Vice President Biden and Senator Kamala Harris won here in a big way. The yard signs alone were a strong clue.

Nevertheless, life goes on and it is time to turn our attention to

the upcoming General Assembly session with the drafting of bills and meetings with constituents.

However, we still have one more day to return to Richmond, albeit virtually, to reconvene from the special session that just ended to consider Governor Northam's amendments and any vetoes, though unlikely, to our passed legislation and our budget changes.

So, in continuation of our historic 60-day virtual session which recessed last month, we now know that we will return to session this upcoming Monday, Nov. 9. Governor Northam has signed 40 of the bills passed by both the House and Senate and made recommendations to eleven pieces of legislation, including Delegate Hope's HB 5058, which my colleagues and I asked to be amended to ensure



Krizek

law enforcement officers may stop a vehicle driving without headlights or brake lights, as that is a dangerous malfunction. The bill is important because pretextual stops where police pull over a motorist for something minor

like an equipment violation is used too often to stop and search Black motorists much more than drivers of other races, and with little effect on crime according to many studies. I do worry about issues like noise pollution now that cars can't be targeted solely for noise, though the noisy vehicles still need

SEE STAY VIGILANT, PAGE 7

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A Connection Newspaper



OPINION

Stay Vigilant To Fight COVID

FROM PAGE 6

to pass inspection and can be cited if pulled over for another more serious offenses. But, if one person's life is saved from one fewer interaction with the police, then this is a small price to pay. Moreover, there are other more effective ways to combat the noise issue. Indeed, the law now is not working well enough.

Most importantly, as we approach the winter months when the cold weather will make physical distancing inevitably harder we must stay vigilant in wearing our masks and avoiding large gatherings. I encourage everyone to get your annual flu vaccinations to decrease the risk of contracting the flu, which combined with coronavirus can be very dangerous. As of this week, we have surpassed 9 million COVID cases in the United States and over 230,000 deaths since March. Cases and deaths continue to rise around the country each day. 38 states, including Virginia, currently have uncontrolled spread, with others trending poorly, and hospitals in several cities are overflowing, including in El Paso, Texas, where they built outdoor tents to house COVID patients.

COVID exhaustion is very real: it is tiresome to continue precautions, to put off plans, cancel events, and skip celebrating holidays with family and friends. However, until we have a vaccine, the virus will continue to infect people regardless of whether we are tired of taking precautions or not. To continue to protect ourselves, our loved ones, and our communities, we must follow CDC guidelines by wearing our masks, washing our hands, and physical distancing. So, please continue to be vigilant and stay safe and try to relax now that that momentous, all-consuming, presidential election is over.

Take a deep breath and enjoy a break from politics. We are all in this together and need to treat each other with respect, dignity, and love.

Let us know about an upcoming event

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November 14th, 2020

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Try something new!

Taste For Giving Set for Nov. 14

Fundraiser goes virtual to support local nonprofits.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Rotary Club of Alexandria's Taste For Giving, an annual fundraiser that supports dozens of local charities providing crucial services throughout the city, will be held virtually this year due to COVID-19 restrictions on large social gatherings.

"The nonprofits we support need us now more than ever."

— Alexandria Rotary Club president John Moorman

"Cancelling the Taste For Giving was never an option," said Rotary president John Moorman. "The nonprofits we support need us now more than ever."

Organizers have devised an interactive event to be held Nov. 14 that can be enjoyed safely at home or in a small gathering. Participating local restaurants will deliver meals to ticket holders prior to the start of the event, which takes place from 7-9 p.m. and will benefit 27 local charities.

Featured restaurants include Riverbend Bistro & Wine Bar, Nando's, Tempo, Trademark Drink and Eat, Dishes of India, Hard Times Cafe, Redrocks Bistro, Cedar Knoll and Charthouse.

"Four or five course meals will be made-to-order for attendees," said Taste For Giving chair Rick Endres. "And each member of your party can order their meal from a different restaurant so this is a perfect opportunity to try something from someplace new."

As in past events, the virtual Taste For Giving will feature entertainment from the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra and a live auction. New this year will be a Team Trivia competition run by a



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

A professionally coordinated trivia contest will be a part of the Rotary Club of Alexandria's virtual Taste For Giving Nov. 14.

professional trivia coordinator.

The Alexandria Rotary Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that supports Alexandria's children, families and seniors via

significant grants to numerous nonprofits and charities with more than \$1 million being donated over the last 14 years.

The virtual Taste For Giving is

open to the public. For information on tickets or how to place a food order, visit www.alexandriarotary.org or email Taste4Giving@gmail.com.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

DRIVERS NEEDED TO HELP SENIORS

Mount Vernon At Home is a nonprofit organization serving senior citizens in the Mount Vernon and Alexandria areas of Fairfax County. They are in critical need for volunteers to assist members with driving to medical appointments and grocery shopping. Mount Vernon At Home will supply you with necessary personal protective equipment (PPE), and can provide a donation receipt for your mileage. Volunteers can sign up for driving assignments through the online system which makes it easy to see and accept assignments. Give what time you can, there is no minimum or maximum number of hours. If you have some time to give to the community and can spare several hours a month, visit info@mountvernonathome.org, or call 703-303-4060.

TUESDAY/NOV. 17

Immigrants from Germany, 1-2:30 p.m. At Mount Vernon Genealogical Society, Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Genealogist James M. Beidler will speak about German immigrants to

America in the 18th century. Register no later than November 13 by emailing your name and email address to contact-us@mvgenealogy.org. Visit the website: www.mvgenealogy.org/eventListing.php?nm=20

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Assistance League of Northern Virginia, a volunteer nonprofit, invites community members to join the organization to participate in its Reading Express program. Volunteers provide one-on-one tutoring to first grade students during the school year. To learn more contact VP Membership Mary Gronlund at gronbiz@aol.com or Program Coordinator Lynn Barron at lynnieb517@verizon.net.

United Community (formerly UCM), 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, seeks volunteers for Food Pantry assistance, Early Learning Center teacher aides, basic needs counselors, youth tutors and mentors, office administration/data entry, and community outreach. Flexible hours and schedules. Opportunities for all ages to serve, including community service hours. More info at ucmagency.org/volunteer-opportunities or email volunteer@ucmagency.org.

Operation Paws for Homes, a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See www.ophrescue.org for information and all volunteer opportunities.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors

seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Line Dance Instructor needed for the Gum Springs Senior Program once a week on either Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Volunteer Solutions, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711.

Volunteer Fairfax makes it easy for individuals and families, youth and seniors, corporate groups and civic clubs to volunteer. Fulfill hours, give back, or pay it forward through a variety service options. Visit www.volunteerfairfax.org or call 703-246-3460.

STEM VOLUNTEERS. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) needs scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and physicians to assist K-12 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) teachers in the Northern Virginia Area, during the 2016-17 school year. In the 2015-16 school year, the numbers of STEM volunteers in Northern

Virginia were: Fairfax County - 40, Arlington - 20, and Alexandria - one. Details of the collaboration are worked out between the teacher and the volunteer, and may involve giving demonstrations, assisting in lab experiments, lecturing on special topics, assisting with homework, etc. The hours are flexible, and volunteers attend a one-day training in September before being assigned to schools. To see how volunteers are assisting their teachers, view the video clips at www.seniorscientist.org. To volunteer, contact donaldrea@aol.com.

Fairfax County's Community Services Board is seeking volunteer office assistants. Volunteers are needed to assist CSB staff with greeting guests, making reminder phone calls, data entry, filing, shredding, stocking shelves, and other duties as needed. Hours are flexible, but would be during normal business hours. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/viva/volunteers.htm for more.

Yoga Teachers are needed. Help improve a person's well-being by teaching yoga classes to adults who are staying in a residential facility. The day/time is flexible, but would be during the week. Prior yoga instruction is required. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/viva/volunteers.htm for more.

The Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted

living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Respite Care volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact Kristin Martin at 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or Kristin.Martin@fairfax-county.gov.

Fairfax County needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The Gum Springs Senior Program in Alexandria is looking for a Line Dance Instructor. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The Kingstowne Center for Active Adults in Alexandria needs Instructors for the following classes: Country-Western Line Dance, Hula Hoop and African Style Dance. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

RESTAURANT OF THE WEEK



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

The antique tractor in front of Mamma's Kitchen shows the farm-to-table orientation of the menu.

Mama's Kitchen

Mamma's Kitchen, located at 7601 Fordson Road, is the passion of chef/owner Marianna Johnides where she brings wonderfully flavored Mediterranean cuisine to Alexandria, made from the freshest, most delicious ingredients prepared in simple, accessible ways.

Marianna grew up in a family of restaurant owners. "I observed my mother's own techniques and developed a personal style of creative, original interpretations of some of her traditional Greek and Italian favorites," she said.

Her motto is: "If it's good enough for Mamma ... then it's good enough for our customers!" You will definitely not have a chain restaurant experience at Mamma's Kitchen.

The restaurant is open 11 am to 8 pm, for lunch and dinner, Monday thru Sunday. The dining room is open and has a wood fired brick oven where the signature pizzas are baked. Original murals decorate the walls with scenes from Greece. The outdoor patio is open and is a delightful place to enjoy your meals.

Lunch specials are served Monday – Friday 11 am to 3 pm and include beef or chicken gyros, delicious main course salads, pasta, tuna melt, steak and cheese sandwiches, and personal pan pizza.

Due to social distancing requirements, you may not be able to find a table at this popular local restaurant so carry-out is always an option. You may order online and specify a time for pickup at <https://direct.chownow.com/order/20805/locations/30112>



Original murals depicting scenes from Greece decorate the interior of Mamma's Kitchen.

[com/order/20805/locations/30112](https://direct.chownow.com/order/20805/locations/30112)

The Fall menu features these specials: Butternut squash ravioli served in a maple sage cream sauce; Chicken Limoni; Penne Vodka; Salmon Piccata; and Spanakopita. There is also a wide selection of appetizers, salads, entrees, pastas, sandwiches, gyros and the famous Ari's lentil soup. Kids Meals are available on the menu.

Masks are required in the restaurant but may be removed for eating and drinking

Mamma's Kitchen also provides off-site catering for businesses or families and would love to be a part of your special event.

Mama's Kitchen is the "Restaurant of the Week" from Mount Vernon Lee Chamber of Commerce. Restaurants are an industry deeply affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Support local restaurants and help retain local jobs and the variety of wonderful eateries in our community.

Hollin Hall Jazzercise Hosts Pink Out Dance Day Event

Hollin Hall Jazzercise celebrated Breast Cancer Awareness Month with a Pink Out Dance Day Event on Saturday, Oct. 17. More than fifty Jazzercise customers attended the outdoor (socially distanced) 60-minute dance cardio workout to raise awareness for breast cancer and

honor survivors and those we have lost to the disease. The event raised funds in support of the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

Thanks to the generosity of participants, Hollin Hall Jazzercise also raised more than

SEE HOLLIN HALL, PAGE 13

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Available November 9

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Wondering what local businesses are open?
Visit MountVernonLeeChamber.org

LOCAL BUSINESS INFORMATION: mountvernonleechamber.org/business-resources-for-coronavirus/
FAIRFAX COUNTY INFORMATION: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/information-businesses-impacted-coronavirus/
VIRGINIA INFORMATION: www.virginia.gov/coronavirus-updates/

Another Mount Vernon Gazette Community Partnership

Here's how you can help support small businesses during the Covid-19 outbreak

GIVE THE GIFT OF BUSINESS

Buy a gift card to use at a later date and shop locally online when possible.



KEEP YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

To the gym, exercise class, painting class, music and dance lessons, etc. Many small businesses rely on your support to keep their doors open and pay their bills. Your support can save that business.



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NEWS

Matrix, Sunlight Discussed at Public Safety Committee

FROM PAGE 5

new laws on Sunday, Nov. 1, 2020, including House Bill 5055 and Senate Bill 5035, which empower localities to create civilian law enforcement review boards. These new laws also permit civilian review boards the authority to issue subpoenas and make binding disciplinary decisions. Northam signed Senate Bill 5014, which mandates the creation of minimum crisis intervention training standards and requires law enforcement officers

complete crisis intervention training. Senate Bill 5030, omnibus police reform legislation, incorporates a number of critical reform measures passed by the House of Delegates including:

House Bill 5099 prohibits law enforcement officers from seeking or executing no-knock search warrants, making Virginia the third state to do so.

House Bill 5069 limits the circumstances in which law enforcement officers can use neck restraints.

House Bill 5029 requires law enforcement officers to intervene when they witness another officer engaging or attempting to engage in the use of excessive force.

House Bill 5049 reduces the militarization of police by prohibiting law enforcement from obtaining or using specified equipment, including grenades, weaponized aircraft, and high caliber firearms.

House Bill 5109 creates state-

wide minimum training standards for law enforcement officers, including training on awareness of racism, the potential for biased profiling, and de-escalation techniques.

House Bill 5104 mandates law enforcement agencies and jails request the prior employment and disciplinary history of new hires.

House Bill 5108 expands and diversifies the Criminal Justice Services Board, ensuring that the perspectives of social justice leaders,

people of color, and mental health providers are represented in the state's criminal justice policymaking.

House Bill 5051 strengthens the process by which law enforcement officers can be decertified and allows the Criminal Justice Services Board to initiate decertification proceedings.

House Bill 5045 makes it a Class 6 felony for law enforcement officers to "carnally know" an arrestee or detainee.

Governor Northam also signed Senate Bill 5018 which allows individuals serving a sentence for certain felony offenses who are terminally ill to petition the Parole Board for conditional release; and amended House Bill 5148 and Senate Bill 5034 which allow for increased earned sentencing credits. The Governor proposed a six-month delay to give the Department of Corrections sufficient time to implement this program.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 8

703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions. The Hollin Hall Senior Center in Alexandria needs instructors for the following classes: Basic Woodworking, Italian and Ballroom Dance. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions. The Mount Vernon Adult Day Health

Care Center in Alexandria needs front desk volunteers and patient Card Players. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions. The Advisory Board of the Joe and Fredona Gartlan Center for mental health is looking for volunteers. The board meets the second Tuesday of the month from 9-11 a.m. at Gartlan Center 8119 Holland Road.

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WELLBEING

Decompressing after A Divisive Election

Limit time on social media or watching post-election coverage.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
GAZETTE PACKET

The moments that stretched her to her professional limits came immediately after the 2016 presidential election. As a psychotherapist, Kendra A. O'Hora, Ph.D., owner of Wellness & Co., had to help her patients process the overwhelming emotions that they were experiencing after that tumultuous political season.

"That day was the hardest day of my career," she said.

This year's election however, has been much worse, notes O'Hora. "It's unlike anything I've ever experienced in my therapy office," she said. "For the first time ever, we are offering appointments this week specifically for those who are struggling to process."

The divisive 2020 election season has been a source of significant tension, not only locally, but nationwide. Nearly 70 percent of adults in the United States report feelings of stress as a result of this year's cycle, according to a study by the American Psychological Association (APA).

Adding the recent racial unrest and the coronavirus pandemic that's caused record deaths and wreaked havoc on the economy, the current environment — with no relief in sight — has left three out of four adults anxious about the nation's future. The current political season provides the perfect storm for mental health issues that will last for decades, say local mental health professionals.

It's understandable to feel stressed, overwhelmed, exhausted, and anxious right now, says Heather V. Ganginis Del Pino, Ph.D., licensed psychologist

and associate professor of psychology at Montgomery College. "If your feelings start to interfere with your everyday life and if having those feelings are causing you distress, you might want to seek help from a professional, if one is available to you," she said.

Shock, anger, relief, disillusionment and even neutrality are all normal at this time, suggests Fairfax therapist Jana Wu, LCSW. "Emotions might run the gamut and might shift as the days progress or after engaging in dialogue with others."

"You may be asking yourself, 'What's normal to feel right now?'" added O'Hora. "The long and short of it? Everything. Most people know that anger, frustration, annoyance, and stress are what we like to call iceberg or secondary emotions. In a sense, they are what's on the surface, when there's oh so much more underneath."

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Social support is important, particularly for those without access to mental health therapy, added Del Pino. "It can feel good to help someone else, so check in on friends and family that you know are struggling or donate your time to a cause that is important to you," she said.

Limiting the amount of time one spends on social media or watching post-election coverage can help ease feelings of distress, said Wu. "Take in material that inspires and speaks to your values," she said. "Speak to and engage with community that also shares your values about next action steps to take. Practice self-care and care for others in your community, environment, and home. I personally meditate and listen to sources that inspire me to engage in life in a thoughtful way."

Focus on the bigger picture advises therapist Steven Rosenberg, Ph.D. "Avoid contentious situations and confrontations over political differences," he said. "You are not going to change anyone's mind. Remember, just as you have your own political views, others are entitled to have theirs. Let them. The issues facing our country can't be resolved in one election. Volunteer for an organization that is working on an issue or cause that you feel strongly about."

Decompress by showing yourself compassion and withholding self-judgement, says Del Pino. This could mean making sure you take care of yourself though exercise and sleep, she said. "You can spend breaks doing something you enjoy or just breathe while

giving yourself time to notice your own feelings and thoughts. If you are feeling stressed or anxious about the outcome of the election, acknowledge your stressful feelings and thoughts but also try to notice any feelings that might be hiding under the anxiety and stress.

It's important for parents to recognize and help children process intense emotions, says Del Pino. "Help children process

their feelings by simply asking them how they feel. Let them know you are there if they need to talk," she said. "While acknowledging that this is a stressful time in our country, parents should avoid expressing their own opinions. If you have young kids, limit the amount of news you are watching with them around and instead play a game, sit with them while they do homework, engage them in conversation, or do something active together."

Maintaining a consistent daily schedule, particularly with regard to sleep, suggests Del Pino. "[It] is so important, especially during times of stress," she said. "If your child is having trouble sleeping, or if you are, encourage your child to read something fun before bed or download one of the many free mindfulness or sleep applications that will help your child get in the mood for sleep."



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PHOTOS COURTESY OF HANGRY PANDA

Though the setup is different from before, Hangry Panda's food truck continues dishing up Asian fusion fare to hungry diners during the pandemic.

Hangry Panda, Food Trucks Navigate New Avenues

BY HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

It's no secret that times are tough across the restaurant industry nationwide. With the covid-19 pandemic and all the ensuing shutdowns and social distancing phases that go along with it, every business in the space has been forced to pivot – and, often, pivot again (and again).

And just like their brick-and-mortar brethren, food trucks are suffering, too. Trucks like the Hangry Panda, which was settling into its second year of life, have been set back on their heels by the pandemic – and are struggling to recover.

"It's a very, very tough quest," said Hangry Panda owner Vinh Tran. Last year, Tran said, business was humming along as the Hangry Panda found itself at home around the region, dishing up Vietnamese meals to hungry businesspeople and residents alike.

But now the businesspeople are working from home, and the residents are staying inside. Tran has pivoted his locations to more apartments and residential communities to make up the shortfall.

"It's really tough, though. The thing is you have to control your own destiny, with not having any steady place to rent anymore," he said.

Tran, the owner and chef, has a long history as a hibachi chef and has taken those skills and fused them with Vietnamese and Asian fusion fare to create a robust menu of treats ranging from a variety



Several varieties of pho are on Hangry Panda's food truck menu.

of pho to tacos to small bites and more. Since the pandemic, the truck has offered online ordering to keep lines manageable and personal contact to a minimum.

Tran says the fluctuation in the quantity of customers at any given time has been a new challenge to maneuver. Sometimes, an event – at a winery, say – that is expecting 350 people only brings in 100. Sometimes customers preorder their food at a set time and don't show up for another hour. These challenges are new 2020-style difficulties – but Tran says the world will have to continue facing them for a long while to come.

"This is not something that goes away. If there's no foot traffic, there's no people walking around in DC, it's a different lifestyle now. I don't think it will ever go back to the way it was. Ever."

But, Tran says, there are some silver linings amidst the stress.

"The neighborhoods are very, very kind. Most people are very

kind. When you tell them 'we're behind on rent, please support us,' they come out," he said. "The humanity side of people is still there. They just have to dig really, really deep because they are struggling too." "I feel lucky," he said. "I believe that no matter what happens, people still have to eat."

His truck's job is to make sure the community is fed before they go from hungry to hangry – that is, angry-hungry.

"When they get really, really hangry, they come to us. That's why we're here."

And as for navigating these unprecedented times, Tran says there's really just one option open to him and his business.

"There's no other plan other than keep going," he said. "There's no other avenue."

Hope Nelson is the author of "Classic Restaurants of Alexandria" and owns the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.

CALENDAR

NOW THRU THE HOLIDAYS

Art on the Avenue. The 25th Annual Art on the Avenue festival will move to a virtual format for 2020, running through the holidays. Over 150 artists will be featured, offering hand-made items in a wide range of mediums, including wheel-thrown vases and bowls, tiles, sculpture, tote bags and purses, drawings and pastels, knitted and crocheted hats and gloves, woven scarves and shawls, gourmet food, fused and blown glass, jewelry, paintings, photography, and much more. Traditionally held each fall on Mount Vernon Avenue, Art on the Avenue is a multicultural arts festival that strives to reflect the vibrant mix of the Del Ray community through the artists and their work, and draws an estimated 75,000 visitors each year. Visit www.artontheavenue.org.

NOW THRU DEC. 9

Forty+ Project II. 3-4 p.m. Via Zoom. Forty+ celebrates the collective creativity of people past the age of 40. Fall Project 2 is directed by choreographer Kelsey Rohr through weekly sessions on Zoom (with outdoor or in-person meetings as conditions allow). The project is open to people of all physical facilities. Cost is \$100. Visit the website: <https://www.janefranklin.com/adult-dance/forty-plus>

FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS, NOW THRU DEC. 5

Alexandria Drive-In Movie Encore Series. At the Alexandria Drive-In Theatre, 5001 Eisenhower Ave, Alexandria. The Alexandria Drive-In Theatre, presented by Alexandria based businesses ALX Community and The Garden, will kick off its Encore Series on Oct. 31 through Dec. 5 and will feature a popular collection of movie classics and family favorites. Cost: \$35 per car/per screening. No refunds. 100% of ticket costs go to local Alexandria based charities. Visit the website: www.AlexandriaDriveIn.com

Schedule:

Saturday, November 7 - Nanny McPhee & The Race (Double Feature)
Sunday, November 8 - Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw
Saturday, November 14 - The Secret Life of Pets & Pitch Perfect (Double Feature)
Friday, November 20 - Sea Biscuit
Saturday, November 21 - How to Train Your Dragon & 42 (Double Feature)
Friday, December 4 - The Bourne Identity
Saturday, December 5 - The Grinch & Love Actually (Double Feature)

NOW THRU NOV. 3-27

"Gratitude" Art Show. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Gallery Underground, 2120 Crystal Drive/Crystal City Shops, Arlington. Gallery Underground in November presents Gratitude: Representing Thankfulness in Artwork, an all-member all-media show. The year 2020 has presented us with multiple physical,

moral, spiritual and emotional challenges. Member artists have created work in the season's spirit of giving thanks, representing images of those things for which they are still grateful, despite the current world we face. In our Main Gallery are new works by our members on all themes, in media including oil, acrylic, pastel, watermedia, sculpture, glass, ceramics, wood and metalwork. Visit the website: <https://galleryunderground.org/>

NOV. 6-28

"Women's Right to Vote: 100 Years Since the 19th Amendment" exhibit (November 6-28) features artwork by Del Ray Artisans, local high school students and 2020 graduates; and celebrates the achievements of women over the past 100 years. The movement towards equality in America continues today. Lift your voice and vote. Opening Day Appointments: Friday, November 6, 12-8 p.m. View exhibit at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Details: www.DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

SATURDAY/NOV. 7

Jane Franklin Dance: Hidden Talents at Inner Ear Studios. 7:30 p.m. Via Zoom. Jane Franklin Dance presents a performance streamed live from Inner Ear Studios. Enjoy a Zoom performance event that is filled with real time performance all from the ease of your own living room. Tickets: free with donations accepted (\$10 suggested minimum to help JFD & Inner Ear Studios). Registration is required. Info: <https://www.janefranklin.com/talents>

SATURDAY/NOV. 7

Watercolor Workshop: Orchids. 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. At Green Springs Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Some subjects just scream to be painted in watercolors, and orchids are one of those subjects. Come to Green Spring Gardens and let botanical artist Dawn Flores teach you how to plan and execute an orchid-inspired painting. At the "Watercolor Workshop: Orchids," get information on orchid anatomy and lessons on color. A variety of watercolor techniques and transfer practices will be presented. If you own an orchid, you are welcome to bring it along to use as your specimen. You also may work from photographs provided by the instructor. This class is designed for participants age 16 to adult and is appropriate for any skill level. Cost is \$94 per person. Call 703-642-5173.

SATURDAY/NOV. 7

The Woman's Club of Arlington (GFWC) Annual Bazaar will be held on Saturday, Nov. 7 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the clubhouse at 700 S. Buchanan St. Arlington. Featuring many craft vendors. Door prizes and raffles, also. New this year: Margaret's Soul Food Truck on site during the event. Proceeds go to local and

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 13

Hollin Hall Jazzercise Hosts Pink Out Dance Day Event

FROM PAGE 9

\$1,000 for the Alexandria-based National Breast Cancer Foundation at the Pink Out Dance Day event.

During the Pink Out Dance Day event, attendees wore pink to show support for those affected by breast cancer. Jazzercise locations all over the world have been hosting similar events throughout the month of October to raise awareness for the disease.

"We were so honored to host this event and to raise awareness for breast cancer," said Mindy LaBruno,

who has been a certified Jazzercise Instructor and Owner for 33 years. "Our goal is to be part of the solution and raise awareness in our local community. We are so grateful to the support of our customers who gave generously and danced their hearts out for the cause." Hollin Hall Jazzercise has been a part of the Mount Vernon/ Fort Hunt business community for 33 years. For more information please visit: <https://www.jazzercise.com/location/jazzercise-alexandria-mount-vernon-hollin-hall-center>

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 12

national charities. Free Parking. Call 703-553-5800.

NOV. 10 TO JAN. 21

Holiday Spirit. At Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 29, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery announces the opening of its juried show "Holiday Spirit." This is the annual holiday show, and the artists go all out to create gifts that will get you into the holiday mood. Hours: 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 11

Why Do Cicadas Scream. 9 a.m. to

11:45 a.m. Virtual on Zoom. Excitement is as easy as the wave of a wand. Explore the cicada life cycle and themes of transformation and change through movement and art. Tuition: \$45. For Scholarship information or to enroll at www.janefranklin.com or call 703-933-1111.

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 11

Saluting Independence. 10-11:30 a.m. Virtual.

Join in Saluting Independence on Nov. 11, a virtual event that honors our veterans and raises support and awareness for Canine Companions for Independence. Free.

Visit the website: www.cci.org/salutingindependence. Registration

is required to receive access to the event.

Register at www.cci.org/salutingindependence

SATURDAY/NOV. 21

The Ken & Brad Kolodner Trio. 2 p.m. Featuring Ken Kolodner, hammered dulcimer | Brad Kolodner, banjo | Alex Lacquement, upright bass. Welcome Thanksgiving with a uniquely American program that celebrates the traditions of American music and crosses the boundaries of Old-Time, Bluegrass and American Roots music. At The Rectory on Princess St, 711 Princess St, Alexandria. Visit <https://www.classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts-2/>

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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

Better Late Than Never ...

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



... to get a second opinion about one's first cancer; especially if there's now a second cancer to consider. For most of the nearly 12 years during which I've been a cancer patient, my diagnosis has been non small cell lung cancer stage IV. Within the past 10 months or so, it has become apparent and subsequently confirmed by a surgical biopsy of a tumor located in my lungs, that I have papillary thyroid cancer. The big question remains - and has not been agreed to by my endocrinologist and oncologist, is whether I have two types of cancer or just one. And moreover, whether I've always had two types or one primary - previously undiagnosed, that has now metastasized after 10-plus years from the thyroid into the lungs?

From my understanding - or actually what I've been told, it's possible, though hardly prudent to biopsy all the remaining tumors in my lungs to confirm exactly what type (types) of cancer I have. According to my doctors, the medical risks to me are too great. Therefore, the decision has been made to treat the thyroid cancer and to monitor - for lack of a better description, the lung cancer. And I can live with that (hope to live with that I should say). Nevertheless, it seemed an opportune time to get, for the first time in my cancer life, a second opinion. This week, after waiting out the transfer of medical records and a thyroid cancer specialist's evaluation, Team Lourie will be going to the Lombardi Cancer Center at Georgetown University Hospital for an independent assessment. To say we are extremely anxious is an understatement.

When I was initially diagnosed in late Feb., 2009, we did not get a second opinion. Perhaps we were naive, but at the moment the oncologist told us my diagnosis - and prognosis: non small cell lung cancer stage IV. he was not the least bit perplexed and the path forward seemed clear, and we didn't question him too much. A week later, I began chemotherapy. I have never wavered in this decision and I have no regrets about the path I chose. The fact that I have lived years beyond my prognosis has occasionally given me moments of curiosity as to why I was so amazingly lucky to have survived when so many others have not. Not wanting to look a gift oncologist in the mouth (if you know what I mean), I rarely thought to ask. I mean, I was doing so well.

Then about two years ago, a lump appeared under my Adams Apple. Upon examining me/it, my oncologist characterized it as a clone of my lung cancer and did nothing more than note its size and shape when he regularly examined me until the first of three biopsies (of a lymph node) was ultimately performed. It indicated thyroid cancer. This was new information to my oncologist. And so I was referred to an endocrinologist. She took one look at my "Adams Apple tumor" as I called it, and did a needle biopsy right then and there - in her office. She called me two days later with the results. Again, it confirmed thyroid cancer which subsequently led to the removal of my thyroid a month or so later. A few months after that, a hospitalization followed for radioiodine treatment to locate and kill any remaining thyroid cancer. Within another month I began chemotherapy treatment for thyroid cancer. Which is how I am presently being treated. Nothing more has changed. However, we wondered, what about my lung cancer? It was not being treated? As George Costanza asked after having sex with the cleaning lady on an old Seinfeld episode: "Was that a bad thing?"

And so we have taken steps to find out what it is we don't know that maybe the doctors know. Unfortunately, my original tissue sample is too degraded to re-biopsy, but all other relevant medical information has been transferred. I don't suppose we'll be able to go too far back in time, but given the future that I ended up having, there's no time like the present to review the past.

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

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News



Sometimes carrying the tripod is just as important as getting behind the camera.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Alexandrian Documents The History of U Street

Filmmaker Jane Pittman returns to Alexandria Film Festival.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION



Out on U Street, Pittman and Julia Hocker capture the energy.

The U Street corridor slices through the heart of Washington, D.C. and with history and culture, plus bars, restaurants, and boutiques, it's a draw for visitors. But it wasn't always that way. U Street was the heart of Black culture in America.

Alexandria resident Jane Pittman captured the changes on U Street in a documentary called "An American Scene: Black Lives Matter," that is a featured film in the Alexandria Film Festival on Nov. 15.

"The U Street Corridor in the nation's capital has been many things -- Black Broadway, the heart of black culture in Washington, an innovator, an incubator, a slum. This film captures the highlights and low points of this historic Washington district over the last century," says the film's description for the Alexandria Film Festival. "Set to the Music of the African American composer William Grant Still, the film is a collage of photographs and video footage that documents the people and places that made the U Street corridor what it was and is today."

It is a collection of rare photographs showing a "Black Broadway," Pittman said, featuring the life and times of William Grant Still who was part of a Homegrown Symphony, Pittman called it. "He was famous during the Manhattan Renaissance," she said.

The stretch of U Street was examined with the help of the Smithsonian Institute photo collection and D.C. Public Archives. Pittman looks at an area highlighted by the African American Civil War Memorial Metro stop, Ben's Chili Bowl and other local businesses that have gotten a name through the years.

She's learned a lot about the legalities of using the photos too. "It's been a process to

license the photographs," Pittman said. A combination of the still photos and shots Pittman took with the movie camera were put together in a storyboard format.

"There's much to watch," Pittman said. "The short film is very popular right now." The Alexandria Symphony Orchestra does a musical piece for the film.

Pittman is an Alexandria resident who grew up in North Carolina. She has gotten behind the camera from the early days and now has a production company called "Pittsure Company." She's won several awards for her works, including the "Audience Award," at the 2018 Alexandria Film Festival for a documentary called "The Makeover." It's "a distinctly traditional love story set in a decidedly non-traditional milieu of shifting gender." Another documentary, "Church of the Wild," was an official selection at the Lyons International film festival in Colorado in 2019.

Some of her other topics have been senior women's basketball, artists, pickleball and schools.

"I do a lot of documentary work," she said. For the U Street film, she credits producer Annette Brieger who she worked with, and a local teenager Julia Hocker with animation and production assistant duties when necessary.

The Alexandria Film Festival will run from Nov. 12-15, and will be fully virtual with Zoom links to view the movies.

This is a sneak preview of the film that will be screened in November 2021, with score performed live by the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra.

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