

The Arlington Connection

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Appreciating Our Pets this Thanksgiving

BY JOAN BRADY

Local rescues are reporting that pet adoption is at an all-time high with more people working from home and looking for joy and companionship. According to a Korean study, even pet insects can help increase happiness. Yup, among folks over 65, “Caring for insects was associated with a small to medium positive effect on depression and cognitive function.”

Now I’m not suggesting that we should all race out to cheer ourselves up by getting an orchestra of crickets -- yep “orchestra” is the term for a group of crickets. But the truth is that having and caring for pets has long since been tied to the happiness of owners all over the world. And particularly at this crazy time.

Our fellow northern Virginians say that their pets give them a lot to be thankful for this Thanksgiving.

Jordan and Mason knew exactly what they were doing when they dragged their respective owners, Kate Dubrowski and Alex Picciano to the Riverhouse apartment complex dog park. That day, as the dogs played, the two chatted and four years later, on Nov. 15, they tied the knot!

The humans report that “[They] are so thankful

[the dogs] brought them together.” As for Jordan and Mason, they are enormously pleased with themselves for their matchmaking abilities and are considering putting out a shingle to help other local singles. The family has recently moved to the Del Ray neighborhood in Alexandria.

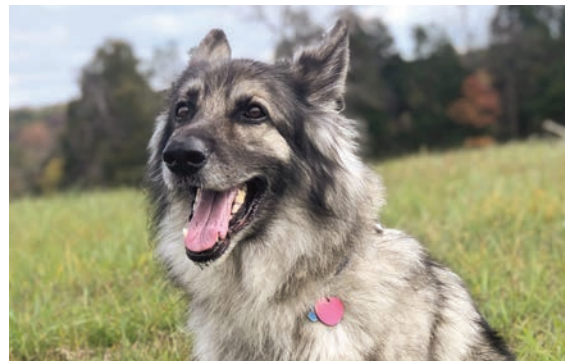
Interested in adding a pet to your family through adoption or fostering? There are quite a few rescues in the area offering a range of pets including dogs, cats and smaller animals. Here are just a few:

Animal Welfare League of Alexandria
Animal Welfare League of Arlington
Homeward Trails
Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation
Wolf Trap Animal Rescue

ArPets is a weekly feature for highlighting the well-loved pets of Arlington as well as animals who are available for adoption. If you or your dog, cat, iguana, bunny, rat or any other pet, has an interesting pet story to tell, send email to: joan@joanbradyphotography.com.

Joan is an award-winning Connection Newspapers columnist and local photographer specializing in pets, children and families and contemporary business portraits.

“Since I no longer have a commute, Bear and I have been going on extended morning walks and it’s helped me keep some semblance of a routine [during the pandemic] ... I’m more thankful than ever that he’s around.” Kelly Davison
Bear, a 9-and-a-half-year-old German shepherd mix, resides in Arlington Heights.



CONTRIBUTED BY KELLY DAVISON



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY KATE DUBROWSKI

Kate Dubrowski and Alex Picciano with Jordan and Mason.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY LINDA FETTIG

“I am thankful for him because he has already brought so much joy and happiness to our family.” — Linda Fettig

Elvis, a two-month-old coonhound mix whose family includes Linda and David Fettig and their daughter Michelle as well as Linda’s 99-year-old mother, Pauline Franko, calls the Overlee Knolls neighborhood home.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY ELIZABETH PIEPENBRING

“My son [Nicholas] and I are so thankful for our two rescue dogs. They have offered us so much love and many laughs during such a dark time. They love to keep the squirrels away from the bird feeder and they are vigilant watchdogs who alert us when the neighbor’s cat dares to enter our yard.” — Elizabeth Piepenbring

Copper, a 4-and-a-half-year-old beagle/dachshund mix, and Lucy, a 3-year-old beagle/Catahoula leopard hound mix, live in Lyon Park.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY CLAUDIA SALEM

“We are thankful for her being our best friend and the best foster mentor/sister Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation could ever ask for! We’ve had over 50 dogs come to us and leave better,” because of Beatrix, said Claudia Salem. Beatrix, age 12, lives with Salem and her son Max, who has a special bond with the pitbull mix. They live in the Donaldson Run neighborhood.

Virtual or In-Person

What should “back to school” look like during a pandemic?

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Sept. 8, early October, November and now 2021. Arlington Public School students have been on a roller coaster ride since the pandemic restrictions were announced in March. Schools were closed temporarily and then opened with virtual learning, which is where they remain today except for a small number of students.

Some families have adjusted pretty well; others not so much. Some worry about the health threat posed by coronavirus in the classroom and the threat it poses to themselves and the teachers. Others are more concerned about the social deprivation and academic backsliding that are resulting from the lack of in-person learning.

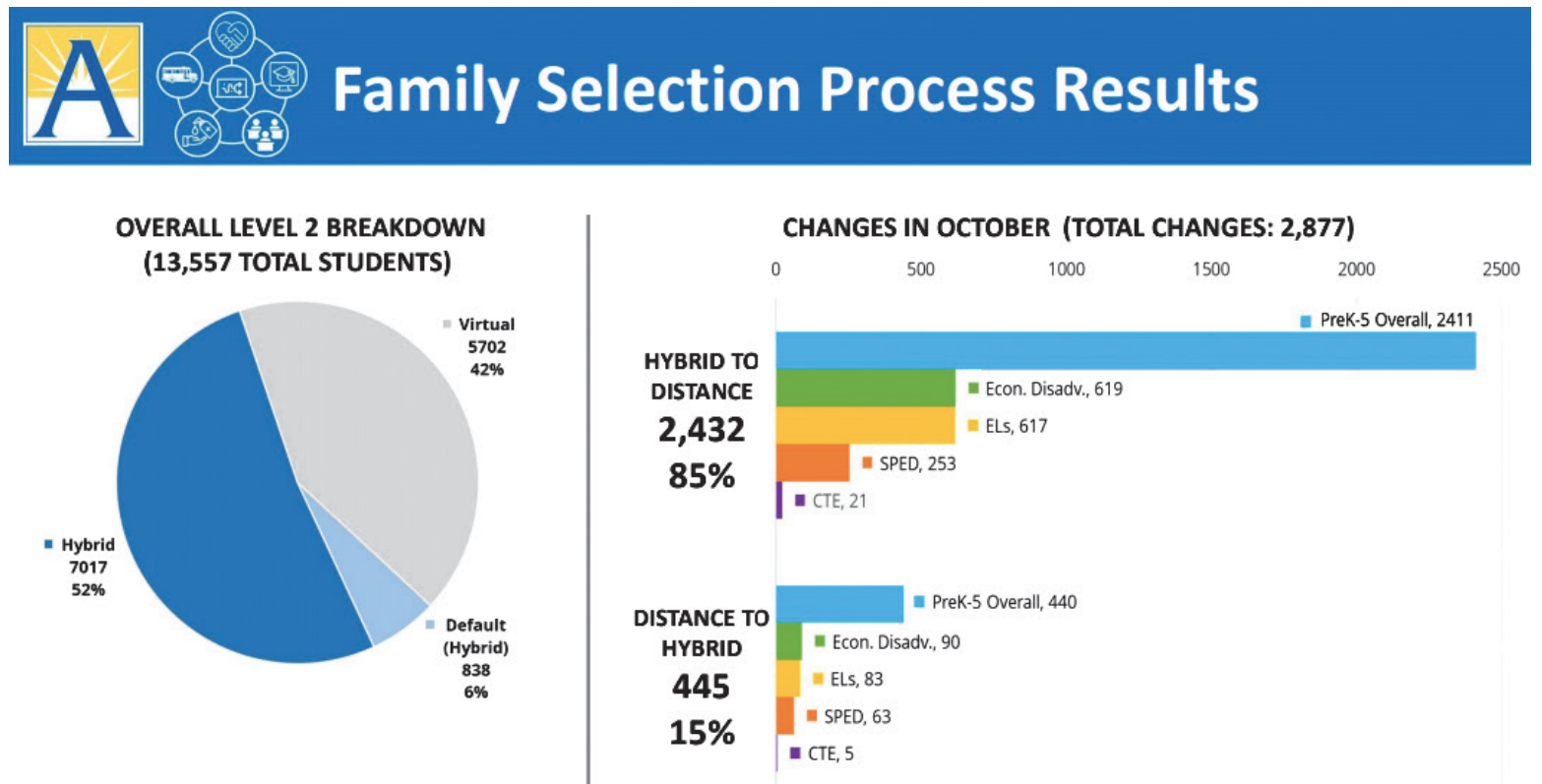
Miranda Turner who is on the Steering Committee for Arlington Parents for Education (APE), a parents’ advocacy group in favor of a safe measured return to in-person education says, “The virtual doesn’t work well for my kindergarten and 3rd grade kids.”

She says a kindergarten student needs to know how to raise their hand, follow directions, sit in a circle, and socialize. And it’s a lot of sitting all day for the third grader.

“You get kicked out a lot over and over [from virtual classes]; it’s just something that happens.” She adds it is important to have human interaction with the teacher and with the other students. “It’s just not the same on the internet. They are proceeding as though virtual is a realistic option.” Her daughter wrote a letter in October asking Governor Northam to open the schools.

Amber Tyler, mother of a second grader at Discovery Elementary, says “the virtual learning works for us. My daughter is engaged. But there are times I have to remind her. You can’t stay engaged for hours.” She says this is a hard choice but everybody has to do what makes sense for them. Tyler says when she described to her daughter what it would be like to go back to school with masks and social distancing, her daughter didn’t think she would like it and wanted to keep learning virtually.

Emma Baker, mother of a high school and middle school student, says both of her daughters have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). The frustration levels are different with her two daughters. The kids are often working



Graph from APS Nov. 5 presentation showing results of family selection process in October. See APS website for full presentation.

by themselves and “my younger daughter is used to having someone around in the classroom to help her when she has trouble with a math problem. We had to hire a tutor for her. Kids should have been in school since September. I would choose hybrid in a heartbeat.”

In mid-July ACS announced a plan for a phased hybrid learning plan to begin in the fall, which would offer parental choice on their preferred instructional delivery method. School began Sept. 8 with virtual learning only.

The planned return to school was prioritized by the student’s level of need and ability to access learning remotely with the projected return date for level 1 in-person at mid-late October.

Level 2 was projected to begin Nov. 12 for PreK, Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades, including English language learners, students with IEPs as well as high school students enrolled in selected courses at the Career Center. December was the projected date for 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students to begin in person. All APS middle and high school students who had chosen hybrid were projected to return mid-January.

The schedule was revised in early October after feedback from parents and revised health statistics, with the deadline for parents to update their preferences



Pod of children in virtual on-line learning class.

for instructional delivery delayed until Oct. 21. The family selection process indicated that of 13,557 families, 2,432 changed from their

initial choice of hybrid to distance learning while 445 changed from distance to hybrid. This resulted in 52 percent choosing hybrid (a

combination of in-person and virtual) and 42 percent choosing virtual.

Superintendent Dr. Francisco Durán believes the shift to preference for virtual reflects the increased incidence of coronavirus numbers. He says the school system has numbers for coronavirus cases by zip code. For instance, Carlyn Springs Elementary was the only school to have a 100 percent response rate to the parental preference poll.

“Eighty-three percent [at Carlyn Springs Elementary] chose virtual learning because of the high COVID rate among this largely Hispanic community. Most of the people know someone or have someone in their family with COVID, and many have no health insurance,” Durán said.

Tyler said they have made their decision to go completely virtual partly because they have some underlying health concerns. “It would be very scary if COVID came into our home.”

Since initial plans for reopening were announced in July, dates and plans for reopening have changed a number of times leaving uncertainty for schedules, work and day care arrangements.

Turner says, “It’s been brutal.” She never told her daughter about the changing deadlines for return to school, “having hope taken

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GIVING THANKS FOR LOCAL HELP

Arlington Nonprofits Deserve Your Help

Give Locally in Arlington

❖ Arlington Free Clinic provides free, high-quality health care to low-income, uninsured Arlington County adults through the generosity of donors and volunteers. www.arlingtonfreeclinic.org 2921 11th St. South, Arlington, VA 22204, 703-979-1425

❖ A-SPAN provides services for Arlington's street homeless. Its mission is to secure permanent housing for one of Arlington's most vulnerable populations. P.O. Box 100731 Arlington, VA 22210, A-SPAN strives to end homelessness in Arlington through housing and ongoing case management. Learn more about our housing programs; medical, employment and Day programs. A-SPAN provides shelter and shelter-based supports. 703-820-4357, www.a-span.org/ and www.facebook.com/aspan.org/

❖ Arlington Thrive provides one-time, same-day emergency financial assistance to Arlington residents facing a financial crisis, and also has programs to help prevent homelessness. 703-558-0035, www.arlingtonthrive.org

❖ Bridges to Independence - Bridges to Independence leads individuals and families out of homelessness and into stable, independent futures. They offer a continuum of aid and support for all family members, helping them attain financial security and move forward into self-sufficiency. www.Bridges2.org

❖ Animal Welfare League of Arlington - Since 1944 the Animal Welfare League of Arlington has worked to improve the lives of animals. Help them create a world where all companion animals find homes; enjoy their lively social media presence. Rabies & Microchip Clinic, Oct. 8 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm by reservation only. Sign-ups for each date will open a week before the clinic date. Rabies shots are \$10, microchips are \$35. www.awla.org/event/drive-up-rabies-microchip-clinic-3/ 703-931-9241, www.awla.org

❖ OAR (Offender Aid and Restoration) Offender Aid Restoration (OAR) community based nonprofit working with individuals returning to the community from incarceration and offering alternative sentencing options through community service. 1400 N. Uhle Street, Suite 704. 703-228-7030 www.oaronline.org

❖ Doorways for Women and Families provides services to help women out of domestic violence and homelessness toward safe and stable lives, Arlington, www.doorwaysva.org, 703-504-9400.



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Alias Santiago, Jolie Smith and Ray Bynum open a cardboard box to inspect three of the 2,500 frozen turkeys ordered by AFAC for Thanksgiving dinners for their clients.

❖ The Arlington Food Assistance Center provides supplemental food assistance to Arlington County residents, distributes groceries to over 2,300 families every week. More than 35 percent are children. 2708 South Nelson Street, Arlington, VA 22206, www.afac.org/, 703-845-8486.

❖ Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia, Arlington, 703-521-9890.

❖ Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH) has expanded its Resident Emergency Fund to help more than 4,000 low-income neighbors hit the hardest by the economic repercussions of COVID-19. Donations to this fund go directly to struggling households to help them meet their basic needs like putting food on the table, paying their rent or utility bills, keeping infants and toddlers in diapers, filling prescriptions, and picking up personal hygiene items. <https://apah.org/>

❖ Just Neighbors provides immigration legal services to low-income immigrants in Washington D.C., Maryland and Virginia, especially those who are most vulnerable. 7630 Little River Turnpike, Suite #900, Annandale justneighbors.org

❖ The Lost Dog & Cat Rescue Foundation helps homeless pets find their way into loving homes through rescue and adoption. We offer same-day adoptions and two-week trial periods. ALL pets are spayed or neutered prior to adoption. www.lostdogrescue.org/ P.O. Box 50037, Arlington, VA 22205; To donate www.lostdogrescue.org/donate-now/ or email giving@lostdogrescue.org 703-295-DOGS

❖ Northern Virginia Family Services, 571-748-2500, www.nvfs.org, Employment and job training, healthcare, housing, mental health, foster care and Healthy Families.

❖ Second Story — Abused and Homeless Children's Refuge, 2100 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA 22182.

703-506-9191, second-story.org. Second Story (formerly Alternative House) provides shelter and services for homeless, runaway or abused teenagers, unaccompanied youth, and young mothers and their children.

❖ Comfort for America's Unformed Services (CAUSE) ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation for all that they have done. Mailing address: 4201 Wilson Blvd., #110-284, Arlington, VA 22203, 703-591-4965, cause-usa.org

❖ Neighborhood Health Clinics www.neighborhoodhealthva.org, Improving health and health equity in Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax by providing access to high quality care regardless of ability to pay.

❖ Literacy Council of Northern Virginia, 703-237-0866, www.lcnv.org, Teaches adults the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and understanding English.

❖ The Community Foundation of Northern Virginia works to respond to critical needs and seed innovation in our region. www.cf-nova.org/for-donors/donate-now

❖ TAPS, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, 3033 Wilson Blvd., Third Floor, Arlington, VA 22201, Call 24/7 800-959-TAPS (8277) The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors offers compassionate care and resources to all those grieving the loss of a military loved one. Make a donation to support surviving military families and loved ones. You can also make a gift in honor or memory of a loved one. www.taps.org/donate

❖ Friends of Guest House Northern Virginia offers structure, supervision, support and assistance to female ex-offenders who want to improve their lives and break the cycle of incarceration. Friends of Guest House offers the only program for women of its kind in Northern Virginia.

One East Luray Ave., Alexandria, VA 22301-2025, 703-549-8072, info@friendsofguesthouse.org, friendsofguesthouse.org/

❖ Ronda A. Gilliam Clothing Bank provides free clothing, shoes and linens to individuals of all ages. Located in Arlington Presbyterian Church, 716 S. Glebe. 703-920-5660.

❖ Shirlington Employment and Education Center (SEEC) established to link employers with temporary day laborers; serves mainly low-income immigrants. At the Arlington Mill Community Center at 909 S. Dinwiddie Street, Suite 422, Arlington, VA 22204 703-933-1101 or seecjobs.org

❖ Alliance for Housing Solutions 3100 Clarendon Blvd, Arlington, VA 22201 703-859-0452, working to increase the supply of affordable housing in Arlington County and Northern Virginia through public education, policy development, advocacy and innovation. <https://www.allianceforhousingolutions.org/>

❖ Catholic Charities Diocese of Arlington, 200 North Glebe Road, Arlington, VA 22203 (703) 841-3895 www.ccca.net

❖ Homeward Trails Animal Rescue, PO Box 100968 Arlington, VA 22210 (703) 249-5066 We find homes for dogs and cats rescued from low-income, rural animal shelters or whose owners can no longer care for them. www.homewardtrails.org

❖ The Clothesline for Arlington Kids, 2704 N. Pershing Drive, Arlington, VA 22201 (703) 243-2615 Collects new and clean, gently used quality clothing from the community, and distributes it free of charge to low-income school-aged children in a welcoming space. www.clotheslinearlington.org/

Let Us Know Your View

Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue.

Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name. Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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By mail to: Letters to the Editor The Connection
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Brooks welcomes toy contributions as part of his ACPD training as a new service dog.



Corporal Steven Wallate puts up a sign for holiday toy drop off which has been changed to drive through this year.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Delivery Changes But Cheer Remains the Same

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Cars line up in the Harrison Shopping Center parking lot on Nov. 20 to drop off toys at the contactless, drive-thru Fill the Cruiser Holiday Toy Drive event. It was sponsored by the Arlington County Police Department.

Corporal Steven Wallate puts up a large sign directing the drivers to the flashing police cruisers parked in the lot in front of Harris Teeter where a crowd of officers stand ready to accept the toys.

This is the sixth year for the toy drive but things have changed. Tiny feet skipping across the parking

lot loaded with legos and Barbie Dolls have been replaced by faces inside the car handing toys out the window to police officers with masks. Officer Michael Keen accepts toys from a trunk loaded with “toys of all kinds for kids of all ages.”

Officer Harley Guenther, wearing her holiday hat, greets cars as they drive through to drop off their contributions. Brooks is in training as a service dog and is enjoying his first Holiday Toy Drive, wagging his tail to greet every visitor who arrives on foot.

The ACPD will hold three additional events: Ballston Quarter Nov. 23 from 5-7 p.m.; Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church Dec. 1 from 5-7 p.m. and Arlington Assembly of God on December 2 from 5-7 p.m.

Pavilion Fenced Off as Site for SEEC Workers

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

The pavilion on South 27th Street and Shirlington Road sits empty after 20 years of serving as a meeting place for Shirlington Employment and Education Center (SEEC) workers. It fell victim to the 4-Mile Run Redevelopment project.

SEEC was established in 2000 to match day laborers with employers who are in need of temporary labor. Originally it was funded by a Community Development Block Grant program but for many years it has been funded by Arlington County. The program has provided

more than 500 immigrant day laborers and local Green Valley residents with employment each year.

The SEEC workers signed in at the SEEC office on S. Nelson each day, and employers picked them up at the pavilion where skills were matched with needs. Work performed varied from construction to yard work, domestic services and handyman jobs. Prices were negotiated between worker and employer. The workers are almost all Hispanic immigrants with half from Guatemala.

One of the purposes stated in the original bylaws was to “engage in such other activities as are in furtherance of or are related to the

foregoing purposes.” As a result, the original program gradually grew to provide additional assistance to the workers such as warm coats and gloves, blankets, coffee at the site, bus tokens where necessary and Thanksgiving dinner paid for by fundraisers and donations from local Arlingtonians and other organizations. In addition, local churches began to cook enchiladas and chili or make bagged lunches to serve at the site several days a week to men waiting for jobs. One of the volunteers says, “it was the greatest compliment when one of them said it tasted just like home.”

The SEEC office also maintains

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WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Feasibility Study Arlington County

Virtual Public Information Meeting

Wednesday, December 16, 2020, 6:30-8 p.m.
www.virginiadot.org/route1multimodalstudy

Find out about a study to identify enhanced multimodal connectivity and accommodations along and across Route 1 from approximately 12th Street to 23rd Street South in Crystal City, to meet the changing transportation needs of this growing urban activity center. In coordination with Arlington County, the study will explore an at-grade urban boulevard, review and compare potential improvements to the current elevated conditions, and the elevated urban boulevard described in the Crystal City Sector Plan. Ultimately, the study aims to provide sufficient information to make the best decision on a future project on Route 1 in Crystal City.

The meeting will be held as a **virtual/online meeting**. Information for accessing and participating in the virtual meeting is available at **www.virginiadot.org/route1multimodalstudy**. The study team will make a short presentation beginning at 6:30 p.m. and answer questions for about an hour after the presentation.

Review study information and meeting details on the webpage above or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-259-2599 or TTY/TDD 711 to make an appointment with appropriate personnel.

Give your comments during the meeting, or by **December 28, 2020** via the comment form on the study website, by mail to Mr. Dan Reinhard, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or by email to route1multimodalstudy@VDOT.virginia.gov.

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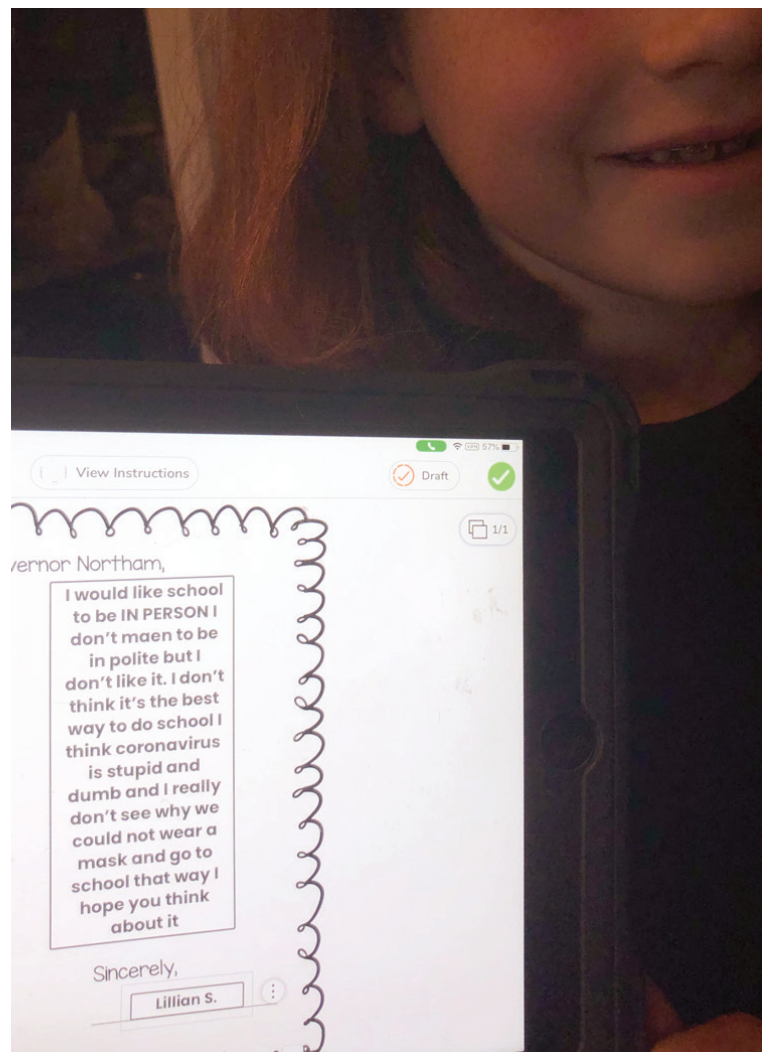


**TELL US
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THINK**

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Russell Laird had 400-500 "Open Schools Now" posters printed. He says a number of the posters have been destroyed and he is now bolting them down.



Miranda Turner's 8-year-old daughter wrote a letter to Governor Northam urging school reopening.

Virtual or In-Person

FROM PAGE 3
away."

Durán says he changed the time-frame in early November when the Arlington case coronavirus incident rate entered into the high-risk area. Durán adds he monitors the data consistently and looks at the decision in a holistic way, also using CDC primary indicators. He said there is a lot of different research, and there are varying perspectives. "I don't know if there is a perfect answer. It's a new phenomenon and we're still learning about COVID."

Durán explains in addition to assuring safety, there are operational metrics with complicated logistical decisions to be made. He says, "It's not a simple list for reopening." You have to consider transportation with only 11 children allowed on a school bus, matching teachers (virtual or hybrid) with parental choices (virtual or hybrid) and the disruption that would be caused by opening and closing school over and over.

Durán says he has talked to a number of parents and understands their concerns. Since Arlington schools had temporarily closed in March due to COVID and had moved to virtual learning, the evolving health metrics and guidelines set by the Virginia Department of Health have necessitated revising the school reopening plans a number of times.

But Duran views it as his responsibility to assure the school system has looked at all of the data, that all staff and students have been considered. And he says you see schools around the country going in and out of school with the resulting disruptions for families,

teachers, bus drivers and support personnel on all levels.

Russell Laird, who has a second grade daughter, says when this first happened he thought they should make decisions two weeks at a time. "We didn't know a lot in the spring but we know a lot more now."

He says his daughter is enrolled at Key Elementary in a bilingual program, and it's tough to learn a second language on line.

Laird adds his daughter is an over achiever but it's tough on her and especially on teenagers in their vulnerable years. "It's a travesty. Some of them are physically hurting themselves."

Laird says that schools are not super spreaders, and research overwhelmingly documents that schools are not a risk. Baker says restaurants and gyms are super spreaders. "Nobody says schools are super spreaders. All other places are open. Why not schools?"

Turner says, "I think in Arlington specifically there is a lot of higher level of risk adversity." She says if you make virtual better it could be a good alternative but the present system of dropping the in school system onto virtual doesn't work.

She says the emotional health of the kids is big enough to risk the low threat of coronavirus spread in the schools. "We could open school five days a week for younger students and assess this for the older students."

Laird feels strongly that virtual isn't working and gathered 1,000 signatures on a petition in the spring and recently had 500 "Open Schools Now" signs printed.

"Did you see the person at that

ridiculous press conference this week in Fairfax wanting to go all virtual? That was me. I believe they called me a heckler." He says a number of the signs he had printed have been destroyed, and he is now bolting them down.

All agree that every parent should have a choice. Baker says, "If you choose hybrid, you choose for your own reason. It says you have made the decision to take the risk. You have taken on the responsibility. You have to start somewhere."

Superintendent Duran says that he views the decision to open the schools as his responsibility. "If we go back in person, I have to be sure I have looked at all of the data, that all staff and students have been considered. And until recently we didn't have all of the proper equipment for the isolation rooms such as the proper PPE."

But Baker thinks the bigger issue is forcing the teachers back into the building. An APS poll found that 45 percent of the teachers wished to return and 54.8 percent supported distance learning.

Laird says teachers who refuse to teach in person should be fired. Baker considers them "essential workers."

On the other hand, Tyler worries about forcing teachers to do something that isn't safe. I don't know if I were a teacher how comfortable I would be going back into the classroom."

Durán says, "It isn't that the teachers don't want to go back. Many of them are not able to come in due to health risks, age. It's concerning to me that many of the attacks on teachers are personal. They are working so hard, and it's

not so easy to teach virtual."

Another part of the issue is the technology. Many parents complain that the Zoom sessions can be difficult to maneuver and their students can't do it by themselves.

Laird says he will be busy working at home and his daughter will come and say, 'daddy, I need help.' "I'm not an IT guy. They have how many apps and pretending a second grader can do it." He just gets back to work at home and his daughter interrupts him again.

Baker recalls when the pandemic hit in March with the school closing there was much to be desired. "No one saw it coming, and the technology, in my opinion, didn't have things set up and ready to go." She said they were spinning in a circle; the Internet connection didn't work; the students couldn't understand an assignment and they didn't get to see their peers and teachers. She says her girls didn't learn much.

But she said by September things had changed and there had been improvements. "It was really night and day, and I appreciate that. But we know that it's not healthy to stare at a screen. Oh my gosh how thrilled I am to have our teachers."

Durán says there are still some parts of the county where the students have a device but don't have access to the Internet. "We know

who these families are and some schools have established Internet access outside the school. Teachers know the families who are not logging in and they reach out. Internet access should be a basic right in 2020.

"Feelings run strong on all sides and we've got to get together and talk to and listen to each other. We all want the same thing. Everyone wants the best for their children."

Baker says this is very frustrating. "Arlington County has a lot of money and we pay a lot of taxes. It is a wonderful place to be. However, a lot of decisions are made in a vacuum. We've got to be creative," Baker said. "There are some intense people out there."

Tyler says, "I'm frustrated when you feel anger from either group. No one knows the right answers. I feel like everybody needs to take a deep breath. I know people don't like to hear this but it could be a teaching opportunity. This is crazy hard but it's just a few months of your life."

To access the School Board November 5 presentation: [https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/BV3TQH6ECFC8/\\$file/D-1%20School%20Year%202020-21%20Update%20110520%20Presentation.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/arlington/Board.nsf/files/BV3TQH6ECFC8/$file/D-1%20School%20Year%202020-21%20Update%20110520%20Presentation.pdf)

A Thanksgiving Like No Other, But Gratitude Is On The Menu

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

There won't be a Turkey Bowl in Hall's Hill this year, for the first time since most residents can remember. The Thanksgiving Day tradition is cancelled due to the pandemic. Even the chrome polished cars that gathered on the day won't be there; the road in front of the field is torn up from construction. Arlington residents are approaching Thanksgiving dinner with a different attitude this year, however; many more are focusing on the things that make them grateful this year, like health, and family, even if they are on a zoom call instead of across the table.

Moyen Uddin, owner of the Asia Market, specialty grocery and butcher shop on Lee Highway, is grateful for much.

"We can't gather this year," he said disconsolately. "I am just cooking a chicken, that's all, but I am thanking God that in future we

will gather next year; last year was difficult with the pandemic, we lost a lot of business, about 20 percent of our sales, but we managed without help to get through the worst of that time because we had a good year before the pandemic. I became an American citizen," he said with a smile behind his mask. "And I voted in the election this month. My son came home from Penn State for the holidays, and my wife and two sons are healthy, so I have a lot to be thankful for."

Lila Harmon of Arlington said she is thankful for friends and family; she will do what she pretty much always does on Thanksgiving: sit down with her Mom, immediate family, boyfriend and eat turkey.

Jim Moore of Moore's barber shop isn't doing anything this year: he might eat a turkey bacon sandwich for breakfast, he joked. Grateful will be the emphasis this year, not food.

Sharon Shutler managed to get her family together before the hol-

idays, since the weather permitted outdoor seating and it was easier to travel safely before things got crazy. Shutler said she was grateful for much this year, not necessarily in this order: "My crazy black lab who is always happy and playfully eccentric; my two daughters who are fun, great cooks, and remarkably resilient; my husband who remains always calm and shockingly optimistic; warm sunny days; the endless varieties of perennials and shrubs, though this abundance creates gardening dilemmas; my activist friends - kindred spirits who made the last 4 years bearable."

Some Arlingtonians are trying hard to raise funds for people who have been affected by the pandemic, and some of them will run the Turkey Trot virtual 5K to do that.

And for those who feel a little lonely this year, Bob and Edith's Diner is now open for business on Lee Highway, and they will be offering their standard open faced turkey sandwich with two sides, from 9 to 3 pm on Thanksgiving Day.



PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

Moyeen Uddin, at his "Asia Market" grocery and butcher shop on Lee Highway. Uddin is grateful to be a US citizen and to have had the chance to vote this year, among other things.



Lila Harmon, a sales associate at Petco, will have a pretty normal Thanksgiving with her small immediate family.

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SENIOR LIVING

Holiday Celebrations COVID Style

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

The decision to spend holidays away from loved ones can be a necessity during the coronavirus pandemic. For those who're accustomed to celebrating the season with large family gatherings, the solitude that comes with COVID-19 can be a difficult adjustment.

"First, acknowledge that this is going to be a different kind of holiday," said licensed psychologist Denise T. Dewhurst, Ph.D., Professor of psychology at Montgomery College. "Reach out to someone else you know who is also alone. Even a brief phone call benefit both of you."

A little forethought into how one's time will be spent will offer structure and can help manage feelings of loneliness, advises Dewhurst. "For some, this may be watching television, or reading. For others, it might be a hobby or craft."

"Work on creating something, maybe baking, art projects, family genealogy project, a journal about your life," added therapist Carol Barnaby, LCSW. "Take a virtual tour of somewhere you would like to visit."

Practice gratitude, suggests Dewhurst. "Remind yourself of things you do have to be thankful for," she said. Connect with family members virtually. Talking to one person or one group at a time might allow for better conversations, she said.

Video conferencing with family and friends, particularly during a meal, can allow one to simulate being together in person. "Talking and seeing others' faces is second best to being there and definitely will feel more like you're part of things than not," said psychiatrist Gail Saltz, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the NY Presbyterian Hospital Weill-Cornell School of Medicine. "Make a dish that matches the dish of where you would normally be going. Eating the same food, while having conversation increases the enjoyment and sense of being together."

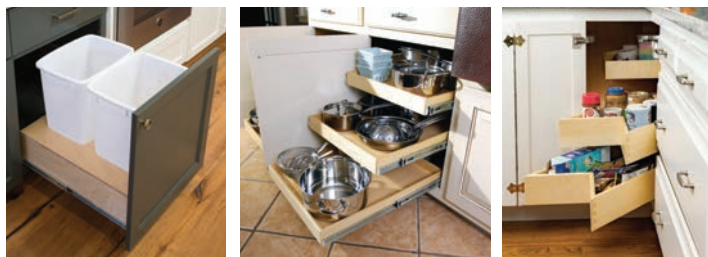
Put on a mask and take a socially distanced walk or other outdoor activity, says Saltz. "It may not be the sit-down meal, but a safe masked, distant outside walk can provide some time together," she said.

Reminisce about past holidays and envision those that lie ahead. "Spend a part of the day looking at photos privately of those you love and remembering fun and close times you have had together," said Saltz. "Keep in mind that when this is over, you'll resume making more memories together."

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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF KING WILLIAM

IN RE: ESTATE OF CHARLES ROBERT PARNELL, DECEASED

ORDER UP PUBLICATION

The object of this suit is to have the Estate of Charles Robert Parnell, Deceased, settled and paid out to all heirs.

It is ORDERED that Christine Royer appear at the above named Court and protect her interest she may have in this matter on or before December 17, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

It is hereby ORDERED that this Order be published once a week for four successive weeks in the Arlington Connection as her last known address was in Arlington, VA.

It is ORDERED that the Arlington Connection publish this Order for the time specified and send the Certificate of Publication and bill to Carl J. Witmeyer, II, Esquire at 9562 Kings Charter Drive, Suite 200, Ashland, VA 23005, to be paid by Peggy George, Administrator of the Estate.

It is ORDERED that the Clerk of this Court send a certified copy of this Order to Carl J. Witmeyer, II and to the Arlington Connection upon entry by this Court.

ENTER: 11/10/2020
R. J. Witmeyer, II
Judge

I ASK FOR THIS:

Carl J. Witmeyer, II
VSB # 15790
THE WITMEYER LAW FIRM, LLC
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Local churches regularly serve lunches to SEEC workers waiting for employment.

Pavilion Fenced Off as Site for SEEC Workers

FROM PAGE 5

a database of SEEC workers and refers eligible workers to County services as Arlington Food Assistance Center, Arlington Free Clinic and Department of Human Services.

As time went on Andres Tobar, Executive Director of SEEC, realized there was also a need to train Hispanic women for employment so he began a five-week course in 2012 to teach Hispanic immigrant women clean housecleaning techniques. The concept was to give the women an edge up on their competition by providing them the skills to clean using modern, environmentally sensitive products. Since the program began approximately 250 women have been trained.

These classes were held on Saturday mornings with transportation and childcare provided. Tobar says, "The childcare allowed the women to attend." Local churches and community organizations provided funding for the green housecleaning program. He says, "I can't tell you how supportive the faith-based community has been through the years." Tobar says the graduates of green housecleaning are available for hire through a SEEC database, and some of them went on to start their own housecleaning business.

Tobar saw the success of the green housecleaning program and got the idea to broaden the training to teach the women how to start their own businesses. In 2014 SEEC partnered with El Poder de Ser Mujer to provide training to 25 Latinas on how to start a business. The 5-week class included business development, marketing, financial management, "So far we have trained 330 overall."

Tobar says they had one woman who was able to get employment at the White House and others at Washington Nationals stadium dealing with food. Others started their own

cleaning companies. "What they wanted to know is what was involved. Some had already started a business but in the middle discovered they needed to know more about handling certain things like taxes or planning."

Andres said there have been some major success stories from workers who were able to transition to permanent jobs after their SEEC experience. He says the idea is to help men transition to permanent employment, and some have been able to do it.

The availability of SEEC jobs is seasonal in nature and can range, for example, from one worker hired the whole month of April with two in May after the pandemic hit. It has now gone back up to 108 in October but is expected to fall back down during the winter months. As a result of little income in the off months, many workers are in danger of losing their room or the couch they rent in a house so in 2016, in partnership with Arlington Thrive, SEEC began reaching out to provide rental assistance for the lean winter months. To date 60 men have received rental assistance.

When the coronavirus restrictions were put in place, it hit the SEEC workers hard. Jobs dried up, but rent still came due. Tobar says, "The community stepped up and we were able to get several major grants for food and rental assistance. We were delighted with the tremendous response that we received to support the immigrant community. It is a continuation of twenty years of support from Arlington County to ensure the immigrant community was provided an opportunity in this country."

In the future the program is expected to move to the Arlington Mills Community Center when it reopens after the coronavirus shutdown.

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A Question of Time



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Let us presume, for the sake of this column, that I only have papillary thyroid cancer stage IV, and that my years as a non small cell lung cancer patient, also stage IV, are over. If true, it begs the question, which I have been asked twice since this recategorization has become - in my circle anyway, public knowledge: how does it make me feel (to no longer be one scan result away from having months to live to now having years to live)? As obvious an answer as it should be: I can't exactly get my mind around it. I keep hearing that "If it's too good to be true, it isn't" advisory in my head. I realize medicine is different, and that's what scares me.

Well, I can't really say I feel as if I have my life back because I never really lived like it was gone. I pretty much - treatments and side effects notwithstanding - tried to maintain my normal life and to continue my routine as well. I didn't stray too far from my well-established dos and don'ts. I didn't write down a bucket list and therefore spent no time pursuing long-standing goals. I just did what I have always done. I didn't want to be controlled by my cancer; doing things, taking trips, etc. just because I had a "terminal" diagnosis. To my way of thinking, that would have been akin to reinforcing a negative: a cancer that was likely to kill me sooner rather than later so I better do such and such or else. Instead, I just lived my regular life and felt no pressure to cross off items on a bucket list before I died. In spite of living life not as if I was dying, but as if I was going to be living, (unlike the country music song that expresses a different sentiment) I survived beyond my wildest timeline: so far, 11 years and nine months after initially being given a "13 months to two years" prognosis.

Fast forward to the most recent - and amazing news: I hadn't miraculously survived non small cell lung cancer after all, I had merely survived a very survivable and slow moving thyroid cancer (that has - or had previously, metastasized to the lung). Though my oncologist still thinks I have two types of cancer, my endocrinologist thinks I only have - and have had, one type, thyroid cancer. The Lombardi Cancer Center head and neck cancer specialist also feels like I have one cancer: thyroid. Her reasoning, after reviewing my medical records was a bit more direct: "if you had lung cancer diagnosed 12 or so years ago, we wouldn't be here having this discussion. You wouldn't be alive." So being alive is proof, a type of proof I suppose, that I've had thyroid cancer all along and never had lung cancer.

Not that I want to be thick-headed but after nearly 12 years of being told that I had lung cancer and living scan to scan every two to three months and anxiously waiting as well for my lab results every three weeks

I find myself unable to let go of the worst case scenario that has been my life since Feb., 2009, and embrace this amended diagnosis. I can't seem to turn off my internal anxiety/fear clock. In fact, it's still stuck in its original position. I'm like an ocean liner headed out to sea. It can hardly turn on a dime and neither can I. Certainly I want to believe it and I don't really doubt the thyroid cancer opinions I've received, but it just seems that having your wildest dreams come true after almost 12 years of trying to accept the reality of your cancer situation/early death is too much good fortune for anyone to imagine/realize. It's the opposite of normal. As much as one might want it to happen, it's just not the way it generally works. I don't suppose doctors hand out terminal diagnosis before giving it extra ample thought. And yet, I'm about to be living proof.

Nevertheless, every day, the shock of it begins to wear off and I can contemplate my future once again. No more will I count the days between scans. No longer will I dread reading my lab work and wondering what it all means. Oddly enough, what it all means is that I'll probably continue/resume my previous life, boring and mundane as it was because, well, it worked for me then so I imagine it will work for me now.

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

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