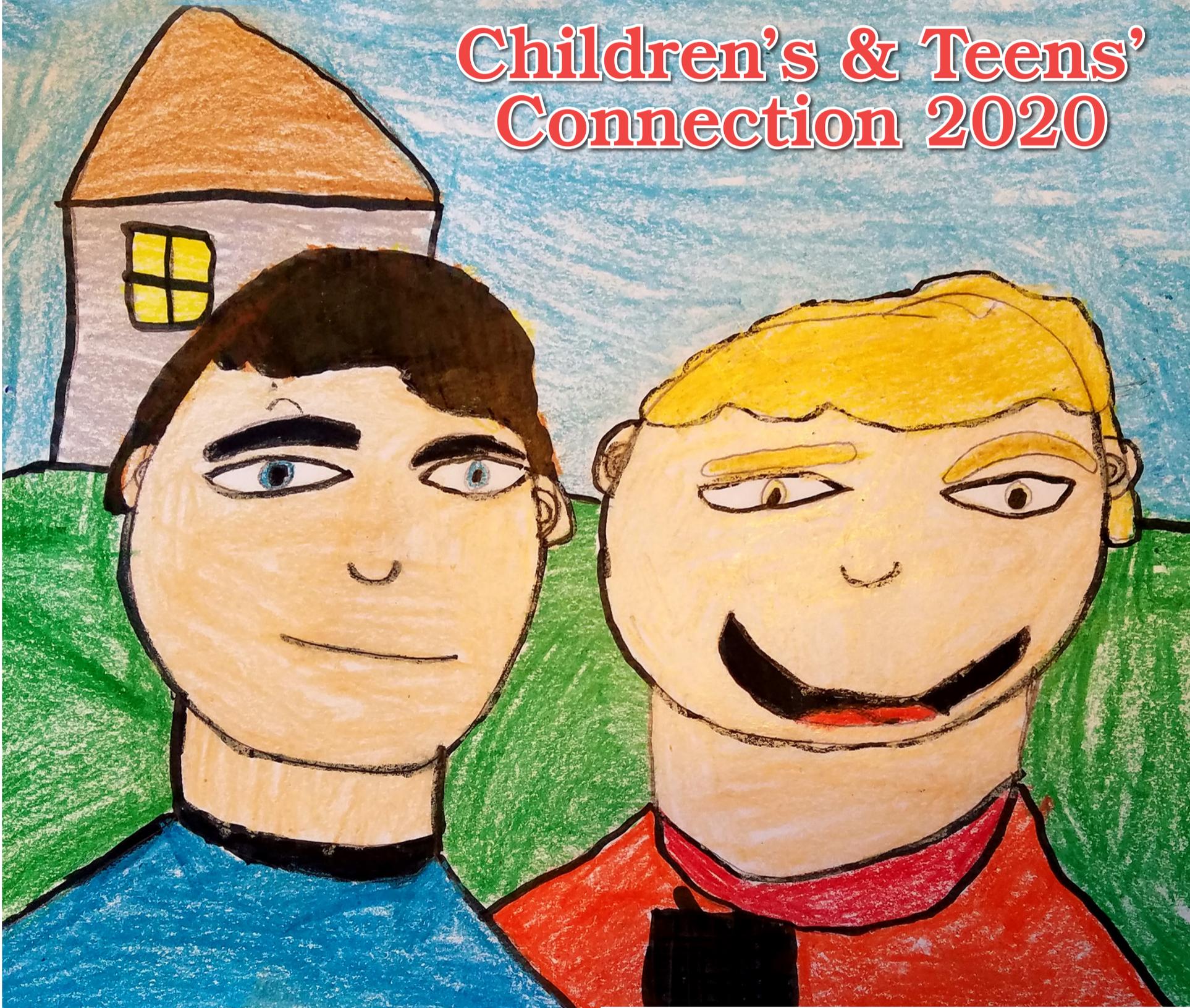


The Arlington Connection

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Robert Clayburn
2nd grade
Title of Artwork: "Me and My Friend"

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lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known

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PHOTOS BY MARK CHARETTE

The weather outside was, well, not so bad. The first snow of the season was a mere dusting in most of Arlington.

Bridges to Independence Finalizes Merger

Unified organization announced at December 19 virtual ribbon-cutting.

Bridges to Independence, a Northern Virginia provider of housing and vital services for at-risk families and individuals, today announced the finalization of its merger with the Bonder and Amanda Johnson Community Development Corporation (BAJCDC), a community-based non-profit with a mission to address the health, education, financial empowerment and social service needs of people living in Arlington's Green Valley neighborhood.

"We are excited about moving forward with a strong, unified organization that will ensure people in Green Valley and throughout Northern Virginia receive the support and services they need," said Bridges' board

president Patrick King. "As our communities and families continue to struggle with the impact of COVID-19, the work of Bridges to Independence and BAJCDC is more important than ever."

The two organizations will unify under Bridges to Independence to provide youth education, social service referrals, health and wellness guidance, and financial education – adding to Bridges' current housing, employment and youth development portfolio. Bridges will also maintain operations at BAJCDC's Green Valley location on South Shirlington Road, remaining it to the Bonder & Amanda Johnson Community Services Center. Former BAJCDC Executive Director,

Cecily Whitfield also serves as Bridges' Chief Program Officer while maintaining her position on the Executive Committee of the Green Valley Civic Association Board.

Whitfield says, "This merger will bring opportunities to truly support the Green Valley community through programs and resources that can act as a change agent and provide impactful service delivery to the community."

Bridges to Independence provides housing and other services in Northern Virginia for homeless women/families and those at risk. The organization offers a continuum of aid and support for all family members, helping them attain stability and move forward into

self-sufficiency, breaking intergenerational cycles of poverty. As a 501c3 nonprofit organization, Bridges has been working with and for homeless families since 1985, formerly as the Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless.

Established in 1999, the mission of the Bonder and Amanda Johnson Community Development Corporation is to enhance the economic and social development of its community.

It is the BAJCDC vision to achieve this through providing opportunities to address community needs through education, healthy living, financial empowerment and community involvement.

Arlington Police Implement Body Worn Camera Program

Beginning last Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020, Arlington County Police Officers assigned to the Operations Division will begin wearing body worn cameras. The plan is to record all dispatched calls for service, enforcement contacts and investigative contacts. The deployment of cameras includes officers assigned to Patrol, Special Operations, Community Outreach, K-9 and the Emergency Response Team (commonly referred to as SWAT).

This technology complements the existing in-car camera system and interview room

cameras used to document digital and audio video recordings of law enforcement activity and interactions. "The Arlington County Police Department welcomes the use of body worn camera technology as an additional tool in our commitment to providing professional law enforcement services to the Arlington community," said Acting Chief Andy Penn. "We recognize our community's trust is earned each day with every interaction. I am confident these cameras will build upon our longstanding history of community policing by highlighting the professionalism of the agency while instilling greater

public confidence as we continue to hold ourselves accountable to the highest professional standards."

Program Funding

In June, County Manager Mark Schwartz announced funding for a Body Worn Camera program for the Police Department, Sheriff's Office, and Fire Marshal's Office as part of his proposed FY 2021 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). In July, the County Board approved the CIP and funding for the program. Specifically, the CIP provided \$268,000 for body worn camera hardware; \$244,000 for upgrades

to four County courtrooms to support the technology; \$536,000 for data storage, software, and maintenance; and \$755,000 for replacing existing in-car camera systems to one compatible with body worn cameras.

In July, Arlington decided to Fund Body-Worn Camera Program for Police and the Sheriff's Office.

Community Engagement

In November, the Police Department, Sheriff's Office and Fire Marshals' Office sought the public's input and feedback on draft Digital Evidence Management System policies, regulating digital audio and

video recordings captured by body worn cameras, in-car cameras, and interview room cameras. The goal of this engagement was to create model policies utilizing established best practices and to continue to strengthen community relations and professional standards within the departments by enhancing transparency, accountability and training. All comments were reviewed and evaluated for incorporation into the policies.

MORE: Read the Police Department's Final Digital Evidence Management System Policy.

CHILDREN AND STUDENT CONNECTION



Shrevewood Elementary School

Alisha Soeun Yoon
 Title: Fall Family Portrait
 2nd grade
 Shrevewood ES

COVID-19

As a drop of red pigment
 Turns a bucket of water into a red river
 A single case of COVID-19
 Turns the whole world upside down
 Like a bird trapped in a cage
 Like a hamster running on a wheel
 We feel hopeless and lonely
 We talk to ourselves in the mirror
 We wear mask to hide our fears
 We scream silently for help
 But
 There is a light at the end of the tunnel
 Peace and calm are waiting for us
 Let's pray and hope
 Changing tears into laughters
 No matter what happens
 We will find our way
 We will survive

Ina Chung, 17, is a junior at Bishop O'Connell High School in Arlington. Ina is a resident of McLean. Her English teacher is Mr. Prince.

When the Winter Is Over

BY SEONGHUI JU

Out of breath and in constant pain
 Alone in the room, wallowing in fear
 Tears shed, making up a stream of despair
 While racial injustice is raging again
 An empty feeling roams the world
 People fear not everything will be repaired
 Jobs are gone and shops are closed; it's too hard to bear
 But even rainy days pass, and bright ones appear
 The right and fair will show its presence
 These are the times when we have to be willing
 To see the world in brighter ways, to gaze upon what's not so appealing
 To search not for the cause, but rather the effect
 Because after winter, a blossom will pop
 More and more will follow, as the bundle dyes our future in vivid colors

By Seonghui Ju
 11 years old
 Falls Church, VA.
 6th grader at Haycock Elementary in Falls Church
 homeroom teacher, Mrs. Kelly Arditti
 English teacher, Mrs. Jill Shull.



Name: Samantha Sutton
 Grade: 3rd
 Title: Dude from Israel
 (Cultural Identity Drawing)
 Art Instructor: Mrs. Chinn



Robert Clayburn
 2nd grade
 Title of Artwork: "Me and My Friend"

Merry Christmas

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

The pages of the Connection (including the Alexandria Gazette Packet, the Mount Vernon Gazette, the Potomac Almanac and the Centre View) are usually full of holiday spirit, beginning before Thanksgiving. While in this, the year of COVID, the year 2020, a year like no other, the holidays have been

EDITORIAL

muted in so many ways. Still we have celebrated help for the needy whose numbers have expanded with the pandemic; collecting toys and warm coats for children who might not otherwise receive them; holiday celebrations, concerts and performances via Zoom; socially distanced Santa, tree lightings; stories of giving; the Virtual Nutcracker; and more.

And still, Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ. Whether you believe the Christmas story literally or in spirit, you know it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption. In this holiday of 2020, like no other as we keep saying, we need the Christmas story in whatever way we can access it.

Christmas is also about embracing

the teachings of Jesus: to love thy neighbor as thyself; to help the needy; to feed the hungry and clothe the poor; to care for those who are sick; to invite and welcome strangers; to treat others as you would have them treat you. These teachings have deep meaning and consequence for us right now.

Matthew 7:12:

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.”

Matthew 25:35-40:

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go

to visit you?’

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

SO SHARE the verse relating the birth of Jesus from the Bible, Luke 2: 4-19:

Whether you embrace the Christmas story literally or in spirit, it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption.

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David.) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that

she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

“And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CALENDAR

NOW THRU JAN. 3

Ice & Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run. At Cameron Run Regional Park, 4001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Opens nightly 5 to 10 p.m. **Ice and Lights:** The Winter Village at Cameron Run will return this year, featuring an ice rink, more than a dozen holiday light displays perfect for Instagramming, retail area, food, music and more. The Ice and Lights Village is a short drive from Old Town. Masks are required in all areas of Ice & Lights except when eating or drinking in the concession areas. Admission: \$8.16 for general admission to Village; \$20.68 for admission with skating; starting January 9, 2021, \$12.19 for skating. Visit novaparks.com/events/ice-lights

NOW THRU DEC. 31

Christmas at Mount Vernon. From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Visit Mount Vernon this winter to participate in holiday activities and meet special guest Aladdin the camel. Learn about camels and George Washington's inter-

est in exotic animals during Camel Talks, offered Friday through Sunday beginning on November 27. Specialty tours give guests a deeper look into the holidays at Mount Vernon. During the tour “Mrs. Washington's Mount Vernon,” hear Martha Washington discuss the day-to-day planning needed for a busy holiday season. The “Holiday Dinner for the Washingtons” tour shares how food was grown, preserved and served during the holidays. Mount Vernon is open 365 days a year, including on Christmas Day. Admission: \$23 for adults; \$12 for youth (ages 6-11); free for children age 5 and below; extra cost for some activities. Visit mountvernon.org/christmas

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 handmade 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. 31

Small Works Show. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Gallery Underground, 2100 Crystal Drive, Arlington. “Small Works, Great Joy!” an all-member, all-media show of compelling small-scale works by our artists, priced affordably for holiday shopping. Visit the website: <https://galleryunderground.org/>

NOW THRU JAN. 30

Winter Wonderland. At King & Rye's courtyard (480 King Street, Alexandria) is transforming into a Winter Wonderland. In addition to general courtyard seating with heat lamps and holiday décor, new this year, book an igloo for private dining for up to eight guests. This is ideal for social distancing as you are only in the space with your party, and the area is sanitized between parties. The igloos will each have heaters as well as the option to play your own music via a Blue-

tooth speaker. The igloos will be reservation required with a \$50 rental and \$100 food and beverage minimum. The rental will include a hot cocoa and cookie bar. For food and beverage, enjoy a tapas style menu with a southern twist and, of course, festive cocktails. Reservations can be booked online or via info@kingandrye.com, available as of December 2, 2020. Visit kingandrye.com/event/winter-wonderland

NOW THRU JAN. 6

Winter Solstice Revels. 7-9 p.m. Online. Kindle the spirit of the season and comfort of “hearth and home” with Washington Revels and the virtual 2020 Winter Solstice Revels. This live participatory holiday event is fun for all ages, with carol singalongs, virtual performances, and more. Cost is \$35. Visit the website: <https://bit.ly/solstice-revels>

THURSDAY/DEC. 31

Torpedo Factory Art Center's Virtual Olde Year's Day. Welcome 2021 from the comfort of your home with our art videos and projects to create and share. Visit torpedofactory.org.

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Connection

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CALENDAR

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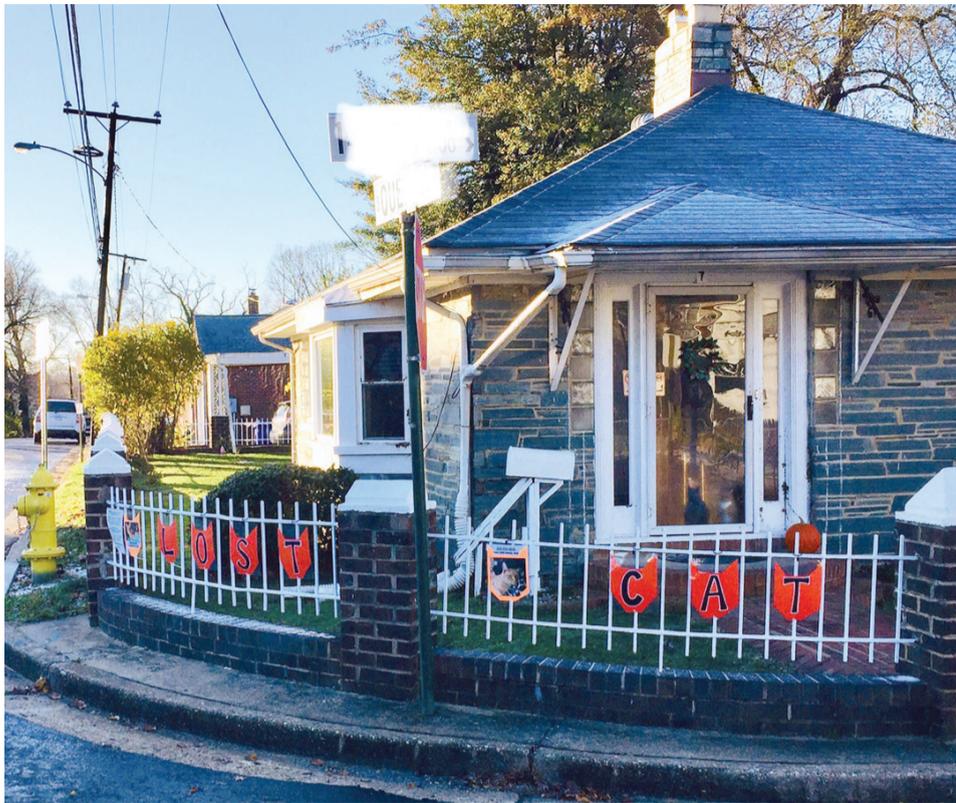
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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg



Getting the word out.

It'll be an Ollie Jolly Christmas For this Arlington Family

BY JOAN BRADY
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

It started as a totally normal day with Oliver the cat venturing out for her daily adventure. But hours later, Oliver or Ollie, as she is fondly called, had not returned.

Ollie and her brother Dodger enjoy exploring their Arlington neighborhood, but generally don't go out of earshot. So when Ollie didn't come when called on Saturday, December 12th, Emily Carmichael was worried. Oliver and Dodger are very close and as the hours passed, he seemed worried too.

If an outdoor cat doesn't come home, that generally means something has disrupted their normal routine. Carmichael feared that Ollie might have gotten accidentally trapped in someone's garage. Or, as Ollie doesn't like to wear a collar, perhaps some well-meaning stranger had noticed her and thought she was homeless. "She absolutely loves people, loves attention, and is so trusting she will approach strangers on the street," says Carmichael.

Hoping to find her beloved ginger feline, Carmichael sprang into action; posting on Nextdoor, in multiple Facebook groups, on Craigslist and several lost and found pet networks. In addition, she posted flyers around her neighborhood. At the time, "[her] sincere hope is that all of our neighbors will carefully check their garages, sheds, or any other enclosed spaces where a cat might be hiding. Doing so might save her life and my little family's Christmas."

On Dec. 17, six long days later and eight hours after putting a big sign across her fence, there was a knock at Carmichael's door. A family had apparently found Ollie in the street and didn't realize she had a family until they saw Carmichael's fence sign.

Carmichael says from now on, Ollie must learn to tolerate a collar. And she hopes that



Carmichael and Ollie, reunited Web Main Image.

more people who find an animal will report it. "Even one phone call or one email to a shelter," she says, "can dramatically speed up a reunion, and relieve a family's worry."

As for Oliver's reaction to all the fuss, Carmichael says, "She very clearly enjoyed her vacation."

This week's fun fact: Did you know that 80% of ginger cats are male?

If you are interested in adding a cat, dog or small animal pet to your household, here are a few local rescue organizations who may be able to help you find your perfect match:

- Animal Welfare League of Alexandria
- Animal Welfare League of Arlington
- Homeward Trails
- Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation
- PetConnect Rescue
- 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.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY EMILY CARMICHAEL

PHOTO BY JOAN BRADY

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Trip, and Hopefully Not a Fall



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Having recently returned from a driving sojourn through the south with stops and stays in North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida visiting four sets of friends in those three states, I can say with certainty that wearing masks, social distancing and common sense consideration for your fellow citizen were not nearly so accepted as we had hoped. Though we didn't exactly mingle with the masses, we were, nonetheless, in uncharted territory. As such, my wife and I will be getting covid tests after a week or so of being at home. Though still symptom free, it seems prudent under the very unique circumstances in which the world finds itself that we not wait too much longer. Time is very likely of the essence.

As a precaution - and courtesy to our southern hosts, we both got tested before our trip and with negative results, off we drove with one less concern. Now we could say with certainty that we had acted respectfully and with other people's prospective health in mind. Nevertheless, it was hardly a guarantee that we would remain covid free. After all, it was only a test. It was not an inoculation. Speaking of which, as a cancer patient with a compromised immune system, I imagine I'm likely to get my two shots sooner rather than later. But what about my wife, Dina. She raised an interesting question. Though she's not in any of the categories of early shot recipients, she is however living with someone who is me. Moreover, I don't suppose it would be to my advantage living in the same household/sleeping in the same bed/caring for a covid-positive person: my wife, even after receiving my shot. Data for that situation likely doesn't exist yet. I don't imagine it's akin to playing with fire - for me, more likely like playing with embers. Still, there seems to exist a risk, perhaps one that's been considered in the hierarchy/schedule of "inoculees." In summary, will family members of high-risk covid 19 recipients receive their vaccinations earlier on in the schedule than they might otherwise have been eligible? Or is the demand too great, given the worldwide pandemic, which I imagine it is.

If the plan is to minimize the risk for those most at risk, how do you accomplish that while leaving those closest (literally and figuratively) to them unprotected? I'm not asking for special treatment or dispensation from the Pope (has he gotten his shot?), I'm just wondering. Granted, there's not an unlimited supply - on or off the shelves, of vaccines, but there does seem to be nearly unlimited numbers of people who need to be vaccinated to accomplish a sort of worldwide herd-type immunity. That being said, if other people living in the home of an individual qualified/fortunate to receive a shot or two, are not inoculated as well, will it in fact enable the virus to move on, so to speak and find some other host susceptible enough to keep the virus straining? Will the proximity of other non-inoculated people defeat the purpose of getting the tier ones and twos inoculated? (I sound like Carrie Bradshaw (Sarah Jessica Parker) from "Sex and the City" sounding out one of her columns.)

I don't mean to be paranoid; I'm just wondering/theorizing if my fear is at all founded in reality or am I just cruising for a verbal bruising? I'm also curious if there's any discretion in the recipient process. Presumably, there are lots of circumstances/patients like me where the cancer patients' health and welfare - to varying degrees, are dependent on the health of people (family, friends or caregivers) entrusted to care for them. Giving the vaccine to the patient but denying it for the people responsible for their wellbeing seems counterproductive - or short sighted. I may very well be inoculated against covid in the not too distant future, but if I don't receive the care and feeding I need, I may survive covid but still die from my underlying disease: cancer. I understand there's no perfect solution at present. But it's the future I'm worried about.

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

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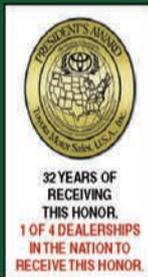
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