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The Arlington Connection



Your Sammy guide stops the car at nine stations. Winter creatures help you search for the winter star to bring back light to the world in the outdoor production of Encore Stage and Studio's "A Night Star."

Masked and Cold, but the Show Goes On

ENCORE, PAGE 3

ArPets:
Meet King
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Gentle
Resolutions
WELLBEING, PAGE 4

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Star Light, Star Light But No Star Tonight

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Your car lines up to join the search for the winter star that used to light up the sky, “giving a glorious aura and making you feel complete. You could even see in the dark.” Then one night the night star went away and all of the other stars disappeared with it.

Encore Stage and Studio leads you on the journey, all actors and audience in masks, around the Temple Rodef Shalom parking lot on Westmoreland Street.

Each car has its own Sammy guide. You stop to inquire of each rabbit, fox or bear about the disappearance of the star. Was it a myth or reality?

Taylor, the rabbit, inquires if it is just a story but confesses, “I am really, really scared.”

The grumbly bear is more interested in watching paint dry than the mystery of the disappearing star and the creature at Station 7 says if you’re looking for a super star, “I’m it. My last name is famous.”

Finally as the journey nears its end, the fox seems to be hiding something behind her back, perhaps the hot dogs she stole for lunch or perhaps—could it be the star? She disappears into the brush as Sammy the guide chases, but doesn’t catch her and bemoans the loss. But you will find it not in places you want to go. “You may have tried and tried, but the star lies deep inside. The star is not lost. I took it the day it fell from the sky and everything you have done for nothing.”

The fox continues, “Why look away when the star is truth, wisdom, compassion, bravery. It lies deep inside.” Sammy discovers she is beginning to believe the story is



PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Your Sammy guide stops the car at nine stations. Winter creatures help you search for the winter star to bring back light to the world in the outdoor production of Encore Stage and Studio’s “A Night Star.”



true.

“We have been the star the whole time.”

Xander Tilock, the 16-year-old creator of the production, says he

got this idea from a show he saw in McLean and went with his mother to propose the idea to Encore. “It wasn’t from a life experience or anything. I wanted a way to shine



a ray of hope. COVID is terrible.”

He says, “COVID hit me hard. I try to do as many Encore shows as I can a year.” He says Encore is his second family. This year Encore

was forced offstage and out of the theatre classrooms. He says when they asked the question of why the actors wanted to be in the show, the answer was they missed the theater.

He said, “I wanted to shine a ray of hope. The kids take on that mantra; I can feel it with all of the performers.”

Xander says they started planning in mid-October and held all rehearsals online.

There are 34 performers from age 8-16 in the total cast with 17 in the performance at one time. “This is the yellow cast. The blue cast comes on at 2.” He explains it is a long time to perform, and they learned that 2 hours is about the maximum. “Today we are beyond sold out and each performer only sits down a minute before the next car comes along.” They also have a technical coordinator who handles details like setting up the cones, traffic flow and the two cars who broke down in the line.

“I learned how to jump start a car in the middle of the show.”

The shows began Dec. 20 and ran through Dec. 30 with two hours of half hour performances in the morning and two in the afternoon. It has been cold but Wes Magnum, the volunteer at station one said they have been busy even with the cold weather. He says there hasn’t been a time when “there wasn’t one car here and one waiting.” He says the director handed out hand warmers and heat pads but the kids were too excited performing to need them.

Encore is a theatre company in Arlington “by children for children” that touches 15,000 children and adults in a normal year. The proceeds of the performances were given to Arlington Food Assistance Center and Encore’s scholarship fund.

Police Announce Charges in Package Theft Series

Arlington County Police Department’s Property Crimes Unit arrested a suspect in a package theft series. A 36-year-old man of Springfield, VA, was arrested and charged with Possession of Burglary Tools and Petit Larceny (x4). Additional charges are anticipated. He is being held in the Arlington County Detention Facility on a secure bond.

At approximately 1:10 p.m. on Jan. 3, a patrol officer observed an unoccupied vehicle with no license plates parked

the 300 block of 23rd Street S. The vehicle matched the description of a vehicle associated with a package theft reported to the officer on Dec. 27, 2020. A short time later, the officer observed the suspect return to the vehicle with a bag concealing alleged stolen packages. The suspect drove a short distance and was detained by officers as he exited the vehicle. During the execution of a subsequent search warrant on the vehicle, additional packages were located. Detectives are working to identify and notify victims.

Package thefts are often crimes of oppor-

tunity with suspects targeting items left unattended or out in plain view. While these crimes are often associated with the holiday season, they can happen at any time. The Arlington County Police Department encourages online shoppers to think ahead about delivery options and follow the below safety tips to help reduce the opportunity for package theft:

Schedule packages to arrive when you are home and track their progress during shipment.

Bring packages inside as soon as possible

after delivery.

Have someone you trust accept the package if you will not be home during delivery

Require signature on delivery.

Utilize other delivery options such as lockers or in-store pick up.

Reschedule delivery or ask for a package hold when on vacation.

Report Package Thefts to Police.

If you have been the victim of a package theft in Arlington County, report to police using the online crime report.

Gentle and Subtle Resolutions for 2021

Try small, simple and achievable goals.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

For 2021, local mental health professionals advise being gentle with yourself when creating the daily schedules and resolutions that often come with the beginning of the New Year. As many are feeling drained and defeated after a tumultuous 2020, making tiny, downsized resolutions can offer reassurance and hope as we embark on a new year.

"The year 2020 really highlighted that we can't control what happens, but we can control how we respond," said therapist Marla Zometsky, manager of the Wellness, Health Promotion for Fairfax County. "We are resilient and we can learn how to adjust based on the changes that are presented to us. It is okay to grieve things that did not turn out how we wanted, we can grieve and move forward."

Create a routine by making a small change to one's day, advises Karina Guzman, Director of Wellness, Prevention and Education at Marymount University. "It might be helpful to create a simple daily routine or make uncomplicated new year resolutions focused on being present," she said. "Meditating, practicing gratitude and staying connected with our support networks like friends and family are some quick and free activities to incorporate. They can be done at your own pace and are easy to include into a daily routine long-term."

Simple daily routines are great for producing structure. "Most people thrive on having structure in their daily lives and find that it makes them feel more productive, which then helps their mood and feeling good about themselves," said Bethesda therapist Carol Barnaby, LCSW. "A great way to add structure is to think about what your goals and responsibilities for yourself are daily. Then make a plan for your day that includes these goals. Make sure the goals are small and specific."

Some have created broad and generalized goals like getting fit in 2021, but Zometsky suggests starting with a purposeful, meaningful and achievable goal.

"Instead of focusing on a resolution, which is something that typically focuses on what is lacking, in 2021, perhaps set an intention," she said. "An intention helps us to focus and it is mindful that we are on a journey."

"2020 may have been the most challenging year many of us have experienced," said "As we plan for this brand new year, perhaps the best resolutions won't

generate additional stress, but help us focus on positive self-care, reducing stressors and nurturing human connections," said therapist Tara Wooldridge, LCSW of Arlington County Government. "Routines and rituals can provide comfort. Scheduled physical exercise, mindfulness, meditation, quiet, reflective moments, support groups, and sharing with others are all ways to foster well-being. Choose what feels right for you and follow through. Our mental and physical health must remain priorities as we battle the ongoing global pandemic."

What do you aim to do more of this year? Intentions can give you a sense of purpose, and focuses on what is motivating you. Maybe your intention is to slow down or to continue to form deeper and meaningful relationships? Maybe your intention is to be more present in certain situations, or be more holistic in your health and wellbeing. Setting an intention will help you...identify your actions and navigate your response when faced with adversity."

For those who've created broad and generalized goals like getting fit in 2021, Zometsky suggests replacing those with purposeful, meaningful and achievable goals. "Instead of focusing on a resolution, which is something that typically focuses on what is lacking, in 2021, perhaps set an intention," she said. "An intention helps us to focus and it is mindful

that we are on a journey. What do you aim to do more of this year? Intentions can give you a sense of purpose, and focuses on what is motivating you. Maybe your intention is to slow down or to continue to form deeper and meaningful relationships? Maybe your intention is to be more present in certain situations, or be more

holistic in your health and wellbeing. Setting an intention will help you...identify your actions and navigate your response when faced with adversity."

Practical resolutions might feel comforting in this year of uncertainty, says psychologist Jerome Short, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychology at George Mason University. "Try small changes, evaluate, adjust, and praise yourself for improvements, he said. "It may help to have a daily schedule, usual healthy meals and exercises, and specific times alone and with others."

Paring down ambitious resolutions to those that are practical can feel satisfying this year, suggests Short. "Declutter your house, wear a basic wardrobe, and eat simple meals. Share work and household tasks with others," he said. "Evaluate when you work most efficiently and what energizes you. Make sure you have time for breaks and enjoy your five senses with favorite sights, sounds, foods, and hugs".

"Instead of focusing on a resolution, which is something that typically focuses on what is lacking, in 2021, perhaps set an intention."

— Marla Zometsky,
Wellness, Health Team for Fairfax County

"Meditating, practicing gratitude and staying connected with our support networks like friends and family are quick and free activities."

— Karina Guzman, Director of
Wellness, Prevention and Education at Marymount University

BULLETIN BOARD

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

FRIDAY/JAN. 8

Microgreens. 10 – 11:30 a.m., Online. Microgreens – You've likely seen them, but what makes them good for you? Join Extension Master Gardener Becky Halbe to learn their many benefits and some simple ways to grow these delicious, nutritious, and inexpensive baby plants and sprouts in your own home. Free. RSVP at <https://mgnv.org/events/> to receive link to participate.

SUNDAY/JAN. 17

Tribute to MLK. Arlington's annual tribute to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is virtual in 2021. Join in on Jan. 17 at 5 p.m. for a free online event where you can choose what you want to see, when you want to see it. From music and dance to spoken word and community dialogues, there will be something for everyone. Help carry on Dr. King's legacy by remembering our history and joining in a call to shape our future. Visit the website: <https://parks.arlingtonva.us/mlk-tribute/>

NATIONAL LANDING UNVEILS "TURN UP THE LOVE"

As part of National Landing's mission to activate public spaces, the BID is unveiling "Turn Up the Love," a winterlong campaign featuring a series of engaging outdoor pop-ups. These festive installations will include a 10-foot tall life-size boombox made from thousands of ornaments which plays holiday music, three shareable standing photo frames and even more surprises to be announced after the holidays.

Activation Locations:
Water Park – 1750 Crystal Drive – Boombox Activation
Centre Park – 3550 S. Clark Street – Festive Photo Frames
Visit www.nationallanding.org/events/winter-wonderland

LUMINOUS BODIES BRING SPARKLE TO ROSSLYN

Brighten your holidays by experiencing the Luminous Bodies by Cliff Garten.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

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ARpETS: MEET KING



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY LOIS BARON

King loves to play fetch.

The “giant teddy bear” Who Just Wants to be Loved

BY JOAN BRADY
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

I remember it was gloomy that day. Not the weather so much as the mood. We walked through the doors of the shelter together. But when he left, he left me behind. Maybe he looked back. Maybe he didn't. But I felt the emptiness when he was no longer at my side.

I don't know why he didn't want me anymore. But I do know what it feels like to be unwanted. Lots of dogs came and went. Many to adoptive homes, the rest to fosters. I overheard the staff talking about the many people who are adopting and fostering dogs right now. The shelters and rescues can barely keep up with the demand. But no one wanted me.

I'm a mix of breeds. And I'm big. No one cared to look past my picture. They never learned that I love to play fetch, to take walks and to snuggle. They didn't care that just like all of those cute little dogs and big dogs with floppy ears and soft fur, I just want to be loved.

There was no soft bed at the shelter. Just a concrete floor. I was happy that the people at the shelter seemed to like me. When they walked by, they called me, “love bug” and “giant teddy bear.” They worked with rescue groups who tried to find a foster home for me. First just a request went out. Then a second, more desperate request. The months passed slowly. No one wanted me. Then, finally, the “URGENT” request, the one I think they do just before they decide you are a lost cause. I was lucky, that's when the Barons decided to foster me.

The day they came to pick me up. I couldn't believe it. They picked me! Meee! Ok, not for forever, but at least until my forever family is found. The Baron's grown daughter sat with me in the back seat. I hugged her the whole way

home, wagging my tail so she would know how happy I was to feel the movement of the car, taking me away from that cold and lonely shelter.

My foster home is great. I love getting treats. I love sleeping on the couch. I love snuggling with my head in the lap of whoever is around. And belly rubs are my absolute favorite. My one sadness is that the cats who live with us won't come down and let me lick them all over. I know they will like me when they get to know me. Everybody does.

I'm happy now, but I know this isn't forever. Please check me out at homewardtrails.com. You can find me under my name, King. I can't wait to meet you!

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@joanbradyp photography.com.

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

If you are interested in adding a cat, dog or small animal pet to your household, here are a few local rescue organizations who might 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



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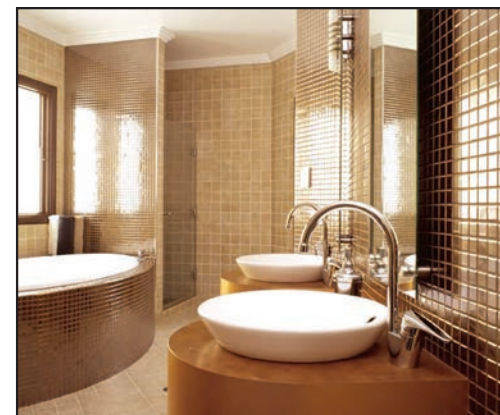
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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg

NEWS

Optimal Physical Therapy Joins OrthoVirginia

OrthoVirginia has acquired Optimal Physical Therapy in Arlington. This merger allows more continuity of care for patients as well as improving access to physical therapy services.

This location is the 10th OrthoVirginia physical therapy office in Northern Virginia and is located above the Rosslyn Metro Station.

"Optimal Physical Therapy and OrthoVirginia share a common mission of returning patients to activities they enjoy," said Anne Harshey, Physical Therapy Director.

"This merger of our practices allows us to achieve that shared vision through increasing access to our

services."

Dr. Ben Kittredge, Regional Vice President of OrthoVirginia – Northern Virginia, agrees. "Physical therapy is a critical component of a patient's recovery journey. We strive to make our services available where our patients live, work and play so that they can return to activities they enjoy sooner."

Due to COVID-19, each patient will be asked to wear a face mask and complete a quick screening questionnaire before their appointment.

OrthoVirginia has more than 100 physicians, 22 office locations, MRI facilities, outpatient surgery centers and physical therapy clinics.

FLOURISHING AFTER 55

55+ Programs are virtual or outdoors, following the Governor's Forward Virginia guidelines. A 55+ Membership is required to attend (\$20 annual fee). Learn more at parks.arlingtonva.us, search 55+ member.

To join or register, go to registration.arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

Outdoors: 1/8/21

Aurora Hills Fast Forwards, fast paced walking group, Friday, Jan. 8, 9-10 a.m. Registration # 912201-15.

Virtual Programs: 1/6-15/21

Local history group to discuss Sears and Roebuck homes in Arlington, Wednesday, Jan. 6, 1:30-2:45 p.m. Registration # 912402-24.

Writing workshops emphasize self-reflection, beliefs and future goals, seven sessions begin Wednesday, Jan. 6, 4-5:30 p.m. Taught by author Catherine Franz. Registration # 912300-09.

Where to turn for help when caring for persons with dementia, Wednesday, Jan. 6, 1-2 p.m. Presented by Lindsey Vajpey, Insight Memory Care. Registration # 912500-17.

Ageless Grace, fun wellness program begins Wednesday, Jan. 6, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Six sessions, \$30. Registration # 912500-15.

Meditate with new experimental techniques and relaxation-focused crafts, seven sessions begin Thursday, Jan. 7, 10:30 a.m.- noon. Cost \$42. Registration # 912500-14.

Tai Chi Ch'uan classes can help relieve ailments including arthritis,

balance and stress, Thursday, Jan. 7, 2-3 p.m. Registration # 912105-01.

Multigenerational living reaches record high levels, discussion led by Jeffrey Passel, Pew Research Center, Thursday, Jan. 7, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Registration # 912400-24.

Afternoon Hangout, discuss ways to deal with quarantining, Thursday, Jan. 7, 3-4 p.m. Registration # 912801-12.

Traditional Hatha Yoga, previous experience is helpful, classic Yoga poses to stretch and strengthen the entire body, Friday, Jan. 8, 9:30-11 a.m. Seven sessions, \$52.50. Registration # 912104-02.

Basic drawing techniques taught by community arts programmer Jen Droblyen, Friday, Jan. 8, 1-2:30 p.m. Details and simple supply list provided with registration, #912301-05.

Announcements

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Obituary

Michael Lassiter, 26, Dies



Michael (Mike) was born in Washington, D.C. to Oliver W. Whitehead and Marilyn Lassiter on December 16, 1994. He attended Shade Elementary, Roper Junior High, and Spingarn High School where he played running back and defensive tackle.

Mike believed any job given should always be done to the best of your ability. He worked at Foot Action and Home Depot. Mike obtained employment with Safeway on September 8, 2015 where he found his calling. Mike worked in the meat department and was certified as a meat cutter at in the evenings at Safeway in the Chesterbrook Shopping Center on Old Dominion Drive; Store #4933. Mike was patient and kind to all customers that visited the meat department and catered to their needs. Mike was loved by all of us here at Safeway and will always be in our hearts.

Michael was preceded in death by his grandparents Ruth E. and Clinton Lassiter, Aunt Marie Antoinette Lassiter, and Uncle Charles C. Lassiter.

Michael earned his wings and leaves to mourn parents Oliver W. Whitehead and Marilyn Lassiter, daughter Zilytarie D. E. Lassiter, siblings Robbie Hicks, Robert, Mary, Ikea, and Kianna Lassiter. Uncles Clinton and Tyrone Lassiter and Aunt Hope Lassiter.

If you would like to donate to the Michael Lassiter Funeral and Memorial; please go to <https://gofund.me/fc3e22f5>. Michael Lassiter should appear. The go fund-me account was organized by Store Director, Zane Franceschi.

From the family: Psalm 147:3 God heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds; Matthew 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

- By DIANE BRITT
McLEAN SAFEWAY FRONT STORE MANAGER



The 2020 Excellence in Housing Affordability Award from Urban Land Institute (ULI) Washington recognizes AHC's Alexandria, Va. apartment community St. James Plaza for providing quality affordable housing that enhances people's lives.

AHC Inc. of Arlington Receives Excellence In Housing Affordability Award By Urban Land Institute Washington

AHC Inc., an Arlington developer of low-income housing, was recently honored with the 2020 Excellence in Housing Affordability Award from Urban Land Institute (ULI) Washington, a district council of the national nonprofit. This award recognizes AHC's Alexandria, Va. apartment community St. James Plaza for providing quality affordable housing that enhances people's lives.

The Trends Conference Awards highlight innovative and exceptional developments that enrich neighborhoods in the Metropolitan Washington Region. AHC Inc. was selected from among 40 nominees. All nominated projects embody excellence and creativity across a number of categories, including developmental approach, land use economics, access and mobility, sustainability, and community and culture. AHC Inc.'s St. James Plaza was distinguished for its innovative design, zone planning, and local partnerships. The apartment community includes a mix of efficiencies, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartment homes for households earning up to 60 percent of the area median income.

The \$32 million development transformed a three-acre parcel of land owned by a long-time church, St. James Methodist Church, into a vibrant mixed-income, mixed-use community.

The site also includes a 2,300-square-foot preschool for 50 children. Operated by nonprofit The Campagna Center, the school is located on the first floor of St. James Plaza.

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The four sculptures extend the vocabulary of stone and bronze monuments that bookend Rosslyn into transparent stainless steel structures filled with sunlight during the day and colored LED light at night. The ever-changing dynamic light program shimmers against the Rosslyn skyline and marks a major entrance into Arlington from Washington, D.C. The 45-minute light show cycles continuously, beginning two hours before dusk and ending at 2 a.m. Luminous Bodies is located at the Esplanade Bridge, N. Lynn Street and Lee

za. Thirty-one market-rate townhomes, developed by Craftmark, further integrate the development into the existing single-family neighborhood. Inside the apartments, oversized windows add an airy, open feeling to the apartments, which also include wood-toned vinyl-plank floors and contemporary finishes. Other amenities include a play area, community room, fitness center, and underground parking.

Development partners include the City of Alexandria, Capital One Bank, Hudson Housing Capital, Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF), NeighborWorks and NeighborWorks Capital. Designed by Cunningham-Quill Architects, the five-story building was constructed by Harkins Builders.

"It's a great honor to be recognized among so many innovative developments in the metro-DC area," said John Welsh, VP of Multifamily Group at AHC Inc.

"As we develop our properties, we make each decision with affordability, sustainability and quality in mind, and we're proud of creating communities that residents love to call home."

Based in Arlington, AHC has developed more than 7,500 apartment units in 50+ properties in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C. AHC's Resident Services program reaches 3,000 children, teens, adults and seniors each year through on-site education and social service programs and activities. For more information, visit <https://www.ahcinc.org/>.

Highway in Arlington, Virginia (above I-66 and adjoining the approach to Key Bridge).

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New Year, Old Problem: Cancer

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



As I sit and write here, with too much time on my hands, I can't help but consider my lot in life. In a little less than two months: Feb. 20, I will celebrate (if that's even the right word), the 12-year anniversary of my original cancer diagnosis. On that date, I received a phone call at work from my internal medicine doctor advising me that the previous week's surgical biopsy indicated a malignancy in my lungs. The following week, Team Lourie was sitting in an oncologist's office waiting for the other shoe to drop. And boy, did it drop: non small cell lung cancer, stage IV. Accompanied by a "13 month to two year" prognosis with very little encouragement or statistical probability to give us much reason to hope. In answer to our predictable question, the soon-to-be my oncologist offered up a tantalizing prospect: "Could you be the one" (literally) that outlives your prognosis? It was hardly heartfelt, but his answer was "Yes."

So off I didn't fly into the wild blue yonder. Instead, I shuffled out his office and with my head down, exited the building and staggered into my car where my wife, Dina and I attempted to process the information we had just been given. I don't recall there being much discussion during the 30-minute drive home or even after we had arrived. To tell you the truth, besideS still processing the information we had just received, we were pretty much in a daze (hence the overall name for my columns: "Daze of My Life") and were so blindsided by the seriousness of what we had just heard (no cancer history in my immediate family as well as my being a lifelong non-smoker), we almost couldn't talk, probably didn't talk and any talking we did was likely empty and hollow. Imagine being told, out of the blue, that you could be dead in less than a year, maybe even before your 55th birthday. Heck, both my parents lived past 85. That's what I've been anticipating. To think that 30 years yet of my future life had just been taken away was almost too much to believe. But since the oncologist was not the least bit in doubt about any of the results or how to proceed (we didn't feel the need, given the urgency and conviction with which the oncologist spoke, to even get a second opinion), we decided and committed that very day to starting chemotherapy the following week. It seemed clear that there was absolutely no time like the present.

Though the dozen or so tumors in my lungs "never acted" as my oncologist expected (growing and moving) it wasn't until Dec. '19 a year or so after a large tumor appeared below my Adam's apple that a new surgical biopsy was performed. The results of which indicated thyroid cancer which a few weeks later led to my having a thyroidectomy (thyroid removed) per the direction of my newest doctor, an endocrinologist (who has been treating me ever since). When the post-surgical biopsy confirmed yet again the existence of thyroid cancer, my reclassification as a thyroid cancer patient was official. Soon thereafter, my treatment for thyroid cancer began, first an overnight at the hospital and then daily levothyroxine pills. As a result, I am no longer being treated for lung cancer, just thyroid. The question has raised its ugly head in these last few months: Was I misdiagnosed or did I have two types of cancer? And if I do have two types of cancer and one/the lung cancer is not being treated, am I in reality a "dead man walking?" Ignoring/not treating lung cancer is generally speaking, not advisable. As my oncologist said to me many years ago about my having lung cancer: "I can treat you but I can't cure you." Not exactly words to live by.

It's on these anniversaries and the last few months leading up to them when I focus even more on my circumstances. How does that actually occur when my having cancer already consumes my conscience and subconscious? I can't really explain it other than to express the amazement and good fortune that I'm still alive. All I know is, I'm always happy when I wake up the next day and the anniversary has finally passed.

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

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Pictured: One of the several historical buildings that has housed the Alexandria Gazette Packet since its 1784 founding.

The pandemic has crushed many newspapers across the country, and one of America's oldest newspapers and its affiliated Connection Newspapers, websites and digital media is at risk. The Northern Virginia, DC, and MD area's best read and most trusted source for community news, which includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region. The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyperlocal news to residents. Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years - countless residents have grown up with this local paper covering significant moments in the life of your family and children, news, sporting events,

school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cars. Internet news and large national newspapers do not provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers provide.

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