

The Arlington Connection



SENIOR LIVING

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ATTENTION POSTMASTER:
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL.
REQUESTED IN HOME 1-28-21

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
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EASTON, MD
PERMIT #322

Yup, Brisket is One Smart Pup

BY JOAN BRADY
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

It was the last day of 2020 and he was hungry. He was tired of roaming, foraging for scraps and being too afraid to fall asleep. The scratches on his nose and paws suggested that life hadn't been without conflict. He knew he needed help. But didn't know where to turn.

When the local newspaper delivery driver hopped out of his vehicle, leaving the door open as he quickly ran up to a house to deliver the paper, this smart pup knew exactly what to do. With a quick look inside to see if it was safe and one over his shoulder, he jumped right in.

The driver was pretty surprised to discover he had picked up a passenger, when he returned to find "Brisket" curled up in the seat next to him.

I wasn't there, of course, but that's how I imagine the scene unfolding.

The sweet-faced pup had no collar, so the driver didn't have a way to locate his family, if he had one.



The joy of an unseasonably warm day and knowing that it's almost dinner time.

Falls Church, where this all happened, is one of the coverage areas for the Animal Welfare League of Arlington (AWLA) and so off the driver went to see if the folks at AWLA could help reconnect the poor guy with his family.

But without a collar or microchip, the rescue didn't have a lot of options. They posted a picture and description on the AWLA website, hoping that if he had a family, they



Meet Brisket.

CONTRIBUTED BY AWLA



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED BY LORENA EGUSQUIZA

Don't underestimate the importance of a safe place to sleep.

would find him there. The volunteers fell in love with him and imagined a joyful reunion with his family. But no call came.

Brisket, as he is now called, was fortunate to be placed with experienced foster mom, Lorena Egusquiza. He is truly sweet and a very happy guy, according to Egusquiza. At around 1 year old, he is always up for playtime, but also loves to snuggle. He is housebroken and

knows a bunch of commands including sit, paw, down, potty and inside (for when it's time to come in from the yard).

By all accounts, it's going to be one lucky person or family who adds Brisket to their household. If you think it should be you, please send an email to awla.foster.lorena@gmail.com to arrange an initial virtual meet & greet. She will reply to you within 24-48 hours. You can also read more about Brisket at AWLA.com.



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JOURNEY

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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.

FLOURISHING AFTER 55

55+ Programs are virtual. 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.

JAN. 28, 2021

Encore Learning's Spring Preview of courses being offered between March and May 2021, Thursday, Jan. 28, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85231610450>.

Healthy cooking demonstration by Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Food Volunteers, Thursday, Jan. 28, 11 a.m. – noon. Registration # 912501-04.

American Labor Museum, virtual tour ending with roundtable discussion, Thursday, Jan. 28, 1-2:30 p.m. Registration # 912400-15.

History discussion focuses on cultural, economic, artistic and political issues, Thursday, Jan. 28, 1-2:30

SEE FLOURISHING, PAGE 5

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Vaccine Update, Frustrating, Scary

On Saturday, the County Board received a lengthy and detailed update on Covid-19 vaccine distribution in Arlington. We know not everyone has time to watch a weekend Board meeting, so here are a few key bits of info. Watch the full segment <https://youtu.be/rK3Fz5EtCwE> on the County's YouTube channel.

❖ "I know it's beyond frustrating and downright scary for many of us – including me – about the change and uncertainty in vaccine availability," – Dr. Reuben Varghese, Public Health Director.

❖ Within a week and a half of entering Phase 1b, the state informed the entire Commonwealth it was shifting to a per capita allocation by health district region. The primary reason for the sudden change was 1) Virginia is only receiving 110,000 doses per week for the whole state and 2) in a span of just two weeks, all of Virginia moved into Phase 1b.

❖ Currently, the allocation for Arlington is roughly 2,700 doses per week. "Arlington County has the capacity to do at least 1,000 per day, but obviously without the vaccine we're unable to do more."

❖ "Through Jan. 23, Arlington County has received 5,100 first doses from Virginia. And as of Jan. 22, we have used 4,560 doses, close to 90%, which is what we were aiming for, so we always have

| Arlington County COVID-19 Case Data | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Total Cases* | | | New Cases Today | |
| 11,269 | | | 120 | |
| * includes Confirmed and Probable | | | | |
| Confirmed Cases | Probable Cases | Total Cases per 100,000 Persons | | |
| 9,646 | 1623 | 4,744 | | |
| Total Hospitalized | | | Hospitalizations Today | |
| 715 | | | 0 | |
| Total Deceased | | | Deceased Today | |
| 197 | | | 0 | |
| Updated: January 25, 2020 | | | | |

<https://data-dashboard.arlingtonva.us/covid>

supply to start the next week."

Arlington County Rescheduling VHC Appointments

Arlington County is working to reschedule COVID-19 vaccine appointments canceled by Virginia Hospital Center.

Affected individuals include people 75 years and older who were scheduled to receive their first vaccine dose after Jan. 26, 2021. What to Know:

❖ Individuals who already got

a first dose of the vaccine at the VHC-managed clinic at the Walter Reed Community Center will still receive their second dose as scheduled.

❖ Residents 75+ will be contacted directly by Arlington County to reschedule as vaccines becomes available. The goal is to reschedule the canceled appointments in the order of their original appointments.

❖ Arlington asks for the community's patience as it works to

incorporate the 75+ group to its plans within the existing vaccine supplies.

Find additional information in our Vaccine FAQ, under the "VHC Vaccine Appointment Cancellations" section.

First Case of B.1.1.7 Covid-19 Variant Identified in Virginia

The Virginia Department of Health says that the first case of the SARS-CoV-2 variant B.1.1.7 has been identified in a sample

from an adult resident of Northern Virginia with no reported recent travel history. The B.1.1.7 variant, which first emerged in the United Kingdom in late 2020, is associated with increased person-to-person transmission of Covid-19.

"Viruses change all the time, and we expect to see new strains as disease spreads," said State Health Commissioner M. Norman Oliver, MD, MA.

"As our state public health officials closely monitor the emergence of the B.1.1.7 variant in our Commonwealth, it is important that all Virginians continue following mitigation measures."

Covid-19 News & Notes

Central Library Holds Pickup service will reopen Tuesday

The County's ability to inoculate those eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine is limited only by the availability of vaccine supply

Columbia Pike extends Buy a Nurse Lunch program through winter 2021

Read: Northern Virginia Regional Commission's Letter to Governor Northam Regarding Vaccine Distribution

Questions about Covid-19? Call the County's public information line at

703-228-7999, Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5

Back to Basics, Help Make Recycling Work

BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Arlington trash cans this week were decorated with "Recycling Made Simple" pamphlets outlining the four categories of materials that are acceptable in the blue recycling bin.

The list of acceptable items includes mixed paper, cardboard, plastic bottles and containers, aluminum and steel cans.

The list does not include plastic bags and chip wrappers, single use plastics or styrofoam, glass, plastic envelopes or pots or pans. As more stringent requirements have been imposed by foreign markets, glass has been removed from the list of recyclables as well as lower-grade mixed plastics.

Since clean materials are more likely to be processed at the recycling plant, it means that a clean stream of materials translates into a higher percentage of Arlington's materials to be recycled into new materials.

It also increases the value credited to the County for each ton of processed materials.

What actually makes its way into Arlington's blue bins? Glass bottles (3.5 percent), metals (5 percent), non-recyclables (9 percent) and paper and cardboard (74.6 percent).

Current data indicates that trash and glass makeup 12.5 percent of the material collected in the blue cart and have no value, but make it harder to recycle.



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Help make recycling work.

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.

LIONS CLUB CITRUS SALE

The Northwest Arlington Lions Club is holding a citrus sale online Now thru March 31. They will be selling honeybells, citrus and pecans direct to you. Order online at www.nwarlionscitrus.fwffb.net. Order maple products at www.purintonmaple.com; Maple Promo Code - "nwarlions" at checkout. Phone: 703-528-1130/Text 703-772-3784.

FRIDAY/JANUARY 29

Native Spring Ephemerals. 10-11:30 a.m. Online. While they bloom for only a short time, ephemerals such as Bloodroot, Trout Lily, and Virginia Bluebells can add beauty to the home garden in spring while providing critical support to early-emerging pollinators. Join Extension Master Gardener Elaine Mills to learn about fifteen ephemeral species native

to our region with details on where to see them, where to buy them, and how to care for them. Free. RSVP at <https://mgmv.org/events/> to receive link to participate.

SATURDAY/FEB. 6,

Seeds: Selecting and Starting. 10 – 11:30 a.m. Online. Jumpstart your vegetable garden. Get the scoop on seed selection – hybrid vs. heirloom, which seeds to start indoors and what is required to get them growing. Join Extension Master Gardeners Jasmin DeCoursey and Pam Newton to learn how to make your own starter pots, create simple lighting systems and practice winter sowing by starting seeds outdoors in milk-jug greenhouses. Germination is complex, but seed starting is reassuringly simple! Free. RSVP at <https://mgmv.org/events/> to receive link to participate.

FRIDAY/FEB. 12

Home for the Heart Virtual Breakfast. 9 a.m. Home for the Heart will give you a behind SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 5

We Still Need Your Help

Thank you to hundreds who have supported us financially, and with warm words of encouragement.

BY MARY KIMM

In 2009, I was diagnosed with breast cancer, and after a year-long journey of surgery, radiation and chemotherapy, I have been fine. Sometimes I will run into someone (well, I haven't actually been out to run into anyone since March) or talk to someone who will ask, "How are you?" with a tone of concern, and I realize they are wondering about my cancer. (Yes, I did go out for my mammogram. More than a decade cancer-free, thank you!).

2009 was also the onset of steep declines in newspaper advertising revenue, and that has been a pernicious and persistent problem.

Right now, when I hear that tone of concern (or something a little more ominous) with the "And how are the papers doing?" this person is asking about the GoFundMe, and whether we anticipate that we will survive the pandemic.

At the end of 2020, the Connection Newspapers shared a Go-

FundMe drive that would help all of our papers, including our flagship, the Alexandria Gazette Packet, publishing since 1784, the Mount Vernon Gazette, the Arlington Connection, Great Falls Connection, McLean-Vienna Connection, Centre View-Chantilly, Reston and Herndon Connection, and the Burke, Springfield, Fairfax, Fairfax Station, Clifton, Lorton Connection plus the Potomac Almanac.

We set a goal of \$50,000, and thanks to community support, in a month we have topped 50 percent of that. Thank you so much.

There is no deadline. <https://www.gofundme.com/f/save-american-oldest-newspaper>

How did we get here (I keep asking myself)?

We are facing an existential threat in the combined crises of a long-running decline in newspaper advertising, plus the onset of the pandemic and the economic shutdown that has come with it. (Newspaper advertising revenue

overall fell more than 60 percent from 2008 to 2018, well before the pandemic.)

In the first week of the shutdown in March, the drop in revenue for us, and everywhere, was breathtaking.

Fortunately, some long time advertisers have stayed the course and kept our revenues from moving actually to zero.

But many restaurants, retailers and others are also facing an economic crisis that could lead to extinction. We are not the only ones. Businesses, families and individuals floundered for months after early federal help, desperately in need of more help. Now we know more federal help is on the way, but is not here yet.

More than 160,000 businesses in the US closed just between March and August of last year due to the pandemic, and that number is likely vastly underreported. While local newspapers were already suffering from advertising declines, the loss of thousands of local businesses as potential advertisers is a setback, and not just for The Connection. Event advertising, a mainstay, has disappeared.

Community support has come, through GoFundMe, and oth-

er means — many have mailed checks payable to their favorite newspaper, to 1606 King Street, Alexandria, Va. 22314, and others have purchased ads as a way to lend financial support. Words of encouragement and appreciation have also meant so much to all of us here.

So what is the plan? Our GoFundMe, as it continues to grow, will allow us to bridge the operational gaps between a deep valley and the arrival of the funds from the Paycheck Protection Program (through local banks). And that will give us time to grapple with the question of how to reinvent ourselves and create an organization and revenue stream that will sustain us. Our writers and others connected to us are full of ideas. I'm sure our readers, advertisers and supporters are also. Please let us know.

We are experts at cost-cutting, and that has been a painful, ongoing process.

Now we will embrace a combination of solutions, because just one source is unlikely to unravel the tough situation that we face.

More thoughts next week.

Mary

In Virginia: Vaccines & COVID Recovery

BY SEN. ADAM EBBIN (D-30)

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH), health care professionals, and Virginia's Medical Reserve Corps continue to work overtime to care for those afflicted with COVID-19. This work now involves the distribution of vaccines to prevent future cases. Unfortunately even as we grow our capacity to vaccinate, Virginia, like many other states, continues to see an increase in the number of cases and hospitalizations daily.

In the General Assembly we continue to feel the great burden of the deaths, the fears, and the long-term effects of this virus. Our colleague Sen. Ben Chafin (R-Russell County) passed away from COVID-19 complications just days before our session began, and his empty seat is a continual reminder of the loss far too many have experienced over the last year.

While we must take as many steps as possible to mitigate the damage of this pandemic, the key to beginning our recovery is vaccinations. The good news in Virginia is that we are on the way. At the

time of writing, close to 420,000 Virginians have received their first dose of either the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

While the vaccine is not mandatory, I strongly encourage everyone to get vaccinated as soon as you are able, and continue to comply with the recommendations of health experts to wear a mask, maintain social distance, and frequently wash hands to prevent the spread.

Vaccine prioritization is coordinated at a Federal level — through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Defense, in collaboration with state health officials. There is, obviously, high demand for the vaccine and many groups merit early vaccination. To complicate matters, there is only so much of the vaccine available for each state. That said, I am confident that the CDC and VDH are following the science and working hard to ensure that vaccinations are equitably distributed as efficiently as possible



Ebbin

based on the schedule developed with the Federal Government. Let me be clear: everyone deserves an opportunity to be vaccinated, and eventually everyone who wants to be will be vaccinated. With the whole world seeking and competing for doses, we are faced with the difficult decision of prioritizing people by definable groupings. In Virginia, this does not speak to any person's merits, but rather to the risk posed to the majority of that pool for contracting and dying from the novel Coronavirus. You can determine when you will get vaccinated by checking your local Department of Health website's phase schedule.

Only thirteen other states have vaccinated more people than Virginia, the twelfth largest state. But the reality is that every state is struggling to meet the demand for vaccines due to the expansiveness of this undertaking and the former administration's handling of the vaccine distribution. The needed stockpile of vaccine doses from

the federal government, promised by former President Trump's administration, has failed to materialize. This failure means every state is undersupplied. Right now shot-giving in Virginia is outpacing the supply we're receiving from the federal government. We are administering an average of 19,000 shots per day -- 5,000 more than

SEE IN VIRGINIA, PAGE 6

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
1606 King St., Alexandria VA 22314

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BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 3

the scenes look into the breadth of programs A-SPAN provides to clients. You'll hear stories of hope and after just a few moments of your time, you will leave the breakfast inspired and more committed than ever to support your neighbors in need. Free to attend. Visit the website: <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E12354&id=2>

ARLINGTON RESCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS FOLLOWING VIRGINIA HOSPITAL CENTER CANCELLATIONS

Arlington County will be working to reschedule Covid-19 vaccine appointments canceled by Virginia Hospital Center at its community vaccine clinics due to inadequate vaccine availability. Affected individuals include those age 75+ who had first doses of the vaccine scheduled after Jan. 26, 2021. Individuals who have already received a first dose of the vaccine at the VHC-managed clinic at the Walter Reed Community Center will still receive their second dose as scheduled. Virginia Hospital Center and Arlington County are committed to continuing to work together to ensure efficient distribution of vaccine after this temporary pause of vaccine administration at the VHC clinic. Arlington County residents who receive cancellation notices from VHC will be contacted directly by Arlington County to reschedule as vaccine supply becomes available in the coming weeks. The County is currently vac-

inating Phase 1a healthcare workers and initial Phase 1b essential worker groups – law enforcement, fire, and hazmat; corrections and shelter workers; and childcare and preK-12 teachers and staff.

DONATIONS

The Arlington Food Assistance Center seeks local gardeners and farmers willing to grow and donate fresh produce to the AFAC food pantry for local families in need as part of the Plot Against Hunger program. Each week, approximately 2,400 client families visit AFAC to pick up supplemental groceries and fresh fruits and vegetables are in high demand. AFAC will provide free vegetable seeds to those who pledge to donate produce from community or personal gardens. Visit <https://afac.org/plot-against-hunger> or contact puwen.lee@afac.org or 703-845-8486. Seeds are available now at AFAC, 2708 S. Nelson St., during regular business hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and Saturdays 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Produce can also be donated at AFAC at the hours listed above or at:

- ❖ Arlington Courthouse Farmer's Market, Saturdays 8 a.m.-noon (look for the AFAC cooler near the Master Gardener information table).
- ❖ Rock Springs UCC Church, 5010 Little Falls Road, Sundays 9 a.m.-noon only. (Look for the donation bin on the Rock Spring Drive side of the church).

Pet Food Bank. AWLA is establishing a Pet Food Bank to serve qualifying residents of Arlington County and the City of Falls Church. In consideration of the effect financial

obstacles have on a pet owner's ability to afford pet care, the AWLA Pet Food Bank program's goal is to keep family pets out of shelters. If you are an Arlington County or City of Falls Church resident and are in need of assistance in feeding your pet, follow this link and fill out a pre-registration form. Visit goo.gl/forms/s2FuFdaYWdZm4tPw2.

GET MORE WITH SNAP

<rlington and Alexandria Farmers' Markets accept SNAP/EBT (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) cards for purchases. SNAP/EBT customers can purchase farm fresh produce at local area farmers' markets and get matching bonus tokens to add to their purchases. Virginia Cooperative will be on-site at several local farmers' markets of Alexandria and Arlington to provide more information on SNAP and offer food tastings, prizes and more at the Arlington Farmers' Market, N. 14th and Courthouse Road (second Saturday of the month) and Columbia Pike Farmers' Market, 2820 Columbia Pike (third Sunday of the month).

ONGOING

Online Salary Negotiation Workshop. AAUW (American Association of University Women) Work Smart is free online for anyone looking to learn how to negotiate a salary increase or promotion. Why is negotiation so important? AAUW's research on the gender pay gap shows that, one year out of college, women are already paid significantly less than men. Visit salary.aauw.org.

FLOURISHING AFTER 55

FROM PAGE 2

p.m. Registration # 912402-17.

How to attract birds to a garden, Thursday, Jan. 28, 1-2 p.m. Meet Ranger Cliff Fairweather, Long Branch Nature Center. Registration # 912401-02.

Painting lesson, Thursday, Jan. 28, 10-11:30 a.m. Supply list and picture to paint provided at registration, # 912301-16.

<cl>Virtual programs Feb. 1 - Feb. 5

<bt>Painting demonstration with Jennifer Droblyen, community arts programmer, Monday, Feb. 1, 10:30 a.m. - noon. Supply list and picture to paint provided with registration # 912301-15.

Needle crafters meet weekly to discuss knitting and crocheting projects, Monday, Feb. 1, 10-11:30 a.m. Registration # 912703-09.

Book club members to discuss "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins, Tuesday, Feb. 2, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Registration # 912402-15.

55+ Live! Talk Show, preview of upcoming programs, demonstrations, seminars, Tuesday, Feb. 2, noon - 1 p.m. Meet 55+

staff. Registration # 912801-10.

The warning signs of Alzheimer's, workshop led by Dan Cronin, Alzheimer's Association, Tuesday, Feb. 2, 11 a.m. - noon. Discuss difference between age-related memory loss and dementia. Registration # 912500-16.

Yarn Creations, share knitting and crocheting projects with fellow crafters, Tuesday, Feb. 2, 1 - 2:30 p.m. Registration # 912703-17.

Local history aficionados to discuss the Ku Klux Klan in Arlington during the 1920s, Wednesday, Feb. 3, 1:30-2:45 p.m. Registration # 912402-25.

Afternoon Hangout, newly forming conversation group, share ideas on coping with pandemic, Thursday, Feb. 4, 3 - 4 p.m. Registration # 912801-13.

Travel Trivia, fun game with fellow 55+ members, Thursday, Feb. 4, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Registration # 912601-07.

iPhone and iPad basics, tips from Apple Guru Lowell Nelson, Friday, Feb. 5, 10-11 a.m. Registration # 912900-28.

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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

In Virginia: Vaccines & COVID Recovery

FROM PAGE 4

we're receiving.

I am glad that Governor Northam has responded to this curveball by assigning Dr. Danny Avula to coordinate the necessary work between state health officials, local health departments, hospitals, private providers, and communities. The Virginia National Guard will provide logistical support and help local health departments in the administration of vaccines. The Virginia Department of Health, the Governor's Administration, and Virginia Hospital Association are coordinating with medical facilities around the Commonwealth to get shots in people's arms. I co-sponsored legislation from Sen. Siobhan Dunnivant (R-Henrico) which will expand locations where vaccines can be distributed and mobilize volunteers to provide vaccines. This emergency legislation has passed the Senate and is headed to the House for their consideration.

The first goal laid out by Governor Northam is to clear all our storage freezers. Medical facilities have been directed to use up everything they have, quickly, to get more. Our immediate target is to move to vaccinating 25,000 people a day. Within a few days, Virginia will meet this goal: by the end of last week, more than 18,000 shots were being given daily. Ultimately, 50,000 people a day will receive a dose. Online tools are being rolled out to answer your questions about the vaccine, to understand your phase of the process, and to register locally.

Beyond vaccinations, the pandemic continues to compound other issues in our society and daily lives. We see this as cases of Covid per 10,000 people are higher for Latinos and other communities of color than among White people. We see this as those without a safety net are evicted or threatened with

eviction. We see this as food insecurity rises in our communities and volunteers at food banks decline. That is why Virginia's vaccine campaign is rooted in health equity, prioritizing those with an elevated risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19, including those in long term care facilities, people sixty-five or older, frontline workers, the homeless, people with underlying conditions, the incarcerated, and migrant workers.

To address these inequities, I am proposing legislation that will expand the statutory damages a tenant can recover when unlawfully evicted, a trend we have seen growing throughout the pandemic. As a member of the Finance and Appropriations Committee, I have also filed several budget amendments to alleviate the strain of this pandemic. These include:

\$500,000 to the Capital Area Food Bank, to assist with their vital food distribution services in northern Virginia.

Funding to expand Medicaid coverage in relation to COVID-19 to currently underserved immigrant populations.

Additional funding to Northern Virginia Family Services for wrap-around services including food, homelessness prevention, and child care.

An amendment to ensure that our Free Clinics are included in new Federally allocated aid dollars.

I acknowledge the frustration many of us feel. We finally have a way to the end of this nightmarish chapter, and that makes any delays, errors, or setbacks all the more exasperating. I would like to thank you for your commitment to protecting one another and for your patience as, one by one, we each receive the protection of a trusted, scientifically proven, preventive medicine.

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SENIOR LIVING

Sorority Sisters Celebrate Vice President Kamala Harris

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Wearing their sorority's signature strand of pearls and clothing in shades of pink and green, Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA) sorority members, Martha Coleman and Shirley Dickerson Taylor were filled with awe and jubilation as they watched their sorority sister and fellow Historically Black College and University (HBCU) alum Kamala Harris, sworn in as Vice President of the United States.

Both women are decades-long members of the sorority and are now part of the Zeta Chi Omega Chapter, which is made up of women from Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax counties. Local members supported Harris' election and say their emotions include pride and optimism, for older members as well as younger.

"As someone who participated in the Civil Rights movement of the 60s, I get

emotional just thinking about this huge accomplishment and how far we as a people have come," said Coleman, who has been a member for 53 years. "The idea that a woman of color, who attended an HBCU, and who was raised by a single parent is now our Vice President is mind boggling." "I was overcome with joy and happiness to witness this historical day," added Taylor, who has been a member for 63 years. "The tears flowed as I watched Soror Kamala take the oath and become the Vice President of the United States."

"I witnessed something that I never thought I would witness in my lifetime, said 68-year old Linder Gibson who lives in Montgomery County. "I was overwhelmed. "This lets me know that my little granddaughter can grow up and become anything she wants to be, even President."

Those who joined AKA at Howard University felt a special connection.

"She has been an inspiration for many, said Linda Elaine Newman, who has been an active member for 43 years. "I was doubly proud because I am also a graduate of Howard University. Her positive accomplishments have given good recognition to HBCUs and our beloved sisterhood."

"From the standpoint of being a black and Asian woman it was a monumental moment," added Patricia Wallace, who has been a member for 55 years. It was astounding since, in both these cultures, women were deemed to be on the bottom rung, thought of as property and second-class citizens. Now the glass ceiling has broken."

The Arlington/Alexandria chapter has been in existence for more than 60 years.

"Tears of joy flowed down my face as I watched the first woman, the first woman of color and my sorority sister take the oath of office for the Vice President of the United States of America," said Robin McCoy, who is a 40-year member and serves as the chapter's president.

Many felt a sense of optimism about the possibilities that would be conveyed to the young women and girls in their families.

"The swearing in of my soror Kamala Harris filled me with sadness, joy and delight," said Margarette Peterson, who was initiated

in 1959. "Joy came to my heart to know that my granddaughter would continue to grow up in a better world. ... I was filled with sadness because it has taken so long for a black woman with outstanding qualifications to be recognized. I dried my tears and took a picture ... proudly in my Golden Soror tee shirt."

"I thought of my 10-year-old granddaughter's future in a country that has elected the first woman as

Vice President, who happens to be Black, who happens to have been shaped by our founders at Howard University, and who happens to have been the recipient of the unflinching support from women all over America," said Tia Johnson. "My granddaughter's future was looking brighter. Vice President Harris' election provides the answer that all things are possible."

The Arlington/Alexandria chapter includes older members that range in age from 60 to 90. Many thanked a higher power for the victory. "I was overcome with a flood of emotions and ... a tremendous feeling of gratitude that God allowed me to live long enough to witness this historic moment: the first woman, the first Black, the first Asian American, the first HBCU graduate and the first AKA to become Vice President of the United States of America, a heartbeat away from the most powerful office in the world," said Lula McLain Hicks who was initiated in 1968. "In that moment, Vice President Harris represented every member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated and our 113 years of service to humankind."

Wanda Smith, who joined the sorority 42 years ago, said the swearing-in underscored the lyrics of the official hymn of AKA: "By merit and culture we strive and we do things that are worthwhile. And with a smile we help each other for we know there's no other like our sisterhood," she said. "Yes, I cried and thanked God."

For Aretha Marable Cunningham who was initiated in 1973, the ceremony offered optimism. "I feel extreme joy, relief, excitement, and hope for our country, the United States of America."



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA
"Golden" members of the Arlington/Alexandria chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha, who joined the sorority before and during the Civil Rights Movement, shed tears of joy as the witnessed the historic swearing-in of Vice President Kamala Harris.

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Reoriented



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Or to quote my high school baseball coach: "Reorientated." A cancer diagnosis, especially a "terminal" one, can cause that. However, what I'm addressing this week is money: what to do with what you have when you didn't expect you'd still have it. And by 'have it,' I mean you're still alive and you still have some control over what to do with it.

What this previous paragraph questions is what to do with the money you've accumulated your whole life after you've outlived your original prognosis, which for my non small cell lung cancer, stage IV, was "13 months to two years." The timer began in late February, 2009. I was aged 54 and nearly a half. My widowed mother had just died the previous December after reaching her 86th birthday. My father had died almost exactly two years earlier, at the age 87. Given my parent's at death, I figured/planned on living into my mid-eighties. That all changed when Team Lourie met the oncologist who has now been treating me going on about 12 years.

All my life, pre-cancer and post-cancer, I've paid attention to money: working for it, saving it, spending it and financially-planning it. As I became older, my needs expanded and so too did the sum of money I needed: college, car, wedding, house and then retirement. Now at age 66, 42 as a husband and 12 as a cancer survivor, the future has unexpectedly, given my prognosis, become my present.

During the early years of my diagnosis, I didn't really know how to spend the money I had saved: on the here and now because I was diagnosed as terminal and saw no future in depriving myself or to simply continue living my life spending/saving money as I always had. I chose the former because to me choosing the latter would have been giving into my cancer diagnosis.

Well, almost 12 years have passed since late Feb., 2009. Much has happened. None more significantly as has been my re-diagnosis to papillary thyroid cancer, stage IV, from the previous non small lung cancer, also stage IV. Though my particular type of thyroid cancer is terminal (the sole effective medication has a three-year-ish effective window than there's nothing available), I do have less of a lung cancer diagnosis hanging over my bank account. And yet, the money issue has raised its ugly dilemma once again. Rather than living with death occurring at any time, I now have a bit of a timeline: three years, but with an indeterminate one to follow. Before I had a definite that turned into a maybe. Now I have a maybe that's sort of turned into a definite. As such, once again, do I spend like I'm dying or spend/save like I'm living? The further complication is I'm basically retired and now having to make decisions which have been a lifetime in the making that for many of those years didn't have to factor in cancer and an adjusted, shall we say, life expectancy. It's challenging to determine how much money you're going to need when you can't predict the future. I mean, I'm living proof.

Being the baby of the family - of the family, I'm pretty much the end of the line dating back approximately 150 years to Russia. And since we have no children, there's no one to pick up my slack. I can't run out of money because I'm responsible for my own slack. I can't presume that I won't outlive my resources any more than I can predict my cancer-affected demise. A demise and a quality of life that could be enhanced if I were to spend a bit of the money I do have, mindful always of the consequences however.

I realize, more than most, that there's no time like the present. Nevertheless, I still want to believe I have a future. After all, it's worked (kept me alive) for nearly 12 years. Perhaps I still have another 12 left to live. If so, I'm going to try and treat myself a bit more often this time. I don't see any future in depriving myself.

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



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