

The Arlington Connection

Blunders That Changed History

NEWS, PAGE 5

PET CONNECTION

PAGES 3, 6, 8

Dudley Do-Right shares his house with Olive (left) and Leta who are 7-year-old tabby sisters from a rescue on the island of Anguilla. Their owner says she was happy to adopt them since her cat and only pet at the time had just died and less than a week without any pet was "too much for me."

"Better Together"

VACCINATIONS, PAGE 2

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SENIOR LIVING, PAGE 7 ♦ OPINION, PAGE 4 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10

FEBRUARY 24 - MARCH 2, 2021

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CareFirst Asks Everyone To Take Covid Vaccine Pledge

“Better Together” Campaign will enhance recovery.

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield (CareFirst), a not-for-profit and the largest healthcare company in the mid-Atlantic region, announced it is expanding the impact of its “Better Together” Covid-19 vaccination adoption campaign through a new pledge targeting all its employees and contingent workers. The effort seeks to protect the public’s health by inspiring employees to get vaccinated against the coronavirus when eligible. CareFirst also invited local and regional organizations to join in the initiative by pledging to do the same with their employees.

CareFirst will donate \$100 for every CareFirst employee and con-

tingent worker pledge and \$1,000 for each organization pledge. Donations are expected to reach as much as \$1.7 million and will be shared among several regional community organizations contributing to historic efforts to achieve vaccination rates necessary to end the devastating impacts of the pandemic.

“It is CareFirst’s responsibility as a healthcare company and leading employer to protect the health and safety of our employees and the communities where we live and work,” said Brian D. Pieninck, President and CEO of CareFirst. “While today’s headlines and social media content are consumed with stories and images of current vaccine availability and distribution efforts, in this moment, it is also critically important we focus on building support for broad public vaccine adoption as supply increases. The ‘Better Together’ pledge is an opportunity for our workforce and organizations throughout the region to join together and protect the health of our communities through a shared commitment to taking the COVID-19 vaccine when we are all eligible and able.”

Pieninck kicked off the initiative and signed the pledge at a company-wide virtual town hall on Friday, Feb. 12. “This could be one of the most important contributions we make as a company to the COVID-19 recovery,” said Pieninck. The CareFirst employee Better Together Pledge is scheduled to run through March 12, the one-year anniversary of the company’s first day of remote work.

CareFirst will introduce the Better Together Community Organization Pledge later this month. “I am excited to welcome other organizations and expand the impact of the ‘Better Together’ campaign,” said Mack McGee, CareFirst’s VP and Chief Marketing Officer. “Together,

we will work to reach vaccination levels that protect the neighborhoods and communities throughout our region. We are eager to show our support of those pledging to start programs for their employees that drive similar behavior and build broad commitment.”

CareFirst will hold a panel event – Reaching Immunity takes a Community - on Feb. 24, featuring medical experts and community leaders to kick-off the initiative. Donations from the initiatives will be given to several organizations helping with vaccination efforts in our region and in locations where CareFirst employs its workforce including CASA de Maryland, United Way of the National Capital Area

and West Virginia Health Right.

As part of this announcement, CareFirst will also support employees to get the COVID-19 vaccinations. Employees and contingent workers will be paid for up to four hours (per dose) to get vaccinated against the coronavirus. This policy provides flexibility so the workforce can get vaccinated at the times and places that best meet their needs regardless of the work week’s usual constraints. The company stressed that employees should follow the vaccine guidelines in the local jurisdictions where they live and get the COVID-19 vaccine when eligible and medically appropriate for them.

“FLOURISHING AFTER 55”

Office of 55+ Programs

Department of Parks and Recreation
3829 N. Stafford St.,
Arlington, VA 22207
703-228-4747

55+ Programs are virtual.

A 55+ Membership is re-

quired to attend (\$20 annual fee). Learn more at [parks.arlingtonva.us/search/55+ member](https://parks.arlingtonva.us/search/55%2B%20member). To join or register, go to registration.arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

Controlling clutter workshop, learn how to organize important pa-

pers, Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2 p.m. Registration # 912404-14.

New Poetry group to discuss and share, Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2 p.m. Registration # 912300-08.

History discussion to focus on SEE FLOURISHING, PAGE 10

ENRICHING
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JOURNEY



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THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

ARLINGTON PET CONNECTION

BY SHIRLEY RUHE



Buddy takes an afternoon stroll decked out in his new insulated jacket. As a new rescue dog of indeterminate age, Buddy is happy with his coat and everything else.



Dudley Do-Right, a four-year-old standard poodle, lets nothing get in his way when he is sitting by the front window keeping an eye on the neighborhood. Either that or "he is trying an outfit for Project Runway."



Mason and Pip's pal is the colorful betta fish, Titus Andromendon. He was named after a favorite, very colorful character on the TV show Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt and "dances to the Chaka Khan song 'I Feel for You.'"

PHOTOS
CONTRIBUTED



Zoe is an 11-year-old Yorkie who is a certified registered therapy dog with a bag of tricks. Her visits to health care centers, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, rehab centers and hospitals take place on a regular basis. Because of COVID she now performs the Helping Paws Program via Zoom.



With a last name like McGeehan, it's natural Eggbert would want to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Eggbert is a standard blue poodle who lives in Sterling but points out he likes to visit his grandparents in Arlington.



Branko was an anonymous midnight drop-off at the D.C. shelter on New York Avenue. According to his family, his sister, Minnie, was included in the transaction nine years ago but "too shy to be photographed and in fact "she is hiding right now. Branko insists on being involved in any activity humans are concentrating on, such as completion of a complex recipe."



Ama and Mama stare intently at Squeaky who is hiding as usual. The only outside person she greets face to face is her Sit-A-Pet friend Arlene. All three are rescue kitties and two are handicapped although they don't seem to know it. Ama lost a front paw and Mama has a missing back foot but they "run, jump and play and are two of the happiest cats you can meet."

SEE MORE PETS, PAGE 11

Inland Flooding

Facing storm intensities far beyond what our infrastructure was designed to handle.

BY SEN. ADAM EBBIN

With one week remaining in the 2021 legislative session, Senators and Delegates are putting the finishing touches on legislation, and preparing to head home to the districts they represent in Richmond and throughout the year.

One of the great features of the 30th Senate District, which I have been privileged to represent since 2011, is its sweeping access to the Potomac River, and the many tributaries that feed into it. Despite sitting miles from the Bay and Ocean, water is all around us, bringing with it cool, fresh air; rich, diverse marshland; and the ability to walk from the office to multitudes of freshwater activities in moments. With these benefits, as those who live in our area know all too well, also come a number of challenges.



Ebbin

The most obvious of which is the damage and danger of inland flooding.

As our climate is altered by a multitude of manmade factors, we face the reality of storm intensities beyond what our infrastructure was ever designed to handle.

In just the last year, the city of Alexandria has faced three “ten-year” storms (storms that have a one-in-ten chance of happening in a given year that drops 2.28 inches of rain over an hour or 4.81 inches in a day). The intensity of this rainfall has overburdened our stormwater management systems, creating serious backups and flash flooding in underprepared areas of Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax.

Areas such as Del Ray and Four Mile Run, among many, have faced serious flooding. Many individuals have felt the brunt of the inadequacy of our existing stormwater infrastructure to handle the quan-

tity of water it is facing on a much more regular basis. Basements and properties have been severely damaged, people have been trapped in cars during flash floods, and the problem is only getting worse. We face both a short and long-term problem: protecting the homes and properties of those who live in the affected areas, and also fixing an overrun and aging infrastructure system to mitigate flooding issues.

In Alexandria, residents are looking to the city to do everything possible to deal with the recurring flooding that’s impacting our community. The city is currently working on a Flood Mitigation Action Plan which includes more than \$170 million in infrastructure investments and capacity projects throughout the community which will take ten years to complete.

While that crucial long-term investment is underway, we must find ways to support those people who are being affected now. I was glad that local officials in Alexandria worked with me on legislation to give them flexibility to address the immediate needs of constituents. Often, our local officials are placed in a jam in Virginia -- they have the ideas, money, and staff to pull off incredible projects, but

their hands are sometimes tied by the “Dillon Rule.” Unlike “home rule” states, Virginia localities draw their power from the state legislature, and any new power they wish to adopt must be approved by the legislature.

In this case, localities have created a flexible grant fund, drawn from their own coffers, to address stormwater management, but they were limited in how they use those funds to address flooding. That is why I introduced SB1309, which grants increased power to preserve at-risk properties through floodproofing, grading, and other flood protection products. These cost-effective, and environmentally-friendly projects should grant some much-needed reprieve to our water-adjacent neighborhoods, protecting the most vulnerable neighborhoods while Arlington, Alexandria, and Fairfax governments work diligently to overhaul their stormwater management systems.

I was glad to unanimously pass this legislation and send it to the Governor’s desk last week. I look forward to this becoming law and will continue working to address the underlying issues resulting in environmental and infrastructure threats in our community.

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.

NOW THRU MARCH 31

Honey and Royal Tangerines (formerly “Temples”) and Valencias are joining the Honeybells, Cara Caras, Red Grapefruit, and Mandarins lineup in the Northwest Arlington Lions’ Club Citrus Direct-to-You Fundraising on or about February 8 for ordering online thru March 31 along with Maple Products with shipping direct to customers. Order online at nwarlionscitrus.fwffb.net; Maple products at www.purintonmaple.com. Maple Promo Code - “nwarlions” at Check Out Call 703-528-1130 or Text 703-772-3784.

FRIDAY/FEB. 26

Spring Lawn Care. 10-11:30 a.m. Online. Learn what you can do now to improve and manage your lawn to make it a more environmentally friendly, less resource intensive part of your home garden. Join Extension Master Gardener Joyce Hilton to discuss the best types of grasses for our area, specific springtime turf management practices, nutrient management and soil testing, and basic pest and disease management. Free. RSVP at <https://mgmv.org/events/> to

receive link to participate.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 3

Senior Health and Welfare in Arlington County. 9:30-11 a.m. Via Zoom. Lifetime Learning Institute of Northern Virginia (LLI/NOVA) March Forum featuring Jennifer Collins, Michelle Thomas, and Eric Timar, from Arlington County Office of 55+ programs, the Aging and Disability Services Division, and the Housing Division. They will provide insight how Arlington balances the needs of seniors with the challenges of running a small, active, and increasingly youthful county, as well as leveraging the experiences of seniors to support

the county. They will also discuss how the county is balancing the need for affordable housing options for seniors, as well as aging in place. This includes efforts to maintain the safety, health, and vitality of Arlington’s senior Community. Visit the website: <https://llinova.org/>

ROUTE 1 MULTIMODAL STUDY MEETING

The Virginia Department of Transportation invites residents and users of Route 1 to a virtual public information meeting on Wednesday, March 3, on a feasibility study of potential future multimodal improvements between 12th and 23rd Streets

South in Crystal City. In coordination with Arlington County, VDOT is studying opportunities to improve the safety, accessibility, and overall user experience on and across Route 1 in this area. Following the initial public survey and virtual information meeting in fall 2020, this second meeting provides an opportunity to learn the latest on the study’s progress, to give input on proposed design elements along the corridor, and to ask questions of the study team. For more details and past materials visit virginiadot.org/route1multimodalstudy.

NEW LOUNGE AT NATIONAL AIRPORT

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority announced an agreement with American Express to construct and open its 16th Century Lounge at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. This agreement will be administered by MarketPlace Development, the contractor overseeing the concessions program at Reagan National on behalf of the Airports Authority. The 11,500-square-foot lounge is expected to open by the end of 2022, following the completion of Project Journey, an airport-improvement and reconfiguration project that will significantly increase post-se-

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

The
Arlington
Connection

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

**Published by
Local Media Connection LLC**

**1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314**

Free digital edition delivered to your email box. Go to connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe

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Blunders That Changed History

By Shirley Ruhe
Arlington Connection

From the Eyes of Coldcase Killers” to self-help books to great blunders of history. Charles Toftoy has just released “Blunders: Shocking Mistakes That Altered History,” his fifth book.

Toftoy says, “My wife got tired of having me interview homicide detectives. Why don’t you do something to inspire people?” This led to “The Amazing Fireside Talk,” a self-help book with each chapter focused on hope, happiness, denial.

Then this led to the idea of helping people in a different way, by understanding what really happened in history.

Toftoy says he spent six years researching blunders in history. He started with 200 examples and picked 32 blunders, writing a chapter on each. “A blunder is a compilation of many mistakes put together, sort of like an umbrella. The whole purpose is to provide the real truth and unknown facts about events that occurred in history.”

He says, “My favorite one was Nov. 8, 1939 when a carpenter in Germany had built a bomb that just missed killing Hitler. This happened because it was decided Hitler would need to take the train to his annual speech in Munich due to the fog, and the time difference meant the bomb missed blowing Hitler up by 10 minutes. “Just think — millions of lives would have been saved.”

Another example is Exercise Tiger between the British and the United States in 1944 to prepare for the upcoming Normandy Invasion at Utah Beach. But the German subs near the practice location picked up the movement and they destroyed the landing ship tanks and killed 776. It was covered up.

“I feel for the people who died there. Their relatives didn’t know what happened to their sons and daughters until 20 years later.”

Toftoy explains that he dug deep for these examples. “I was challenged all the time. If something didn’t sound right, I dug deeper. If you dig to find a body in six feet and it isn’t there, most people stop. But you dig another 6 feet and there it is.” Toftoy says he went to the library, studied in the archives, got top-secret messages from the archives of other countries. If things didn’t agree, he kept going until he was satisfied he had the answer.

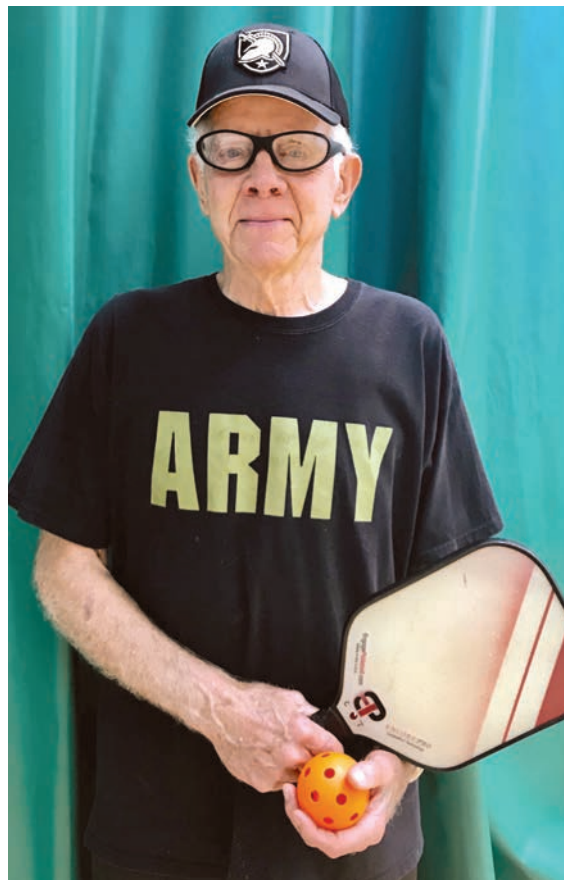
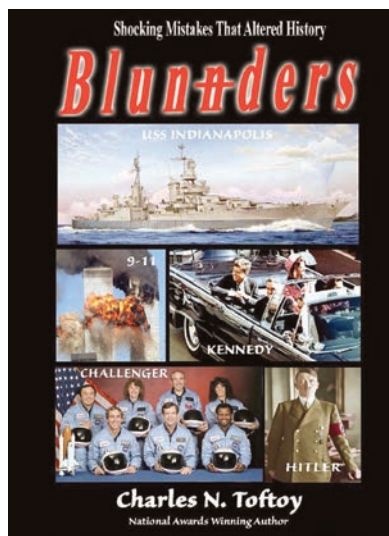
Another one of his examples is the Piltdown Chicken. He says scientists have wanted to tie birds and dinosaurs together forever so when they discovered

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Charles Toftoy in Kenya two years ago where he visited a school “somewhere in the boondocks. They had never seen a professor before.”

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Charles Toftoy, author of “Blunders: Shocking Mistakes That Altered History,” ready for pickle ball, which he plays on a regular basis, and competes in the Northern Virginia Senior Olympics.

the long arms and small body of a bird and the vertebra of a dinosaur in China in 1999, they immediately jumped to the conclusion that they had found the missing link. But it was a hoax. “It was the biggest embarrassment in the history of the National Geographic.”

Toftoy brings experience in three sectors to his writing including 10 years in the military, 12 in the corporate world and 17 years as an academic. He was a U.S. army airborne ranger and a highly decorated Vietnam veteran. Toftoy is active in the Wounded Warrior Mentor Program, which he helped establish.

The next step? Back to where he started, more mysteries.

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The Prince and His Pee (Pad)

BY JOAN BRADY
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Staying with my in-laws has not been without its, well, puddles. Last week I reported that Hank, our elderly beagle, had lifted his leg and peed on my mother-in-law's dining room rug, as she looked on. Not a pretty moment. But we got through it.

Then, last week, he jumped onto the couch I have been using as a bed, lifted his leg and before I could stop him, peed again. Eighteen-year-old Hank has Cushing's syndrome, which can cause uncontrollable peeing, but it has been successfully managed by medication for about six months. Two "accidents" in about a week was not a good sign. And as bad as it would have been at home, it's certainly not fun when your dog is peeing on someone else's things.

My in-laws first learned of the second infraction when they read my column. I breathed a sigh of relief as my mother-in-law laughed the entire way through.

Hours later she quietly suggested that I



PHOTO BY JOAN BRADY

Pillows atop pee pads, probably not what my mother-in-law had in mind.

put pee pads down on any soft surface Hank might decide to spend time on, which I did.

Thankfully, beloved Hank was not kicked to the curb.

I've spoken with his vet and his numbers from a few weeks ago don't indicate a medication adjustment would be appropriate for the Cushing's.

So it looks like I'll be chasing after the beagle with a Tupperware container to capture a urine specimen.

A urinary tract infection would be less serious than a rapid progression of the disease, so fingers crossed.

Our vet told us last August that if Hank was still with us in August 2021, it would be amazing. So we consider every day with our little rescue beagle to be a gift.

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.

ArPets Update: Brisket Has Been Adopted!

BY JOAN BRADY
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Remember that very smart dog, Brisket? He was tired of living on the streets. Cold and hungry, he hopped a ride to the local animal rescue with a local newspaper delivery driver. www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2021/jan/28/arpets-local-news-rescue/

As Brisket was warming up in his new foster home, Sophia was deciding she was ready for a dog. She only had a few things on her wish list; a medium-to-large sized dog who would enjoy long neighborhood walks and hikes in Great Falls National Park.

Voila! There was Brisket's profile on the Animal Welfare League of Arlington's website. Sophia was immediately drawn to that adorably expressive face. And when they met in person, she was enchanted by his sweet shyness and the way he ran to fetch his toys to show her. With walking a big priority, she was delighted that he was a perfect gentleman on his leash. Yup, she knew he was the one.

Sophia and Brisket love their morning walks together. Once they have started their day, Brisket is raring to go. So Sophia has had to develop some creative tactics and quiet time activities, so as not to annoy the downstairs neighbors too early. Most mornings, if Sophia hasn't been able to trick him into an after-walk nap by pretending to go to sleep herself, Brisket can be found silently people-watching from their balcony.

Bringing the "loving, playful, snuggler with the huge appetite" home has brought much joy and laughter.

Life for these two is just beginning, please join me in wishing them all the best.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED BY SOPHIA

All smiles on the way home.

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. If this is at the bottom, I think it should go after the ArPets plug.

Interested in Adopting?

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
<https://alexandrianimals.org/>

Animal Welfare League of Arlington
<https://www.awla.org/>

Homeward Trails
<https://www.homewardtrails.org/>

Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation
<https://www.lostdogrescue.org/>



Brisket has brought lots of laughter



Success! A morning nap.

PetConnect Rescue
<https://www.petconnectrescue.org/>

Wolf Trap Animal Rescue

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SENIOR LIVING

The Value of Intergenerational Relationships

The lives of both youth and seniors are enhanced by meaningful connections.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Bringing seniors and youth together for meaningful relationships can be mutually beneficial. From structured and pleasurable programs that help foster such connections to regular telephone calls with a grandparent, the advantages that these interactions offer are many.

"Because of their life experiences, older adults can be a source of stability and emotional support and serve as mentors for children, particularly those who have a difficult home environment," said Kenneth Bell, LCSW, a Burke, Va., therapist who specializes in gerontology. "Older adults can gain a sense of purpose and fulfillment in knowing that they're impacting and nurturing those who will be adults in the future."

"Intergenerational relationships are very important because they allow youth and seniors to appreciate the entire lifespan," added Arlington marriage and family therapist Katie Ziskind. "Often-times, these intergenerational relationships need to be consciously constructed or well organized."

Among the programs that offer opportunities for developing such relationships is The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at George Mason University. The organization regularly facilitates intergenerational programs between OLLI Members and traditional university students.

"These programs benefit both groups to create community, foster valued learning, and eliminate mutual stereotypes," said Jennifer Disano, Executive Director, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at George Mason University. "Over the years, our organization has collaborated with several departments at the university for in-class projects, lectures, theatrical performances, research studies, mentoring, and career guidance."

Youth Movement Against Alzheimer's, (YMAA) a non-profit organization with a chapter at Thomas



PHOTOS COURTESY OF OLLI

One option for cultivating intergenerational relationships is through programs like those at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at George Mason University which include both OLLI members and traditional university students.

Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, is made up of high school and college students who visit and spend time with seniors who are living with Alzheimer's. While the visits have been postponed due to Covid-19, students use video conferencing and telephone calls to share meals with the elderly.

"[This] provides youth and older adults with a platform to connect to other generations in this time of crisis," said Katherine Rose, Chief Executive Officer, YMAA.

Even without being part of a formal organization, consider having a regular, set time to have Zoom or phone calls

with elderly friends and family members, suggests Stacie Isenberg, Psy.D., a psychologist based in Bethesda. "Most kids understand the value of their relationships with seniors, and that holds true for seniors as well," she said. "Therefore, both feel a special competence and pride in the special role they fill for each other."

"Intergenerational relationships are very important because they allow youth and seniors to appreciate the entire lifespan."

— Katie Ziskind

CALENDAR

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Virginia Department of Transportation

**Route 1 Multimodal Improvements
Feasibility Study
Arlington County**

Virtual Public Information Meeting

Wednesday, March 3, 2021, 6:30-8 p.m.
www.virginiadot.org/route1multimodalstudy
Inclement weather date: Wednesday, March 10, 2021

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) invites you to join a public information meeting for the Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study. This virtual meeting will provide an opportunity for the public to:

- Learn about feasibility study updates and progress
- Provide input on proposed design elements along the corridor
- Ask questions and address concerns with the study team

The purpose of this feasibility study is to identify enhanced multimodal connectivity and accommodations along Route 1 (between 12th Street to 23rd Streets South) to meet the changing transportation needs of the Crystal City and Pentagon City communities.

The meeting will be held as a **virtual/online meeting**. Information for participating in the virtual meeting is available at **www.virginiadot.org/route1multimodalstudy**. The study team will make a short presentation beginning at 6:30 p.m. followed by a question and answer period.

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

Give your comments during the meeting, or by **March 15, 2021** via the comment form on the study website, by mail to Mr. Dan Reinhard, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or by email to route1multimodalstudy@VDOT.virginia.gov.

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UPC: 115882

PET CONNECTION

Don't Forget to Feed Your Backyard Pets

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

If you want to buy birdseed, you have to be persistent. You have to walk around a net strung across the sidewalk to separate Wild Birds Unlimited from the Covid testing site next door. The parking spots in the shopping center are packed with the cars full of passengers waiting to get some of the 300 tests administered every day.

But birdseed customers are persistent. Michael Zuiker, owner of the Wild Birds Unlimited franchise says, "That's the crazy thing—we had our best year ever last year in my 29 years at Harrison Shopping Center. We worked extra hard; we had to learn to adapt."

Zuiker says he thinks things changed because when Covid hit, people were stuck at home, and they noticed the cool birds in their backyard. When they had been working they didn't pay as much attention but when they were home they noticed when the feeders were empty. Now that they have joined the ranks of the bird enthusiasts, some are buying different kinds of feeders to attract a variety of birds.

Zuiker says his business is mostly actual bird food since the in store customer shopping is closed and customers can't browse around to pick up bird jewelry or clutch toys for kids or birdbaths. But "we've turned into a baby Amazon with about 50 percent of our business now delivery. It used to be we'd put seed in your car and you'd go." Now if you prefer, you can order ahead and you can pick up your order on the metal rack outside the door of the store and it will be delivered to your car (wherever it

is parked).

Now they are delivering all over N. Virginia. Zuiker explains it has been tough the last few days with the ice storm. They were totally closed Thursday and opened late on Friday. "Now today and tomorrow we have to run all over the place."

He says that a year ago when Covid hit, Zuiker thought they would be finished after 28 years. "We had no clue what to do. We went from retail to no one coming in. What happened is everybody was scared to death."

And then things changed dramatically; the Urgent Care Clinic next door got really busy with Covid tests.

Zuiker says it used to be there were two nurses sitting on the couch all day at the Urgent Care waiting for patients; now after Covid there are up to 10 nurses doing 300 tests a day in 12 hours. "They work so hard." Now the people wait in their cars, which sit numbered in the parking lot waiting their turn for a test.

"I used to see numbers 1-12. Then it kept blowing up. In a couple of weeks, it was 24-25, then 100. You could look down the whole line of cars at the shopping center."

Zuiker provided coffee and donuts for the nurses and then he came up with the idea to put out a plastic bird feeder with a dollar bill and a sign. Before you knew it they had raised \$6,000 over six months for pizza, lunches and other goodies to keep the nurses going.

But while they closed for in store customer purchases, the store kept an online presence and offered delivery as well as curbside pick up. Zuiker says the regular customers kept coming and in the summer new customers started coming.



A male Downy woodpecker loads up on his favorite suet to provide much needed energy that burns off quickly in the cold.

"That's the crazy thing—we had our best year ever last year in my 29 years at Harrison Shopping Center."

— Michael Zuiker, owner Wild Birds Unlimited



Zuiker started a fund to give the nurses treats in the Urgent Care Center next door. "They work so hard."



Michael Zuiker, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited at Harrison Shopping Center

Those waiting for COVID tests were required to wait in their cars.

Zuiker remembers the shopping center when he first opened his store. "The shopping center was run down with a 40 percent vacancy rate." But they did have a Popeye's and a McDonalds and a liquor store right next door. When they tore down the old A&P and built a Harris Teeter, things turned around. But things were challenging then, too. "I'd been here 6 years and people asked me was I new?"

"We try so hard to reach out to people. We just need awareness that we're still open." And Zuiker says he has learned some things about marketing when with all of his efforts, people still don't know he is open. And then there are the people who ask, "Can I see the birds?"

Looking ahead Zuiker is hoping to reopen the store inside in June or so when the Urgent Clinic next door moves to the front of the shopping center in a rebuilt space

and when he has been able to get a Covid vaccine. "I live in Montgomery County and we don't have enough vaccine."

In the meantime, he says stock up on your Winter SuperBlend, no mess birdseed, thistle, P&B suet or the hot pepper super suet to keep the squirrels away. Or maybe a new squirrel buster eliminator feeder. Watching the squirrels try to get into your new squirrel proof feeder can be an afternoon's entertainment.



INDUSTRY LEADERS – Arlington-based Synergy Home Care, a provider of services for those who want to age in place, has been selected for the third consecutive year as the distinguished 2021 Best Home Care Leader in Excellence, Best Employer of Choice and Best Provider of Choice by industry research firm Home Care Pulse. Synergy Home Care CEO Mitch Opalski, seated center, is surrounded by staff members (clockwise from back left) Deysi Ludena, Irene Blair, Samuella Kanu, Valeria Fonseca and Tiffany Johnson.

JANET BARNETT/THE CONNECTION

PET CONNECTION

Virginia Is for Pet Lovers Too

Cosmetics testing, research dogs/cats, dangerous dogs, pet store employees come under scrutiny.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

The 2021 Virginia General Assembly had only six companion animal-related bills before it this session; a small number compared to the roughly two dozen during the 2020 session, and a dozen in 2019. Virginians love their pets and legislators are no different. Several frequently sponsor bills aimed to better the lives of animal companions, although the short session this year led to a restriction in the number of bills legislators were permitted to file.

Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D-33) and Del. Kaye Kory (D-38) sponsored bills in their respective legislative houses to restrict cosmetic testing on animals. The Humane Cosmetic Act (SB1379 and HB2250), which has passed both houses, will prohibit testing of cosmetics on animals in the Commonwealth, and prohibit the sale of any cosmetic that was developed or manufactured using animal testing by any cosmetics manufacturer. If signed by the Governor, the testing provision of the Act will go into effect

on July 1, 2021, and the ban on sales on Jan. 1, 2022. Unsuccessful with similar bills last year, both legislators found success this time with accord from manufacturer associations.

Sen. William Stanley (R-20), a member of the Senate Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources Committee, sponsored two bills this session, SB1412 to keep those convicted of animal cruelty from working in the pet industry; and SB1417 to give research dogs and cats an opportunity for an adopted home when no longer needed at a research testing facility, including our institutes of higher education.

Stanley's SB1412 will mirror some restrictions for pet stores and dog breeders that public and private shelters and rescues have operated under for many years. Northern Virginia has had multiple examples of pet store manager convictions, where pet stores were closed, only to have the manager move and open at another location. The bill restricts those with animal cruelty, neglect or abandonment convictions from working as owners, managers, employees of pet store or breeders. The bill



Delegate Kaye Kory, D-38,
House sponsor of the Humane
Cosmetics Act.



Senator Dave Marsden, D-37,
sponsor of dangerous dog
legislation.



Senator Jennifer Boysko, D-33,
sponsor of Senate Humane
Cosmetics Act.

also requires pet stores to obtain a statement from purchasers or adopters, that the person has not had an animal related conviction, as shelters and rescues are now required to do.

The testing facility dog adoption bill (SB1417), requires that a dog or cat, no longer needed for testing, be given an opportunity for adoption prior to euthanasia, providing that the animal does not pose a health or safety risk to the public. The testing facility may enter into

an agreement with a shelter or rescue, or research arms of higher education research facilities, such as Virginia Technical College, may institute their own adoption programs. Senator Stanley himself adopted a beagle bred for research after visiting a Cumberland medical research breeder with Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37) to inspect the facility. The two Senators wanted to know more about the only medical research dog breeder located in Virginia after discus-

sion of a 2020 General Assembly bill that would have restricted the business, but did not pass. Stanley named his adopted dog Marsy in commemoration of his trip with Sen. Marsden.

Senator Marsden, Chairman of the Senate Companion Animals subcommittee, sponsored a bill to restructure the procedure for adjudicating cases of dangerous dogs; SB1135. The bill provides for the speedy adjudication of such cases, within 30 days of the summons.



PHOTO COURTESY SENATOR STANLEY OFFICE

Senator Bill Stanley, R-20, sponsor of adoptions for research dogs and cat; with Marsy, his beagle rescued from a medical research dog breeding facility.

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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

Announcements

Obituary



William "Bill" Ploskina, 75, passed away on Thursday, February 18, 2021, in Herndon, Virginia. Born in McKeesport Pennsylvania. Bill graduated from Penn State University as an Aeronautical Engineer. He owned Bill's True Value hardware store in Arlington, Virginia for 42 years. Bill enjoyed traveling and lived in Singapore for one and a half years. Bill is survived by his partner of 27 years Nancy Wood of Herndon, Virginia; his children Sean (Allison) of Virginia Beach, Virginia, Mark of Arlington, Virginia and Ian of Seattle, Washington; his sister Cynthia Stoupis of Irwin, Pennsylvania; his grandchildren Jack (Sean), Lilly and Samantha Gobuluk. Funeral service will be private. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the National Kidney Foundation www.kidney.org or The American Transplant Foundation www.americantransplantfoundation.org

Legals

ABC LICENSE

Salt Line Ballston LLC trading as The Salt Line, 4040 Wilson Blvd., Ground Floor, Arlington, Arlington County, Virginia 22203-4434. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer on Premises/Mixed Beverage Restaurant license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Gavin T. Coleman, Member authorizing advertisement. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

Obituary

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"FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

FROM PAGE 2

political, economic and artistic issues of various countries, Thurs., Feb. 25, 1 p.m. Registration # 912402-21.

Arts and crafts exhibit, virtual tour of paintings, drawings, yarn creations and more, Thursday, Feb. 25, 1 p.m. Registration # 912301-24.

Painting lesson, Thursday, Feb. 25, 10 a.m. Picture to paint and list of supplies needed sent with registration, # 912301-17.

Love your heart, learn heart healthy tips and recipes, Friday, Feb. 26, 11:30 a.m. Registration # 912501-06.

Basic painting class Friday, Feb. 26, 1 p.m. Registration # 912301-19.

Saturday Night Supper Club, dine at home, enjoy fun conversation, Feb. 27, 5 p.m. Registration # 912801-22.

Monday morning meet-up with coffee, friends and conversation, Mar. 1, 10 a.m. Registration # 913801-07.

Needle craft projects, share ideas and fellowship, Monday, Mar. 1, 10 a.m. Registration # 913703-01.

Yarn creations, knit and crochet projects, share ideas, Tuesday, Mar. 2, 1:30 p.m. Registration # 913703-25.

Lee Book Club members to discuss, "The Splendid and the Vile," by Erik Larson, Tuesday, Mar. 2, 11 a.m. Registration # 913402-20.

55+ Live! Talk Show, preview upcoming online programs, meet 55+ staff, Tuesday, Mar. 2, 12 p.m. Registration # 913801-01.

Local history discussion about Kann's Department Stores, Wednesday, Mar. 3, 1:30 p.m. Registration # 913402-17.

Genealogy discussion with local genealogist Susan J. Court, share discoveries and techniques, Wednesday, Mar. 3, 3 p.m. Registration # 913402-01.

"See Me at the Smithsonian," interactive program for adults with dementia and their caregivers, about beloved Museum objects, Thursday, Mar. 4, 2 p.m. Registration # 913500-08.

Women's nutrition, learn the right nutrients to stay healthy and active, Thursday, Mar. 4, 11 a.m. Registration # 913501-01.

Afternoon hang-out for casual conversations about books, movies, exercise routines, hobbies and more, Thursday, Mar. 4, 3:30 p.m. Registration # 913801-20.

Travel trivia reaches far destinations around the globe, Thursday, Mar. 4, 11 a.m. Registration # 913601-04.

PET CONNECTION

BY SHIRLEY RUHE



Wrangler pulls 11-year-old Logan down the driveway on his sled during the recent snow/ice storm in Arlington. The Burstroms drove to Pennsylvania after school closed due to COVID to find an English Cream Golden Retriever that could help cheer up the family during the isolation. Wrangler has done his job.



Mason and Pip taking a walk on Pimmit Run. Mason (right) is ten years old and according to her family "her DNA test showed that she is 12.5 percent of many different breeds but we like to think she is actually part fox." Pip is a white terrier mix who was "foster failed" through Lucky Dog two years ago and they believe is about 12 and totally deaf. They describe Mason as a "champion ball retriever and Pip as a champion napper."



Dudley Do-Right shares his house with Olive (left) and Leta who are 7-year-old tabby sisters from a rescue on the island of Anguilla. Their owner says she was happy to adopt them since her cat and only pet at the time had just died and less than a week without any pet was "too much for me."

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 4

curity space and connectivity between shops, restaurants and multiple airline gates. The Centurion Lounge will be located post-security near Terminal B. Access will be complimentary and exclusive for American Express Platinum Card Members, Centurion Members and Delta SkyMiles Reserve Card Members.

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Not That I Don't Understand But ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... So this is what the process is like trying to schedule a covid-19 vaccination. If you're lucky though, you receive an email reminder - since you've pre-registered, advising you that the time to strike is now. You click on the link, and as I'm witnessing, you wait your turn. The site says there's "High Traffic," and they'll be with you momentarily. There's no calling. There's barely any responding. There's simply sitting and staring - and waiting. There's no indication of how long you'll be waiting. There's no guarantee that the site will even open. There's only instructions to refresh your computer every 30 seconds in the hopes that an interactive-type page will appear and you'll have reached the promised land: the page where you can actually schedule an appointment.

However, as I'm sitting and waiting, I'm getting frustrated. I seem to be getting nowhere, slowly. Though I'm refreshing as directed, nothing is changing on the screen I'm staring at. I've linked but nothing is really linking. So I keep repeating myself: stare, refresh, wait; stare, refresh, wait. It's a loop of nothingness. It seems an endless pursuit. It's almost like whack-a-mole, except in your attempts to get connected, the process is excruciatingly slow and there's nothing to whack. (At least it hasn't cost me anything, other than time, that is.)

I realize that the demand is way more than supply and according to experts, it won't be until June/July when "anyone who wants to get a shot will be able to get one." Nevertheless, I would have thought, given my comorbidity: cancer and age 66, that I'd be closer to the top than the bottom. Not that I'm particularly anxious about my circumstances, but my wife Dina is very concerned about them. (I'm staring steady at the site where this column began. As yet, despite my rigorous refreshing, I still haven't passed "Go.")

I understand that patience is a virtue. But today, while staring at and refreshing this site and seeing no sign of life as we know it, I am testing that virtue beyond its stress points. This process reminds of the days of buying concert tickets online. It was nearly impossible - for a popular show, to break through the internet logjam. That is not until you received a message that all the tickets had been sold. How people ever got through, I'll never know. It was always befuddling to me.

I know however, with respect to concerts, sporting events and the like, there would be a secondary/aftermarket availability. I knew an alternative existed. I also knew the cost would be black market-ish, somewhat over the original retail. Unfortunately, or fortunately, public health solutions cannot be left to the market. In its effort not to discriminate and be fair to all recipients, we're stuck with the present communication and distribution system.

Having endured these kinds of pursuits before when calling the IRS, Social Security, Medicare and The Veterans Administration, et cetera, I know a few precautions one should take before attempting to climb these mountains. First, clear your schedule. Next, go to the bathroom. Then, go to the kitchen and get some refreshments. Find someplace comfortable and cozy from which to call; you need to be prepared for the long haul. And finally, should another call come in while you're on hold, do not risk your spot in line by clicking on your call-waiting. Technology can sometimes break your spirit.

My wait is over. The site was just refreshed. It says the center is closed. Perfect timing. I just finished the column.

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

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