

Hope of Easter
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Two Cats, Six Legs

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Back To Camp! In Person!

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ArPets



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These Two Cats Have Six Legs Between Them

By Joan Brady Arlington Connection

watched as Hank stopped dead in his tracks to observe the jaunty step of the three-legged dog as he passed us on his way up Wilson Blvd. Hank didn't turn away until the canine and his pet parent were well out of sight. While I obviously can't read Hank's mind, it looked to me like he was marveling at the sight; enthralled by the dog's ability to take the hand he was dealt and not let it deter him.

While many may have seen a three-legged dog or two walking the streets, how many of us have observed a three-legged cat? The Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation (LDCRF) apparently sees 4-5 a year, so they are way more common than I would have thought.

Today I want to introduce you to not one, but TWO tripod cats. Kobe and Mia are not litter mates, soul mates or particularly interested in being adopted together. But they each hope to find a forever home. Here are their stories...

KOBE

Kobe came to LDCRF all the way from Mississippi. Many rescue animals end up in this area because they are significantly more likely to find permanent homes here. Not much is known about why the Mississippi vet thought that Kobe's front leg had to go, but apparently there was some trauma that precipitated the decision. While the surgery may have been done down south, Kobe did his rehab with foster dad and cat room coordinator for LDCRF, Steve Swart.

Swart has previous experience with three-legged felines and says, "Three legged cats lead very healthy normal lives. They adjust well to life without a limb and don't seem to worry about it much at all...they learn their limits and

find solutions easily."

According to Swart, it took just a little time for Kobe to gain enough confidence to jump on and off furniture, but he adjusted pretty quickly. Other activities have required a bit of cat ingenuity. Without a left paw, how would Kobe groom the left side of his face? Kobe figured out if he licks Swart's hand, he can then smash his face into that wet palm and use it a bit like a washcloth. Now that is pretty creative.

Swart reports that Kobe is a "good guy who wants to be your buddy." He doesn't have an adorable story to tell of mayhem created by the Kobe-ster, but mentioned that Kobe is the sort of bathroom attendant he "never needed." I'm guessing quite a few pet parents out there can relate.

If Kobe would talk, he could tell you that his handsome face, cool scars and perseverance are hard to resist. And he would want you to know that he is a great napper and would love to share your bed. Swart says that anyone who is lucky enough to bring Kobe home will feel loved, needed and appreciated every day. Check out Kobe's page at lostdogrescue.org or email Steve at cats@lostdogrescue.org

MIA

Mia will be ready for adoption in the next few weeks as she is dealing with a few health issues beyond her three-legged status. So just a few highlights for now...

Mia hails from West Virginia and recently arrived in this area. Her foster mom reports that she is "mellow-tempered, loves to be pet and is both people and cat friendly." She likes to relax in the sun and watch the birds through the window. And she LOVES to be showered with attention. But hey,

SEE THESE TWO CATS, PAGE 3
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

News





Campers at Encore Stage and Studio Spring Break Camp strike a tableau while other campers guess the story.





Campers Excited to be Back in Person

BY SHIRLEY RUHE Arlington Connection

ars full of bouncing, excited children line up in the parking lot of Cherrydale United Methodist Church on the first day of spring break to participate in Encore Stage and Studio outdoor, in-person Spring Break Camp.

Each camper has completed a health screening focused on COVID-19 symptoms and will undergo a temperature and symptom screening before interacting with others each day. Each camper will remain in the same small group for camp activities and will be provided with their own supplies so that students are not sharing materials. Frequent sanitizing breaks are scheduled throughout the day.

Masked campers emerge from their cars with blanket, water and snack tucked under their arms and head for "Over the Moon," the first day's theme for movement, theatre

games and crafts led by Encore's Teaching Artists.

Day 2 is "The Sword and the Stone;" Day 3 "The Emperor's New Groove;" followed by "Tangled" on day 4 and "Wonder Park" on day five. Enrollment can be tailored to an individual's schedule by choosing selective days or the entire week with morning or afternoon camp offered.

Multi-colored blankets are spread out in the yard of the church while hands shoot up in the air. "Who wants to be in the tableau?" Alicia Sykes, counselor, says, "Okay. based on today's play of the Moon Goddess, what were we looking at?"

"I was looking up at the moon." "I'm so glad you weren't stolen."

A tiny voice volunteers, "a rocket." Someone adds in, "everyone else was dancing." Sykes explains that they create a tableau, which is a frozen picture. "You strike a pose and then we see if the others agree with the story."

Encore is a theatre company In Arlington "by children for children" that touches 15,000 children and adults in a normal year. All classes are taught by professional artists and geared toward the skill level of the students enrolled.

Encore | has been offering virtual classes during the pandemic but "can't wait to get back together again on stage" and are offering their award winning camps in person this summer. https://www.encorestageva.org/

These Two Cats Have Six Legs Between Them

From Page 2

who doesn't?

You can email Steve at cats@ lostdogrescue.org to learn more about Mia.

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 Alexan-

dria https://alexandriaanimals.org/ Animal Welfare League of Arlington https://www.awla.org/

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

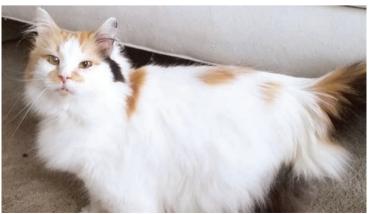
Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation https://www.lostdogrescue. org/

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

Wolf Trap Animal Rescue https:// www.wtarescue.com/

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.



Mia

Arlington Connection & March 31 - April 6, 2021 & 3

EASTER REFLECTIONS

Time to Share Love and Experience Hope

Easter represents the transformation of a time of tragedy into a season of triumph.

By Rev. DeLishia A. Davis

aster is a festive time of year for people all over the world. This special day enhanced by lilies, crosses, bunnies and special chocolates is a fun time in life and a consistent reminder of the love and hope that we are able to experience with one another. Although the holiday is deeply rooted in religious traditions, Easter is a time when people of all ages, races, ethnicity groups, belief systems and preferences celebrate the gifts of life and love.

The favored day of celebration known as Resurrection Day or Easter each year usually includes egg hunts, vibrant worship experiences, family dinners and fun-filled activities. Young parents love to dress up little ones and not-so-little ones love to flash their fashion finery for the occasion and gather for a time of great celebration. Love and joy are cultivated through shared hearts and homes.

During this pandemic, our Easter celebrations are very different. We are cautioned against large crowd gatherings or unmasked meetings. Hugs are scarce and restaurant experiences are limited. However, the holiday focus is central – the love we have for our creator and

our loved ones. This remains constant despite the trials of life and any systemic issues.

Although the fun time looks different this year, some things are consistent. We have the blessings of life, family, friends, food and fun. The pandemic affects us, but does not remove these wonderful elements from our lives. Most of all, we still have an opportunity to receive love and share love with others.

It is important to demonstrate love and acceptance, regardless of any personal differences and preferences as a commemoration of this time. We celebrate Easter as beneficiaries of unconditional love, which should be reciprocated and contagiously spread at Easter and beyond to everyone.

Resurrection Day is especially delightful for those who believe in Jesus Christ, as the central focus of the holiday is the risen Savior and King. Jesus triumphs over a death experienced on Good Friday. As a result, believers have an opportunity to receive the gift of salvation



Rev. DeLishia A.
Davis is pastor of
Calloway United
Methodist Church
of Arlington, Va.
and President of
Arlington Coalition
of Black Clergy.

and experience everlasting life. Christians celebrate Jesus' ultimate sacrifice in worship. It is a reminder of God's fulfilled promises in scripture and in our individual lives. This fact helps believers to grow in faith and hope for the future.

Everyone can have hope because of Easter. Easter represents the transformation of a time of tragedy into a season of triumph. Although we all may face difficult moments

in life, we are reminded that time is filled with swift transition, and circumstances can always change for the better. Every obstacle has potential to become an opportunity through focus and diligence. As a community, we have an innate hope that there will be unity, improvements and brighter days ahead.

Although we are living in an unprecedented time filled with news of coronavirus deaths, hate crimes, police brutality, underserved populations and mental health breakdowns, there is still hope. These issues emphasize the worst in our society and world. Nevertheless, we are reminded through the hope of Easter that even the bleakest of situations can be transformed into moments of joy and victory. It is important to remember that hope for our future.

As we have triumphed through unfortunate situations in our past, we will rise again. America will rise again. Virginia will rise again. Arlington will rise again. Your community will rise again. Your family will rise again. Most of all, you will rise again.

While you await the brighter day promise, prioritize the most important elements of the season. Practice good self-care mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Cherish the good memories, and look forward to the joy-filled promises of the future. Each day is a new opportunity to grow and excel.

This Easter, I hope you will enjoy jelly beans, dyed eggs, chocolate bunnies, virtual worship and priceless family moments. However, my greatest wish is that you share love and experience hope. That makes a difference in the world and cultivates the joy of the season for everyone – the way it was intended.

Rev. DeLishia A. Davis is the pastor of Calloway United Methodist Church of Arlington, Virginia and the President of the Arlington Coalition of Black Clergy.

Arlington

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NEWS DEPARTMENT: arlington@connectionnewspapers.com

Shirley Ruhe

Contributing Photographer and Writer slrbc@aol.com

Joan Brady

Contributing Photographer and Writer joan@joanbradyphotography.com

Eden Brown

Contributing Writer arlington@connectionnewspapers.com

Ken Moore

Contributing Writer kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:

For advertising information sales@connectionnewspapers.com 703-778-9431

Debbie Funk

Display Advertising/National Sales 703-778-9444 debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin

Marketing Assistant 703-778-9431 dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment Advertising

703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher

Mary Kimm mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com @MaryKimm

Executive Vice President

Jerry Vernon 703-549-0004 jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Art/Design:

Laurence Foong, John Heinly, Ali Khaligh

Production Manager:

Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



Reflections on Easter

We believe that there is always more life than we can see on the surface and, in the end, love will always win.

By Rev. Dr. Kathryn Nystrand Dwyer

s we enter Holy Week this year, there are signs of hope and resurrection all around: spring is beginning to burst from the ground, the stimulus package is bringing desperately needed relief for many, and we are seeing millions of people receiving COVID-19 vaccinations. Many peo-

ple have described to me how surprised they were with the depth of joy and emotion they experienced when they received their shot: emotional relief that they have some protection, and anticipatory joy of being able to hold those they love and resume some of the activities that give life so much mean-



Rev. Dr. Kathryn Nystrand Dwyer, Senior Pastor, Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ.

ing. These are tangible signs of hope and new life for which we can sing, "alleluia!"

And yet, there is also

grief, struggle, tragedy, and loss. Holy Week is arriving so closely to the anniversary of this Pandemic. We come to this week aware of not just the measures we have taken for safety and the light that we are beginning to see at the end of this diffi-

cult period in our history, but also the loss of loved ones and the real struggle with loneliness and isolation. In addition, we continue to see disparate treatment of people who are Indigenous, LGBTQIA, and people of color, as well as suffering businesses, job loss, and so much more. Central to the Christian faith is not just Easter and the resurrection; this holiday is also intricately linked with the story of Good Friday when Jesus was crucified, and Holy Saturday, when Jesus lay in the tomb. Holy Saturday is a day of despair and stillness – and we have all been there. Those times when

we do not know what will come next or how, or if, it will work out. These three events - Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Sunday – are all integral parts of our faith. Again and again, we face death and despair and are unable to make sense of it. But, again and again, we are

See Reflections, Page 7

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Starting from a Clean Slate

Governor considers compromise on expungement that has automatic expungement for some misdemeanors and petition-based sealing of the record on some felonies.

> BY MICHAEL LEE POPE The Connection

arijuana convictions will be automatically expunged under a bill now under consideration by Gov. Ralph Northam, although convictions for crack cocaine will require missing a day of work and probably hiring a lawyer to go to court and seal the record. The legislation is a compromise crafted late in the General Assembly session by House Majority Leader Charniele Herring of Alexandria and state Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36), who clashed repeatedly over the last year about how the process should work.

"This bill combines both bills to come up with a process for a clean slate for Virginians," said Herring. "There is some record retention, but still the records will be destroyed after a time."

House Democrats were pushing for an automatic model of expungement, allowing people to get rid of old drug convictions without having to hire a lawyer and miss a day of work. But Senate Democrats were advocating for a petition-based model, which would allow a judge to review the individual circumstances of each individual case before making a determination. The governor began the session by calling on the two sides to find a compromise during his State of the Commonwealth Address, although he pointedly declined to publicly take a side in the debate.

"It's time to act during this session to have the robust debate about how to best conduct the process of expunging people's records," said Northam in his State of the Commonwealth address. "This will make our system more just and equal. And it needs action this session."

Ultimately Herring and Surovell worked together on a mashup of the two bills, taking parts from each version to craft a compromise version for the governor to consider. The version of the bill now on the governor's desk includes automatic expungement process for nine misdemeanor convictions, including fake ID, disorderly conduct and marijuana possession. It would require a petition to a court to seal the record for more serious charges, like possession of crack cocaine or resisting arrest.

go in front of a judge and a comattorney," a good life and you've changed and if you were addicted

"You have to in front of a "These reforms, if enacted, monwealth's would transform lives and attorney," said Surovell. "And strengthen families, comyou have to show you've led munities and the economy." — Phil Hernandez, senior policy fellow at the session and then

drugs you're not addicted any more and if you're an alcoholic you've gotten counseling



After more than a year of intense debate, House Democrats and Senate Democrats have crafted a compromise on expungement, which will have an automatic process for some misdemeanors and a petition-based model for some felonies.



Del. Charniele

"This bill combines both bills to come up with a process for a clean slate for Virginians."

and you're through all that."

CURRENTLY VIRGINIA has almost no way for people to seal records of old convictions, leading to problems for people who want

to get a job or find a place to live. Democrats tried and failed to find a compromise on this issue last vear during the General Assembly Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis again during a special session.

So the compromise version of the bill now on the governor's desk is a major step forward for a criminal-justice reform effort that

"You have to go in front of a judge and a commonwealth's attorney and you have to show you've led a good life and you've changed."



Sen. Scott Surovell

would allow an estimated 1.6 million Virginians to start over with a clean slate.

"These reforms, if enacted, would transform lives and strengthen families, communities and the economy," said Phil Hernandez, senior policy fellow at the Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis. "This legislation also represents an important step to address racial injustice and unequal outcomes that permeate our criminal justice system."

One of the major topics of disagreement was how to handle drug convictions. Lawmakers were mostly in agreement about automatically expunging marijuana convictions. But the discussions were more difficult around other drug crimes, which are all felonies.

Because convictions for possession of cocaine, heroin or LSD are felony crimes, they would require petition-based sealing under

the compromise bill now under consideration by the governor. Some prosecutors say Virginia should end the war on drugs, especially now that marijuana has been decriminalized and is about to become entirely legal. "I don't think possession of drugs should be a felony. I think it should be a Class One misdemeanor," said Alexandria Commonwealth's Attorney Bryan Porter. "If we could amend that down to a misdemeanor, it's still a crime but it's a much less serious one. Then that problem wouldn't exist."

THE DETAILS of the legislation include a delayed enactment, giving lawmakers until October of 2025 to tweak bits and pieces of the process so that it will work in courthouses across Virginia.

Misdemeanors offenses that are eligible would go away after seven years, and people would be able to petition to seal the record on felony offenses after 10 years.

The legislation also creates new penalties for third-party vendors, essentially private businesses that buy and sell old criminal records to people doing background checks or opposition research.

"That's an important component of reform here," said Andrew Elders, policy director for Justice Forward Virginia. "That was a big problem for a long time."



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News

Reflections on Easter

FROM PAGE 4

interrupted with surprising and glorious new life. That is the cycle of life; that is the cycle of our faith.

One of the reasons I like the version of the Easter story in the Gospel of John (John 20:1-18) is that everyone approaches the empty tomb differently. Some ran, some walked, some stood outside weeping. As I prepare for Easter services this year at Rock Spring,

I will be holding all these people in my heart: the ones who are ready to shout Alleluia, those who are cautiously moving forward, and those who are still grieving.

As Christians, we believe that there is always more life than we can see on the surface and, in the end, love will always win. We celebrate Easter when the holiday ap-

pears on the calendar and we believe that Easter is not confined to a specific date.

We will all sing alleluia together when people are no longer judged by the color of their skin, when 'hate crimes' no longer need to be a part of our vocabulary, when no one is hungry or without a place to put their head at night, and when everyone knows they are enough and are loved.

On Easter Sunday at Rock Spring we will acknowledge both realities. This year and every year, we will profess what we know. There is trouble in the world, and God is always interrupting our lives bringing hope and new life.

Rev. Dr. Kathryn Nystrand Dwyer is Senior Pastor at Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ

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.

APRIL FARMER MARKET OPENINGS

The winter market season is winding down, with new market openings right around the corner. They're gearing up for the regular market season kicking off next week and are looking forward to several April market openings.

Markets Opening in April

Ballston: Thursday, April 1, 3-7 p.m. Mount Vernon Triangle: Saturday, April 3, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m Crystal City: Tuesday, April 6, 3-7 p.m.

FRIDAY/APRIL 2

Composting and No Till Gardening: Create a Garden That Thrives. 10-11:30 a.m. Online. Learn the basic composting tools and techniques to turn your yard and kitchen waste into black gold for your garden. Extension Master Gardener Beth Buffington will explain how you can combine these skills with no till gardening to develop rich organic soil throughout your garden while reducing water runoff and soil erosion. Free. RSVP at https://mgnv.org/events/ to receive link to participate.

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.

"FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

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.

Afternoon hang-out, learn from others how best to deal with quarantine living, Thursday, Apr. 1, 3:30 p.m. Registration # 913801-21.

Meatless Mondays, discuss eating less meat and more vegetables once a week, Thursday, Apr. 1, 1 p.m.Registration # 913501-04.

Travel trivia games, Thursday, Apr. 1, 11 a.m. Registration # 913601.

Drumming Circle, opportunity for self expression, increase mental concentration, reduce stress, Thursday, Apr. 1, 1:30 p.m., High View Parks, 1945 S. Dinwiddie Street. Registration # 913702-03.

Armchair travel, explore a volcano in a Hawaiian park, Friday, Apr. 2, 3 p.m. Registration # 913402-30.

Line dance in the park, easy for beginners, no partner needed, Friday, Apr. 2, 10 a.m., Virginia Highlands Park, 1600 Hayes Street. Registration # 913701-03.

American theatre at a crossroads, looking ahead with Rick Davis, Dean of George Mason www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

University's

College of Visual and Performing Arts, Monday, Apr. 5, 1:30 p.m. Registration # 913300-01 Monday morning meet-up with fellow 55+ members, Apr. 5, 10 a.m., general conversation. Registration

913801-12.

Needlecrafters knit and crochet projects together, Monday, Apr. 5, 10 a.m., Virginia Highlands Park, 1600

S. Hayes Street. Registration # 913703-06.

55+ Live! Talk Show, Tuesday, Apr. 6, noon. Preview upcoming programs, entertainment, demonstrations, seminars. Meet 55+ staff. Registration #913801-03.

Lee Book Club members to discuss, "The Girl with the Louding Voice," by Abi Daré. Tuesday. Apr. 6.

11 a.m. Registration # 913402-21.

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Good News Travels Slowly



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Sure enough, the email from my oncologist didn't arrive in my inbox before we left for the weekend away on Friday. It wasn't ideal, but as a long time cancer patient, I've learned to make the best of a bad/potentially bad situation. As it turned out, the time away was invigorating, and there was very little mention of the elephant in the room: Kenny's cancer. Friends can be good like that. Once we got home on Sunday, after a two-hour wait at Six Flags to get my second covid-19 shot, I was rewarded. The email from the radiologist had arrived and the news was good, or so it seemed.

What it is that I typically receive is an automated release of the radiologist's report which is likewise forwarded to my oncologist. Granted, I can only understand half of the words, and those are generally the prepositions; much of the report is written by a doctor for a doctor, not for the doctor's patient. Nevertheless, the process is what it is. It's rare anymore that one receives a call from their doctor with scan-type results. Usually, my oncologist amends this first email with a simplified interpretation of the report: "scan looks good," as a hopeful example. So far, and this is Tuesday afternoon after the Wednesday scan, I've not yet received an amended report, the one where the oncologist offers his summary/opinion. We do have a follow-up video appointment with him on Thursday so perhaps he's saving himself/his comments until that meeting. Perhaps not. Regardless, I should have heard something more definitive by now. Presuming I can figure out the true meaning of the radiologist's report is a bit presumptuous. As a cancer patient, I don't want to have to figure anything out. I want to be told. I shouldn't have to live with any unnecessary uncertainty. I have more than enough uncertainty already. And in case anybody can't guess: uncertainty does not improve my quality of life, one that's already fragile. A "terminal" diagnosis will do that and tends to put a patient ill at ease, morning, noon and night. That's what I call a "post-diagnosis existing condition.

That reaction/disappointment being expressed, from what few words and meanings I could grasp from the report: "no new lesions," no significant change," "stable disease," I can say with all the limited knowledge at my disposal, that I'm probably OKAY. In fact, I would say that my warranty has been extended for another three months, until we wash, rinse and repeat in another three months, per the cycle I've mostly been on since 2009 when I was first diagnosed.

However, I'd be foolish to fuss too much because if my interpretation of the radiologist's report is correct, I really can't complain about good news. I mean, what goes around, comes around, and I'm not about to tempt fate and ruffle karma's feathers. These reports, which typically are the first and surest indication that the patient is in trouble - or not, are a lifeline us patients cling to. A good/stable disease report is sort of like a "life preserver" until you actually talk with the oncologist and get a more official interpretation. Of course, to receive good news earlier would be a lot better. But when the news is good, as this report was, anytime you receive it: "it's all good," as so many say.

Naturally, I'd rather hear it directly from the oncologist. Moreover, given that not all the words written in this report are familiar/known to me, especially in the context in which they're written ("medicalese"); obviously, I'd rather hear the assessment of the scan from the oncologist in person/so to speak, and not leave anything to chance - or misinterpretation by yours truly. In spite of these irregularities, which I can't do anything about (I've tried), my modus has been to roll with the punches and take the good, bad and ugly in stride. So I'm not mad. I'm glad. Life goes on. Thank God!

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



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