

Engine noise from an approaching aircraft can be a disturbance to residents on the ground. (File photo)

The Arlington Connection

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SENIOR LIVING

When It's Time to Downsize

Suggestions for transitioning to a new living community.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

The decision to trade the comfort of home where you've lived for years and transition to retirement can evoke a range of emotions. From leaving behind a place that holds memories of having raised an active family to sorting feelings around a perceived loss of freedom can be overwhelming.

"One of the hardest things to do is embrace change," said therapist Carol Barnaby, LCSW. The older we get the harder it is to embrace change. It takes about three to six months to adjust to new changes and routines."

"That space between ending what was and becoming what will be can be a dark and scary place," added Carolyn Lorente, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at Northern Virginia Community College.

Finding a retirement community where one feels comfortable can help make the transition easier. Virginia was ranked number one in the country for having the best resources for seniors by SeniorAdvice.com, an independent, non-profit organization that offers free information and guidance.

Touring a community before selecting one or deciding to move can allay fears of the sterile living conditions and sedentary life-

styles that are often associated with retirement communities, advises Barnaby. "Find activities to join in the care facility," said Barnaby. "Joining groups allows people to form connections."

One such community is Sunrise of Old Town, which is scheduled to open later this spring. "We have activities going all day long to keep our seniors active and moving so that they have a sense of purpose," said Maggie McElroy of Sunrise. "Residents can bring their furnishings to help make their suites feel more like home."

Creating a sense of the familiarity of one's old home can make the transition less jarring. "We can bring items like photos and decorations that help recreate the familiar home environment," said Jerome Short, Ph.D., professor of psychology at George Mason University. "Then think about good aspects of the move for our health and safety."

"Take time to actively think about memories in your home and reminisce," said psychologist Stacie Isenberg, Psy.D. "You can do this while packing up. Take photos of each room before you pack up and consider making a video where you walk through it and narrate events that happened in the room. It will be a nice keepsake to reflect on ... and a way to get closure and say goodbye to your home."



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Results of Arlington and Montgomery County Collaboration on Airplane Noise

Contractor proposes randomizing approaching flight path to share the noise of disturbing DCA flight tracks; testing underway.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Local officials in Arlington and Montgomery counties continue their collaborative efforts following upticks in their communities' airplane noise complaints as aircraft approach and depart Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, DCA, located in Arlington County.

Residents in Arlington, Montgomery County and D.C. have complained of increasing airplane noise from flights approaching and departing from National Airport.

Proposed flight procedures and new standard operating procedures reduce concentration over dense residential areas within the two counties. The proposed procedures share the noise burden associated with DCA's approach segments close-in to Arlington and the District of Columbia.

The proposal put forth by consultant ABCx2, hired by Arlington and Montgomery counties, would move the flight tracks over land near the George Bush Center for Intelligence at Langley, located in McLean, Fairfax County.

On April 5, Arlington County Board Member Libby Garvey and Montgomery County Councilmember Andrew Friedson (District 1) hosted the DCA Aircraft Noise and Mitigation Study - Component 2 Public Workshop (Arrivals and Approaches). More than 150 community members attended the 90-minute project report. The first study meeting kicked off on Aug. 17, 2020.

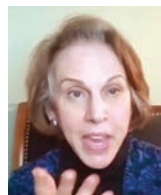
Garvey said that the purpose of the study and ongoing community engagement was to propose approach designs to be submitted to the DCA Community Working Group and upon approval to the Federal Administration Authority.

Friedson recalled that in 2018, community members and staff realized that to make real progress, they would need the help of a third-party airspace expert, a vendor who fully understood the technical details of designing and implementing airplane flight paths and procedures expertise.

"We would also need to work together with neighboring jurisdictions to come up with solutions that don't just move the noise problem from one community to another, but that best mitigate and balance in the ways across the entire region," Friedson said.

The new and more concentrated flight paths the FAA authorized over the Potomac River on July 30, 2020 concerned study members. In response to an August 2018 request to the FAA from the United States Secret Service, one waypoint moved 784 feet to the southwest, directing aircraft away from protected airspace above the White House and Naval Observatory.

In August of 2020, Arlington and Mont-



Arlington County Board Member Libby Garvey



Montgomery County Councilmember Andrew Friedson (District 1)

Engine noise from an approaching aircraft can be a disturbance to residents and workers on the ground. (File photo)



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

tures equally disturbing.

The top three recommendations: design flight paths so the noise would be shared equitably; maximize time over water; and avoid areas with the highest residential density. Roisman said individuals ranked land uses, first to avoid residential areas, followed by schools, outdoor spaces, and historic buildings. Greater detail can be found on the GenProject website.

Janelle Wright, an alternative member of the Reagan National Community Working Group spoke about the principles used in reviewing and discussing options for procedures. According to Wright, the group used software with FAA flight standards and criteria "baked in," and aircraft performance also factored. They were able to see in real-time if the improvements contemplated met FAA standards and were flyable for aircraft that use Reagan National. They could also see the noise impacts of any changes.

"This process is about noise mitigation... not about reversion to historical flight paths or the way the FAA used to manage our airspace before 2015. That is just not an option," said Wright. The committee endeavored to place proposed flight paths equal distance between residential areas, not just the Potomac River's center.

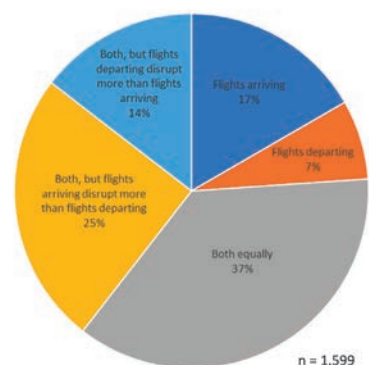
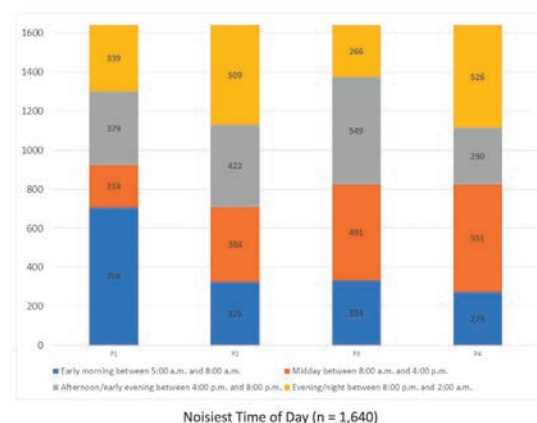
James K. Allerdice Jr., of ABCx2, LLC, provided overviews of proposed flight procedures and standard operating procedures that would give noise abatement/mitigation. Allerdice noted as a challenge that the Washington D.C. airspace is within the prohibited airspace surrounding the White House, the National Mall, and the residence of the U.S. Vice President.

Allerdice collaborated with the FAA, NowGEN <https://dca.nowgen.net/>, and the Design Working Groups, including community representatives. The recommendations would revise two area navigation (RNAV) approaches, moving the flight tracks over more compatible land areas near the George Bush Center for Intelligence at Langley, located in McLean, in Fairfax County, Va. This would more equitably share the noise burden associated with planes approaching DCA with Arlington County and the District of Columbia.

Allerdice said the plan would randomize the paths that the airplanes previously took from Standard Terminal Arrival Routes (STARs). The planes would not fly over the same place all the time, every day.

Following anticipated 190-day positive testing that began March 1, 2021, Allerdice proposes to continue the test model in collaboration with the FAA. "That is the arrival track variability that we are attempting to attain," said Allerdice. Results can be viewed on the NOWGEN-DCA Project website <https://dca.nowgen.net/>.

Noisiest Time of Day and Arrivals vs. Departures



PHOTOS SCREENSHOTS

Noisiest time of day vs. arrivals and departures at Reagan National Airport as perceived by area residents and workers asked in a questionnaire.

gomery counties together launched the \$225,000 aircraft noise mitigation study spearheaded by aviation experts ABSx2 based in Atlanta.

Garvey said the evening's focus would be on flight arrivals and the results of the questionnaire issued after the Arlington-Montgomery County Aircraft Noise Mitigation Study meeting on Aug. 17, 2020. <https://youtu.be/OsEYYgaYxNI> "I know we've got additional work to do, and we'll be looking at departure procedures as well another time," she said.

Ken Hartman, Montgomery County representative on the Reagan National Committee Working Group and chair of the North of Airport Committee provided a baseline assessment, the historical perspective. In the 1960s through 2015, aircraft followed the Potomac River; it became the norm. In 2015, with Performance-Based Navigation (PBN), the new technology allowed aircraft and procedures to be more standardized and routine. Hartman said they had an op-

portunity to sit down in real-time and use mapping software to display procedures and predict noise impacts.

Hartman said. "So, what was, in the past, a wide band of aircraft with a natural level of dispersion became more concentrated."

Rich Roisman, regional transportation planning coordinator in Arlington and appointee to the Reagan National Airport Community Working Group presented the Aug. 17 questionnaire findings. It attracted over 1,600 responses evaluating experiences with aircraft noise. Roughly two-thirds of respondents were from Maryland, one-third from Virginia, and the slight remainder from D.C. Most lived in their homes for ten years or greater.

"The chart indicates that people find things to be very, very disruptive to their daily life, particularly outdoor noise. ... Eighty-seven percent have experienced greater noise over the last four to five years," Roisman said. He added that the most disruptive time is 5-8 a.m., with noise from arrivals and depart-

‘Sisters’ Leave Privilege to Join Resistance

Story of nine Vietnamese women in their fight against French oppression.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Patricia (Kit) Norland sat listening to a Vietnamese social worker in 1988 in Saigon as Oanh explained in beautiful English what it was like to suffer post war trauma with poverty, unemployment, domestic abuse and street children. Norland was at that time working for a small non-profit organization dedicated to improving relations between their two countries in a time when there were no formal diplomatic relations.

Norland returned to Vietnam a year later to interview Oanh and eight other women who had all attended the prestigious Lycée Marie Curie in Saigon and had left their lives of privilege to fight French occupation, each in her own way. Their stories are included in the recently-released book, “Saigon Sisters.”

Norland explained the “Sisters” lived in a cocoon of French society where the children were given French names, wore French skirts and had to salute the French flag. They didn’t even know what the Vietnamese flag looked like. As the women encountered the history of other countries during their studies at the Lycée, they realized they didn’t know the history of their own country and needed their own revolution. They wanted a more egalitarian society.

Some took off their silk garments, donned black pajamas, grabbed their knapsacks packed with sandwiches by their mothers and headed across the street to the bus stop to join the revolution in the jungle.

Thanh was gifted in English and French. She had the tragedy of being married off to an older officer and having children with great physical and mental difficulties who died.

But in time she became a diplomat and translator serving as an aide to Mme Nguyen Thi Binh, the foreign minister of the National Liberation Front.

Thanh’s sister took a different route when Trang fell in love in the jungle and had a love child. But in



Patricia “Kit” Norland with “Saigon Sisters,” her new book focused on nine Vietnamese women who left lives of privilege to join the anti-French resistance.



In 1989 Thanh returns with the author to the same area where she first went into resistance in southwest Saigon.



Reunion of the Saigon Sisters in 1989.

1954 she went north as a double spy and was asked to live with another man where she became involved. Since she couldn’t keep her daughter, she asked her older sibling to raise Autumn and to park her pram out on the street so she could stop by and smile at her.

Le An left behind her mother and grand villa to perform in an artistic troupe serving military units

in perilous places. Their theme was revolution.

Norland was fascinated by how these women who had attended the Lycée, the gold standard of education, and had the whole world at their feet could choose the revolution. These were girls who were expected to have few ideas, to care for the home. Reading and writing was enough. They were taught to



Thanh and sibling Trang don their black pajamas and join the anti-French resistance in the jungle in 1950.

smile, not to laugh; and to walk, not to drive. They wanted to live more; they wanted to be free.

One girl described the resistance as the greatest university. She said she went from an upper class girl to a peasant who could do all the hard work of life. She said at home she never ate fish sauce or salty fish but “Now I can eat anything and at home I slept on a mattress but now I can sleep on the floor. Nobody could imagine. My whole personality changed.”

Norland says part of the background surrounding what happened lies in the history of Vietnam fighting off invaders. In addition, the Sisters were a generation at the crossroads on the hinge of feudalism.

Norland adds that you can’t un-

their actions. First was the January demonstration demanding the release of imprisoned students with one demonstrator shot by French police. This was followed by a river of students marching in protest on Jan. 12, and then a big anti-America rally on March 19 demanding the immediate departure of two American ships which had come to the assistance of the French.

These women met again years later in 1981 at the death ceremony of a friend and continued to stay in touch.

Now over 30 years later Norland has written a book chronicling the lives of nine women of privilege who gave up their lives to fight for an egalitarian society. Norland waited so long to write the book because “I wanted to see how their lives proceeded.”

This is also a “packed” book with a number of different themes, and Norland said she struggled with the best format for presentation. It is a book about politics and learning the lessons of the past as they apply to your own country’s struggles, and it is a story about how nine women broke through the barriers of tradition to fight for a new life.

Norland joined the Foreign Service in 1995 where she served as a diplomatic officer in Vietnam, Laos and Thailand.

“We knew so little about why we were there. There are many unrepresented voices; it’s been mostly through an American lens. The Sisters were able to understand the motivations and the cultural touchstones.” They were eyewitnesses to a dramatic and traumatic period of history. Norland decided to wait until she had retired to write the book.

Norland presented her book at an online event sponsored by Solid State Books in Washington D.C. on March 31. The filmmaker Ken Burns says “this book is destined to become a classic.” The book is available on Amazon.

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Walker Chapel Cemetery Moves from Maintenance to Ministry

Elaborate plans open spots for congregation and community.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Walker Chapel United Methodist Church, after four long years of permits and drawings and dreams, is set to break ground on renovations to its historic cemetery. Walker Chapel cemetery was established circa 1858 and holds an estimated 676 burials from potential slave burials to the mother of Robert Walker who deeded the grounds for the purpose of establishing a Methodist Church.

Larry Danforth, the historic cemetery project team leader, says, "The new stone wall will be right here. We are putting it out a few feet so we don't have to dig the foundation into the hill and take out any of the trees. We want to retain that look. Hopefully in about 6-8 weeks we will have construction on the site taking the old wooden wall out.

"We have been talking about this for four years. I never thought

it would take this long or cost this much. Just this phase will cost \$1.3 million." Danforth says this project originated as his dream when he was faced with a problem to solve. Now there is a five-person committee including an architect who has built huge projects around the world and is overseeing the details.

This all began when Danforth was chair of the church Property Board and didn't have the funds for capital improvements and renovations like the heating and air conditioning system and repainting the steeple. The wooden retaining wall was crumbling. "I came up with the idea of making the replacement wall a wall of memories where people would pay for a plaques to remember loved ones." But he would go home and wonder where the funds would be coming from to complete the project.

Then one day he was notified that an older member of the congregation in her nineties had died and left \$1.9 million, which was earmarked for the cemetery. A couple of days later he was driving in

Springfield and the license plate of the car in front of him said, "Don't worry. God has you covered."

"Talk about the burning bush." Then things just snowballed. The original idea for the wall grew into a much larger renovation plan to replace the wall with polished black granite that will have a space for 900 memory tablets, three columbaria with a beautiful curved stone staircase going up to the top as well as a scattering garden for ashes and the issuance of new licenses for gravesites in the historic cemetery.

"The first phase of the columbarium will hold 600 niches for ashes." He said these niches will be available to the community and they are building the list so anyone interested in a spot in this historic cemetery should contact them now.

Danforth said everyone thought the cemetery was full. "But I looked around and saw a lot of open space." So he hired a company to come in with ground penetrating radar to identify whether someone

SEE WALKER CHAPEL, PAGE 7



Larry Danforth stands at the top of the embankment that will become a scattering garden for ashes.

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in his subject and how to avoid them.
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14 Scenes of 'Growing Up'

By Sara Kaufman
Justice High School

Am I a person? Can I survive?" These are the introspective questions every developing high school student asks themselves at some point in their lives. These questions are addressed through 14 skits in Wakefield High School's original production titled "Growing Up."

"Growing Up" was written by Wakefield

High School students, who brainstormed ideas for a Zoom show after the summer of 2020, when they were isolated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The play followed the journey of several high school students reflecting on the end of childhood and preparing for their lives after high school. This piece takes a unique approach on the well-known narrative of growing up.

The 14 scenes in "Growing Up" were separated from one another in terms of plot. However, the play had a well-developed message of moving towards your future while also keeping in touch with your past. Containing humor in scenes such as "And I Think to Myself..." written by Melena Meek, heated anger in "Mending the Bonds" written by Ryan Peterson, and bittersweet sadness in "Un-Fair Folk" also written by Melena Meek, the actors embodied the wide range of emotions that come with growing up and moving on.

Despite performing on a virtual platform, the cast portrayed their characters authentically, and connected well with other cast members. One notable instance of excellent connection between actors was in "And I Think to Myself..." by Melena Meek, where Jonathan Stewart, The Younger, and Malachi Jimenez-Washington, The Elder, discovered they were the same character at different ages. The Elder provided The Younger with advice regarding the future, reminding him the world is a beautiful place, even during rough moments. In turn, The Younger reminded the Elder to hold onto the whimsical parts of childhood, even asking him to click his heels together like Dorothy from The Wizard of Oz. Stewart and Washington



From left, top, Isa Paley, Ryan Peterson; lower: Melena Meek, Katerina Larrick. "Growing Up" was performed at Wakefield High School on Saturday, April 10. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-z9R7Yb3cHc>

crafted a genuine relationship by matching each other's tone and expression, which not only heightened their stage chemistry but also made the audience feel as though they were in the room with them.

Also of note was Melena Meek, who played a high school student yearning for her childhood in "Un-Fair Folk." In the piece, Meek thanked and said goodbye to the fairytales she indulged in as a child. She felt protected by fairies and other mythical creatures, and left little houses outdoors for them to live in. She wanted to live in her fairytale world forever but understood she must let go and become an adult. Giving a dynamic performance, Meek embodied her character fully. This approach allowed the audience to relate to her story of missing her youth. Meek's use of emotion was incredibly poignant and drew light to the importance of saying goodbye.

The technical elements of the show added a sense of realism to the overall piece. Scene transitions were flawless and allowed the audience to remain focused on the heartfelt production. Additionally, the use of a home-made time capsule in the scene "Lunch Box Club" was endearingly charming and gave life to the virtual production.

At the conclusion, the entire cast appeared on the screen, and answered the questions asked at the beginning of the piece: "People survive, and I am a person." This final message assured the audience that while growing up is difficult, it is a task that can be overcome by remembering the hope of our childhood.

This production may be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-z9R7Yb3cHc>

Walker Chapel Cemetery

FROM PAGE 5

was in every gravesite. He explains the spot may have been licensed years ago and never used. Now they have marked available sites with orange stakes and made 35 available to current and past members of the congregation. He explains members of the congregation who have indicated interest have been coming out to choose a gravesite. "Some want to be away from the road, others under a tree or in the sun."

He points down a hill to the place where

there will be a scattering garden. He says they are working with local naturalists on a plan so it can be native Virginia plants in the flower garden "but not ones the deer will eat." This is a place where anybody will be able to come to scatter ashes of a loved one on the ground. "But we would ask them to acknowledge this is a Christian burial ground."

Danforth says, "The project just gathered spirit and when you gather the spirit you go from maintaining to ministry."

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Hitting The Nail On the Head



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

What are all these "Toe Nail Clipper" emails I receive nearly every day? And how do these senders know that I'm actually the perfect recipient. Toe nail clippers and cuticle trimmers have been the bane of my existence going back as far as I can remember. And as recently as I care to mention, these two accessories have been front and center on my bedside table, in a drawer in my living room coffee table, in my car's console/glove box and in any suitcase/overnight bag I take with me out of town. The fact of what has been the matter with me is that I bit my nails and trimmed my cuticles constantly, not out of appearance but due apparently, to some undiagnosed mental condition, according to family and friends who were subjected to my relentless pursuit of whatever ailed me.

The constant gnawing and "cuticizing" of my nails drove my parents nearly around the bend. Whatever they tried, which was not professional help, couldn't stop the train, so to speak. Unfortunately, they weren't alive to see me stop. What joy they would have felt for this change. Exultation. Unfortunately, the change occurred quite by accident and with no intent of mine. What happened was that I was diagnosed with cancer, rather than make me a nervous wreck about my original "terminal" diagnosis, and bite my nails for a good reason, I just stopped, and it's been over twelve years now. I still haven't been to a manicurist, but I no longer scoff at the suggestion. And though neither of my parents lived to see me stop biting my nails, they also both died before learning about my lung cancer diagnosis, for which I was extremely grateful.

Aside from the obvious reason why my mother would have been upset about her "baby" being diagnosed with lung cancer was the fact that throughout my childhood, my mother smoked four packs of Chesterfield Kings every day. Then suddenly, she stopped, cold turkey, the coldest you can imagine. It happened in the early 60s when the anti-smoking campaign about the association between smoking cigarettes and lung cancer began in earnest in this country. From that point forward, my mother never wavered in her commitment. There were no more cigarettes and she lived to age 87, almost, when she died from natural causes, not cancer.

Oddly enough, it was her non-smoking son, yours truly, who was diagnosed with lung cancer, part of an ever increasing percentage (upwards of 25% most recently) of non-smokers so diagnosed. Whether second hand smoke or environmental exposure to certain chemicals, the numbers of lung cancer patients who were non-smokers has been steadily increasing. And in a fortuitous twist of fate, it was this increase specifically in the number of non-smokers being diagnosed with cancer which led to a huge increase in research funding. Funding which has spawned an increase in the numbers of drugs approved by the FDA which have directly affected my treatment and subsequent survival. Now what percentage of nail-biters are diagnosed with cancer, I can't say.

But this hyper-targeted email campaign - which features almost daily emails from people who are on a first-name basis with me and I them, according to their sender's name, is remarkable in its having reached a prime candidate, and one with a history of having used imperfect and/or failed implements for this very purpose. If anybody would appreciate the possibilities of this product, the relief it might provide, it would be me. If my mother were alive today, I'm sure she'd agree, nobody ever bit their nails more than I did. That's how I learned the meaning of the word "quick": "the soft-tender flesh below the growing part of a fingernail or toenail."

With all the self-consciousness I endured while nail-biting (and the visual condition of my fingers as a result), I wish I could take credit for having figured out the underlying cause, or had found a topical solution and/or a hypnotic suggestion that would help me stop. But I didn't. Apparently, the cancer made me stop, and not even consciously. To quote the late B.B.King: "The thrill is gone."

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



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