

PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/ARLINGTON CONNECTION

OPINION, PAGE 4 ♦ SENIOR LIVING, PAGE 5 ♦ CALENDAR, PAGE 11

The Kaetzels: Connor (17), Sydney (15), and Logan (12), masked and ready for school. Connor and Sydney attend Yorktown High School, and Logan attends Williamsburg Middle School in Arlington.

The Arlington Connection

Arlington and Other School Boards File Suit On Masks

PAGE 3

Divided Government

PAGE 6

ATTENTION POSTMASTER:
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL.
REQUESTED IN HOME 1-27-22

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

Life is short.
Don't make it shorter.

Choose life. Make sure your kids get their HPV vaccine and protect them against cancer.

@vaccinatevirginia



VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



NEWS

Arlington Jury Finds Man Guilty of Murder of his Son

On Monday Jan. 24, 2022, an Arlington County jury unanimously found Marshall Stephens, 66, guilty of first degree murder and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

Stephens was found guilty in connection with the April 23, 2020, shooting of his 45-year-old son, Marshall Stephens Jr. in the Green Valley neighborhood of Arlington.

The victim was found alone in his vehicle, with a single gunshot wound to the back of his head. The investigation determined this incident to be a domestic-related homicide. Marshall Stephens Sr., 65, of Parkville, MD, was arrested and charged with Murder and Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Felony.

Successful prosecution was possible because of a careful investigation on the part of the Arlington County Police Department and collaboration between ACPD and the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney.

"While there is nothing we can do to bring back Marshall Stephens Jr., we are grateful for the jury's verdict and attention to this case," said Commonwealth's Attorney Parisa Dehghani-Tafti. "We hope this helps bring some level of closure to the surviving victims as they continue their difficult healing process."

First degree murder carries a statutory minimum sentence of 20 years and a maximum of life in prison; use of a firearm in the commission of a felony carries a statutory minimum sentence of 3 years.

Dehghani-Tafti added on social media:

"ACPD completed a thorough, meticulous and professional investigation, and defense counsel provided the accused with zealous and excellent representation."

"While our office has obtained convictions in every homicide case we've prosecuted so far, we never reduce these cases to wins/losses. A human being was here, and was loved, and now is gone. Our role is not to celebrate but to do justice."

"Few of us will ever fully understand what the victim's loved ones have gone through; none of us can truly know what it will take for them to recover; and I, for one, will not pretend that a verdict in a criminal trial will bring them true resolution."

"But, at the very least, I hope that our team helped make them feel less alone through all the days they had to live with the uncertainties and difficulties of this process."

"We owe an immense debt to the jurors in that case. It is an indescribably hard thing to stand in judgment of your neighbors - made harder still when the judgment is for something as grave as killing another person."

"The jurors took on a tough case, listened to challenging evidence, and in the end shouldered the immense responsibility of pronouncing judgment. Our team at the CA office thank them for their service. All of us, as a community, owe them our gratitude for their service."

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.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 26

Introduction to OverDrive/Libby ebooks, eAudiobooks, and eMagazines. 1-2:30 p.m. At Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy Street, Arlington. Learn how to find, access, and download OverDrive eBooks, eAudiobooks, and digital magazines including using the Libby app. Registration required at <https://arlingtonva.libcal.com/event/8580276>

FRIDAY/JAN. 28

Grass to Garden: Creating a New Garden Space. 10-11:30 a.m. Online. Many of us would like to create more gardening spaces and reduce our lawns, but we dread the back-breaking hard work involved. Good news! The days of digging deep and flipping or cutting turf are over. In this class, Extension Master Gardener Becky Halbe will describe methods she has used on her property and elsewhere to spare her back and quickly and more easily go from grass to a garden filled with flowers, native plants, or vegetables. Becky is also a Virginia Master Naturalist and currently serves on the Board for the Arlington Friends of Urban Agriculture. She grows fruits, vegetables, and native plants and is adept at foraging the local urban wilds. Free. RSVP at <https://mgnv.org/events/> to receive a link to participate.

FRIDAY/FEB. 4

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

DONATIONS NEEDED

Pet Food Bank. AWLA has established 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/s2FuFdaYWdZm4t-Pw2.

ONGOING

Online Salary Negotiation Workshop. AAUW (American Association of University Women) Work Smart is free online for anyone looking to learn how to negotiate a salary increase or promotion. Why is

negotiation so important? AAUW's research on the gender pay gap shows that, one year out of college, women are already paid significantly less than men. Visit salary.aauw.org.

Create a Wildlife Sanctuary. The Audubon at Home Wildlife Sanctuary certification program assists homeowners in restoring their home's natural habitat by providing information on sustainable gardening practices. These practices include using native plants, removing invasive species, reducing use of pesticides and fertilizers, and creating space for native flora and fauna. Visit audubonva.org/audubon-at-home-1/ for more.

Naloxone (Narcan) can save the life of someone who is overdosing, if given in time. Anyone who assists a person in need is protected from liability by the Good Samaritan Law. Naloxone (Narcan) is available without a prescription for a fee at all pharmacies. Obtain it for free by attending a REVIVE! training. Contact Emily Siqveland at 703-228-0913 or esiqveland@arlingtonva.us or visit health.arlingtonva.us/opioid-awareness/ for available training sessions. The Chris Atwood Foundation also offers training to the public. Visit www.chrisatwoodfoundation.org/naloxone for details.

Monthly Memory Café. 1-3 p.m. at 7910 Andrus Road, Suite 6, Alexandria. The Memory Café, a social gathering for individuals living with memory loss and their families, virtually. Registration is free and highly recommended to

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 8

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

KITCHEN & BATHROOM REMODELING

2 THE 9'S

703-999-2929

**DEPENDABLE,
AFFORDABLE,
RELIABLE
SINCE 1999**

No Middle Ground on Masks in Schools

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

Tempers are flaring as parents decide whether to send their children to school with or without face masks. No one is without an opinion. Some parents are threatening to send their kids to school without masks declaring a “Mask Off Monday.”

Frank Bellavaria, spokesperson for ACPS says, “If a student is not wearing a mask, our schools are advised to speak to the student and provide them a mask to wear. Administrators work directly with any students who do not comply by explaining our requirement, and they notify parents/guardians as necessary. Our priority is to ensure every student can continue learning in person without disruption, and that we protect the health and wellbeing of our school communities.”

Gov. Glenn Youngkin issued an Executive order on the day of his inauguration Jan. 15 giving parents the option to choose whether their children continue to wear masks in public schools, effective Jan. 24.

Less than 24 hours after Youngkin’s declaration, Arlington Public School Superintendent Francisco Duran reaffirmed the current requirement for students to wear masks in school. “Universal mask use has proven effective in keeping COVID-19 transmission rates low in our schools and ensuring schools remain safe and open.”

The Kaetzels: Connor (17), Sydney (15), and Logan (12), were masked and ready for school on Monday. Connor and Sydney attend Yorktown High School, and Logan attends Williamsburg Middle School in Arlington.

All nod affirmatively to the question of whether they expect some kids to arrive at school on Monday without masks. Connor speculates the kids who don’t wear a mask will be sent home. Sydney says it would be embarrassing to have your parents make a fuss at school about the issue. “I’d rather wear a mask.” Connor said he just wears the blue one, and Sydney wears whichever one she can find. Their mother is director of a private preschool in Arlington of over 100 students where the mask requirement for Arlington County Public Schools (ACPS) doesn’t apply. But she says she requires the children to wear an N95 mask with their cloth mask, even outside. “They



The first day of the Governor’s order relaxing the school mask mandate is over but these Williamsburg Middle School students are walking home after school still wearing their masks.



The Kaetzels: Connor (17), Sydney (15), and Logan (12), masked and ready for school. Connor and Sydney attend Yorktown High School, and Logan attends Williamsburg Middle School in Arlington.

are little and unvaccinated.” She says that she issued a notice to parents about the continued mask requirement, and most of them were grateful.

Alexandria City Public School Superintendent Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings Jr. issued a Dear ACPS Families letter affirming the continuation of the requirement that all individuals wear facial masks that cover the nose and mouth while in school facilities, schools and buses to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19. “Any student or staff who arrives without a mask will be provided one by the school.”

On Thursday Jan. 20 both the Alexandria and the Arlington County School Boards voted to support continued wearing of masks in schools.

Alexandria City schools released a statement on Friday indicating the School Board had voted to reaffirm its commitment to health and safety measures first adopted for ACPS in August 2020, including a universal mask requirement, temperature screenings and visitor limits for school facilities.

The Arlington School Board voted to support the Superintendent’s recommendation to continue the current mask requirement within Arlington Public Schools as part of a layered strategy to help prevent COVID-19 transmission in the schools. It cited the Virginia Assembly adoption of Senate Bill 1303 in March 2021 directing school boards to offer and prioritize in-person instruction requiring

school boards to adhere to mitigation procedures, like mask wearing, to the extent practicable as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control.

Meanwhile other school districts around the region will keep masks on including Fairfax County Public Schools, Fredericksburg City Schools, Manassas City Schools, Prince William County Public Schools, Loudoun County Public Schools. Other schools have lifted mask mandates and will make masks optional including Spotsylvania County Public Schools, Culpeper County Public Schools, and Fauquier County Public Schools.

The Catholic Diocese of Arlington announced on Friday, Jan. 21 that it would “implement guidelines affecting 17,000 students in parochial schools that allow parents to choose whether their children wear masks in school or opt

out, following a Jan. 15 executive order by Governor Glenn Youngkin that rescinds a statewide mask mandate in schools.”

At the heart of the debate is the question of what is best for the health of children. Does lengthy mask wearing breed bacteria inside the mask, does it hinder social interaction and cause mental distress, or is mask wearing critical to controlling the spread of COVID-19 as stated by the CDC?

In addition, there is the issue of who is in charge.

There are those who argue that Executive orders are not law and that local school boards don’t work for the Governor. They point to the March 2021 law requiring wearing masks as per CDC guidelines as the definitive answer. Arlington County School Board Chair Barbara Kanninen says, “It is my understanding that the Governor has

overstepped his authority with this executive order. Both local school boards and the general assembly have authorities that the governor has ignored.”

The other side as stated by the Catholic Diocese of Arlington is that the state requirement is primary when there is a conflict between state and local public health directives.

On Tuesday the House and Senate Democratic Caucuses held a press conference responding to the governor’s speech. Del. Rip Sullivan D-48 said in his regular legislative newsletter that there was a lot to talk about, but most urgent was the Governor’s threat to use state resources to defund and punish Virginia schools after school divisions across the commonwealth rejected his illegal order purporting to eliminate mask requirements on schools.

Seven School Boards File Suit

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

On Monday, Jan. 24, seven school boards, including five in northern Virginia: Fairfax County, Falls Church City, Alexandria City, Arlington County, and Prince William County, as well as the cities of Richmond and Hampton, jointly filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s (R) Executive Order that would allow parents to send children to school without wearing masks.

According to the order, “Parents of any child enrolled in a(n) elementary or secondary school or a

school based early childcare and educational program may elect for their children not to be subject to any mask mandate in effect at the child’s school or educational program.”

Gov. Youngkin wrote in the order, citing § 1-240.1 of the Code of Virginia, that “a parent has a fundamental right to make decisions concerning the upbringing, education, and care of the parent’s child.”

At issue is whether locally-elected school boards have the exclusive authority and responsibility conferred upon them by Article VIII, § 7 of the Constitution of Virginia over supervision of the public schools in their respective communities, or whether

SEE HELPING, PAGE 8

The Pace in Richmond Quickens

By SEN. ADAM P. EBBIN

With the excitement of move-in and the inauguration out of the way, the pace of the General Assembly is rapidly ramping up. New staffers from Gov. Glenn Youngkin's administration are circulating the halls with updated policy and agency contact sheets and committees are just beginning to receive "administration input" on legislation. With a new Speaker and new committee chairs, the House of Delegates took some time to begin hearing legislation, while the Senate began right away. After months of anticipation, the Republican agenda is becoming clear in Richmond.

In the first meeting of the Privileges and Elections Committee, where I serve as Vice-Chair, we headed off and defeated early efforts aimed at limiting access to the ballot box on party line votes. One was a proposal from Sen. Mark Peake (R-Lynchburg) to end same-day voter registration, something that has yet to even go into effect. Another bill introduced by Sen. Mark Obenshain (R-Rockingham) would have reinstated the unnecessary and sometimes onerous voter ID law.

Just last November, due to changes made over the last several years, we held a safe and free gubernatorial election where more Virginians voted than ever, according to the Virginia Department of Elections Post Election Report. This

"proved, once again, that elections can be administered in a way that guarantees access to the ballot, all while maintaining secure processes that ensure safe, secure, fair, and free elections."

In the Commerce and Labor Committee we heard another bill from Sen. Peake (R-Lynchburg) that would have canceled a scheduled increase in the Virginia minimum wage to \$12.00 an hour on January 1, 2023. The minimum wage in 2020 was just \$7.50 an hour, the same as the federal minimum wage. Thanks to legislation passed two years ago, it is now \$11 an hour. Especially in Northern Virginia, the minimum wage has been too low for too long, forcing hard working neighbors into poverty, extended credit, and reducing access to the freedoms that home and vehicle ownership provide. I was glad to make the motion and vote to defeat this misguided piece of legislation.

While there are legitimate policy debates to be had about the above proposals, we have also seen some truly off the wall bills. Sen. Amanda Chase (R-Chesterfield) offered a slew of anti-mask, anti-vaccine, anti-public health proposals. These bills, drawn from the darkest corners of the internet, would fine small business owners \$10,000 if they required their employees to get the safe and effective



Sen. Adam Ebbin

Town Meeting on Zoom

Del. Elizabeth Bennett Parker, Del. Alfonzo Lopez, and Sen. Adam Ebbin will hold a virtual Alexandria and Arlington Town Meeting on this Saturday, Jan. 29 at 10 am via this zoom link: <https://bit.ly/3551bcF>

COVID-19 vaccine or wear a facemask to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. In a time of spiking infections especially among healthcare workers, children, and the unvaccinated, I was glad to vote down these proposals. I asked Sen. Chase directly, "If I'm a parent of an immunocompromised child, and I don't want them to come into contact with COVID, would this allow another child who's COVID-positive to possibly come in to school and sneeze on them without a mask?" Sen. Chase responded with a hemming non-answer, but the text of the bill was clear — it absolutely would.

Two of my 25 bills have already passed out of the Senate. SB278 preserves electric vehicle charging stations for electric vehicles to ensure and expand access to charging infrastructure. SB286, which I introduced at the request of Alexandria City, allows localities to require homes purchased in local historic districts to have their properties surveyed to ensure homeowners know their exact property lines and reduce disputes with neighbors or the local government when additions or alterations are made to properties.

With divided control among the two houses of the legislature, major policy actions will be more challenging to advance. However, an area where I look forward to making real wins for the 30th Senate District is through the budget. With a surplus of \$2.6 billion — the largest in Virginia's history, and \$800 million in American Rescue Plan Dollars still to be allocated, there are rare opportunities for historic investments. I have proposed amendments to former Gov. Ralph Northam's introduced budget to alleviate economic strain on

businesses and workers, preserve and maintain historic resources, and invest in outdated government infrastructure.

I am working to include a tranche of federal relief dollars to create a hospitality and tourism industry COVID-relief program which would especially be of benefit to the hotels and restaurants which make up a large portion of the economic and social engine of the 30th District. I have also requested an additional forty million dollars for the Virginia Housing Trust Fund which supports the development and preservation of affordable housing. It is my hope that with these additional dollars we can invest more in the development of deeply affordable housing for the poorest and most at risk Virginians. Additionally, I requested \$500,000 in state dollars to restore and preserve Douglass Memorial Cemetery in Alexandria — a historic African American cemetery in need of major restoration. I have also proposed funding to update ten Department of Corrections facilities across the state to install air conditioning. In this era of extreme weather events 5,600 inmates are currently without air conditioning.

While there is a notable air of contention on many legislative proposals in the Capitol, I am hopeful that with a carefully cultivated budget surplus, there will still be a plethora of opportunities for bipartisan wins for Virginians.

Please join Delegate Elizabeth Bennett Parker, Delegate Alfonzo Lopez, and me for a virtual Alexandria and Arlington Town Meeting on this Saturday, Jan. 29 at 10 am via this zoom link: <https://bit.ly/3551bcF>

It is my continued honor to serve the 30th District.

External Assessment of Police Policies and Practices Available

In the summer of 2020, the County Board asked the County Manager to lead a review of police policies and practices following national events involving policing and racial justice. The County Manager appointed a 15-member Police Practices Group to review four key areas: Community Oversight Board, traffic enforcement, mental health services and alternative dispute resolution. The Police Practices Group provided their initial recommendations for the County Manager in Feb. 2021.

The County Manager also called for an external assessment of ACPD administrative policies and practices to ensure they align with current best practices. The report is now available online, along with a transmittal letter by the County Manager and summary of steps ACPD has taken in response to the findings.

Jan. 12, 2022 County Manager Letter to Community https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/sharedassets/public/departments/documents/rev.01.12.2022_final-transmittal-letter.pdf

Final Policy and Data Review Report by Hillard Heintze <https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/sharedassets/public/departments/documents/hillard-heintze-administrative-policy-and-data-review-of-the-arlington-county-pd-10-04-21.pdf>

ACPD's Response to the Report https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/sharedassets/public/departments/documents/01.12.2022_final_hh-recommendation-status_by-acpd.pdf

NEWS DEPARTMENT: arlington@connectionnewspapers.com

Mary Kimm
Editor and Publisher
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Shirley Ruhe
Contributing Photographer and Writer
slrbc@aol.com

Eden Brown
Contributing Writer
arlington@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

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

Art/Design:
Laurence Foong
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



Let Us Know Your View
Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name. Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.
Send letters
Online www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/
By email: editors@connectionnewspapers.com
By mail to: Letters to the Editor The Connection
1606 King St., Alexandria VA 22314
You can comment on our Facebook page or find us on Twitter
www.facebook.com/connectionnewspapers
<https://twitter.com/alexgazette>
<https://twitter.com/mtvernongazette>
<https://twitter.com/followfairfax>

Romance and Intimacy after 60

Reviving and developing romantic relationships in the golden years.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Erika, a 63-year-old practicing attorney who lives in McLean, says that she and her husband of 33 years are living as though they are roommates. “We have separate bedrooms,” she said. “We really don’t talk except for superficial conversations about politics. I’m lonely so much of the time.”

With the goal of restoring the romance and intimacy that they once shared, Erika and her husband have begun couples counseling. From scheduling date nights to overcoming resentments that hamper affection, local therapists say those over 65 can harness their maturity and life experience to revive or create healthy relationships.

“Although challenges exist, so does your interest in romance and intimacy,” said Brandon Keene-Orton, Assistant Professor of Counseling at Marymount University. “Don’t let existing stigmas harm your sexuality.”

Some older couples no longer have parental responsibilities like driving carpools and coaching little league games, which creates space for satisfying romantic relationships.

“With the worries from raising young chil-

dren behind them, increased free time, new and old love relationships can be life enriching,” said Linda McKenna Gulyn, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at Marymount University and the creator of a “Sexuality in Older Adulthood” in her Adulthood and Aging class. “In older adulthood – as it was in previous years – intimacy and closeness, which may include sexual intimacy, are vital for a long and healthy life.”

Some seniors lack an interest in romantic relationship because of the belief that such connections are not attainable, suggests Alexandria therapist Mark Anderson Ed.D. “As we age our bodies change and our sexual abilities change,” he said. “Many people find it very difficult to talk openly with their partner about these changes. It makes them feel like they’re letting their partner down, like they’re broken or useless.”

Redefining romance and tailoring it to meet the specific needs of both people in a relationship can ease apprehension and restore a desire to pursue a satisfying relationship.

“The focus of sex tends to shift towards intimacy and deep connection as the focus of fulfillment at this stage of development,

which is a welcome shift for many couples,” said sex therapist Joanne Bagshaw, Ph.D., who is also a Professor of Psychology at Marymount University.

Broken trust and ineffective communication have the power to destroy intimacy. “Every couple, no matter how compatible, have some issues or areas of conflict,” said Anderson. “If the couple isn’t able to work through these issues with a therapist or on their own, they can build up hurts and resentments that are hard to let go of. These hurt feelings create a distance between the partners that gradually erodes their sense of connection and intimacy.”

Working through a source of contention in a way that makes both people feel heard and understood can reinforce the bonds that hold together a romantic relationship. “Be candid about your needs. Do not listen to respond, listen to understand,” said Keene-Orton. “From there, healthy, honest, and forward conversations can make you and your partner reignite and maintain the flame.”

The ability to trust one’s a vital part of any romantic relationship, advises Anderson. “If a partner loses the sense that they trust their partner, that they are no longer emotionally and physically safe, it creates a barrier to intimacy,” he said. “The loss of trust may come from a major event like infidelity or may build slowly because of a series of small

“With the worries from raising young children behind them, increased free time, new and old love relationships can be life enriching.”

— Linda McKenna Gulyn, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, Marymount University

issues where someone feels that their partner doesn’t have their back.”

“When trust is restored, couples can begin to really talk about what’s happening, or not happening, in the bedroom,” he continued. “They can open up about their feelings, fears, shame, and confusion. Then, instead of being a source of conflict, it becomes an opportunity for the couple to work together to regain that sense of love.”

Rather than thinking of a sudden relationship overhaul, take small steps to create intimacy. “Spend time together to build a connection,” said Bethesda therapist Carol Barnaby. “Seniors who have been together for a long time often have to work to maintain their relationship, realizing that the person you are with is probably not the same person as when you began your relationship.”

While people change over time, the aspects of the initial attraction might remain the same. “We should also take a look at some of the romantic characteristics that you’ve enjoyed in the past and now miss,” said Anderson. “Try to recreate those.”

Same Company, Same Employees,
Same Great Value - Now Celebrating 20 Years!

TWO POOR TEACHERS Kitchen and Bathroom Remodeling



- Electrical (ELE)
- Gas Fitting (GFC)
- Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVA)
- Plumbing (PLB)
- Residential Building (RBC)

Fully Insured & Class A Licensed
Since 1999



Free Estimates **703-999-2928**

Check if your contractor is licensed at the state level
<http://www.DPOR.virginia.gov>

Visit our website: www.twopoorteachers.com

Quality Tree Service & Landscaping

Reasonable prices. Licensed & insured.

Expert Tree Work

Tree removal, topping & pruning, shrubbery trimming, mulching, leaf removal, planting, hauling, gutter cleaning, retaining walls, drainage problems, etc.

703-868-5358

**24 Hour Emergency
Tree Service**



Republicans are hoping to spend \$150 million to create 20 new charter schools, but they'll be facing opposition in the Senate Education Committee, which has nine Democrats and only six Republicans.



One issue where Democrats and Republicans might find common ground is banning political contributions from public utilities.

Era of Divided Government

Mask mandates, anti-racist curriculum and campaign finance on the agenda.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

Virginia is under new management, and it's a sharp turn from how things have worked in the commonwealth for the last two years. Republicans are now in control of the Executive Mansion and the House of Delegates. But Democrats still control the state Senate, ushering in a new era of divided government. The 2022 General Assembly session has just started, and already Democrats and Republicans are fighting over everything from mask mandates and anti-racist curriculum to marijuana legalization and voting rights.

"It's quite dysfunctional from a policymaking standpoint," said Jennifer Victor, associate professor of political science at George Mason University's Schar School Policy and Government. "It's a very antagonistic form of politicking that is unfortunately quite common across state legislatures, and it's one of the unfortunate consequences in the partisan and polarized era that we're living through."

On the campaign trail, Republican candidate Glenn Youngkin often talked about what he called his "day-one agenda," things like banning critical race theory from schools and getting rid of mask mandates. Shortly after his inauguration as governor, he signed executive orders to deliver on both of those campaign promises although the details of how that might actually work remain unclear. Critical



Gov. Glenn Youngkin began his day one agenda by issuing executive orders to ban critical race theory from public schools and allow parents to decide whether their children wear masks in schools.

race theory isn't actually taught in Virginia schools, and many local school board members reject the idea that a governor can dictate covid protocol to school divisions.

"Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) will continue to abide by the health and safety guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Alexandria Health Department (AHD) and continue to require all individuals to wear masks that cover the nose and mouth in ACPS schools, facilities and buses," wrote Superintendent Gregory Hutchings in an email to parents last weekend.

EDUCATION IS AT the top of the agenda for the new administration, although the new governor will likely hit a roadblock when

his initiatives face the cold hard reality of the Senate committee system. During a speech to a joint assembly earlier this week, Youngkin announced he wanted to spend \$150 million to create 20 new charter schools. But the Senate Education Committee has nine Democrats and only six Republicans. So getting a bill expanding charter schools to the Senate floor would require two Democrats on the committee to cross over and vote with the Republicans, which seems unlikely.

"If you look at some of the charter schools, you're going to find that some of them are mostly students who are African American," said Sen. Louise Lucas (D-18), chairwoman of the Senate Education Committee. "I don't like sepa-

rating students. I think there ought to be a blend, and I think students ought to be able to have interaction among students other than students who look just like them."

Although critical race theory is not taught in Virginia schools, Republicans have been critical of the anti-racist teacher training that emerged after the murder of George Floyd in May 2020. During his speech to the joint assembly this week, Youngkin said his executive order was intended to prohibit what he called "inherently divisive concepts in schools, including critical race theory." Members of the Legislative Black Caucus say they're skeptical that the new governor is interested in making sure students understand some of the more unsavory chapters of race relations in Virginia history.

"If you don't want the truth taught, just say that's what you don't want," said Sen. Mamie Locke (D-2). "If you are going to stand there and say you want to teach the good, the bad and the ugly of Virginia history and then sign an executive order saying we are going to ban critical race theory, you're being a hypocrite."

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM may be one issue where members of opposing parties can come to some kind of agreement. For example, Democrats and Republicans joined forces to reject a bill that would have put limits on campaign contributions. Currently, Virginia has no limits on the amount of money that donors can contrib-

ute. Some senators were interested in setting some kind of limit, and two separate bills would have set a ceiling of \$20,000 or \$25,000. A bipartisan coalition emerged to kill that idea.

"Contributions are speech," said Sen. Jill Vogel (R-27). "When you set up artificial barriers to speech people find ways around it."

Virginia and 10 other states had no limits on contributions from individuals in state races in 2019, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

On the campaign trail, Youngkin said he would disrupt entrenched interests in Richmond. He might have an opportunity to do that if lawmakers are able to put together a bipartisan coalition to prohibit campaign contributions from public utilities. Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) is working with Del. Lee Ware (R-65) to ban campaign cash from public utilities, including Dominion Energy, which has long been a major force in Virginia politics and a generous donor. Petersen and Ware say it's a bad idea to have a utility that is regulated by the state to have so much influence over lawmakers.

"I can get a portion of my caucus. I can't get them all. I certainly can't get the ones who are more senior in leadership," said Petersen. "But I need -- we need, the commonwealth needs -- the new governor to take a firm stand on this issue and my hope is that will change the dynamic."

A spokeswoman for the governor said Youngkin will review all legislation that comes to his desk.

NEWS

Northern Virginia Faces Loss of Legislative Experience

Redistricting Creates Opportunities and Forces Change.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Redistricting maps, used for voting for Virginia's Senate and House seats, were finalized by the Virginia Supreme Court on Dec. 28, approving the map plan developed by Special Masters appointed by the court.

The effort followed analysis of 2020 U.S. Census data which documented population shifts, making it necessary to adjust districts to maintain roughly the same population sizes in each, in keeping with the one person - one vote concept. Virginia's redistricting commission, in its first year, was not able to come to agreement, moving the process to the State's Supreme Court.

Virginia's Constitution allows, but doesn't require, consideration of the addresses of incumbent legislators, who must live within the district they represent. They were not considered in the maps approved by the Supreme Court in December. As a result, several new Districts created have two or more incumbents.

State-wide, seven Senate districts and 19 House districts have more than one current legislator living in them. Eleven Senate districts and 23 House districts have no incumbents. While this provides opportunities for new candidates with new outlooks, it also means the loss of many experienced legislators.

In the northern Virginia area, the two Senate Districts which have pairs of incumbents include the two most senior Senators in the General Assembly, Richard Saslaw (1980) paired with Dave Marsden, and Janet Howell (1992) paired with Jennifer Boysko.

In the House there are four northern Virginia pairings, impacting incumbents, Kathleen Murphy and Rip Sullivan; Dave Bulova and Dan Helmer; Kaye Kory and Marcus Simon; and Eileen Filler-Corn and Kathy Tran.

Each these House incumbents received significant majorities in their last election, held November 2021, capturing from 53 to 72 percent of the vote. Two area Senate districts and three House districts have no incumbents.

Current incumbents continue to represent their prior constituencies until the next election. The date of that election is unclear, awaiting determination of a lawsuit in the federal appeals court, which could require House incumbents to run again in 2022 within the newly mapped territories.

Virginia's principles of redistricting

Voting districts have been a contentious area in U.S. politics. The U.S. Constitution does not address state legislative redistricting creating an area of political maneuvering.

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Senator Richard Saslaw (D-35th), the most senior VA senator, and former House Speaker, Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41st) both face potential primary campaigns with other incumbents after redistricting paired them with other incumbents (Shown at 2020 public hearing)



Senator Janet Howell, second most senior senator, and member of the powerful Finance and Appropriations, Privileges and Elections, and Rules Committees, is another area senator paired with another incumbent in the new redistricting map. Shown at 2019 campaign event)

Supreme Court rulings have helped to set precedent, including that "the Equal Protection Clause demands no less than substantially equal state legislative representation for all citizens, of all places as well as of all races." The Voting Rights Act of 1965 mandates that electoral district lines cannot be drawn in such a manner as to "improperly dilute minorities' voting power." In a 2019 case, the Supreme Court held that the Republican led House of Delegates did not have the legal right to challenge a lower court opinion that struck several district maps in the Commonwealth they had drawn, as an unconstitutional racial gerrymander.

The Virginia Constitution outlines four principles in its redistricting criteria:

1. Population equity - "Every electoral district shall be composed of contiguous and compact territory" Va. Const. Art. II, § 6. Every electoral district shall be drawn in accordance with the requirements of federal and state laws that address racial and ethnic fairness, including the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States

2. Voting Rights and political participation - provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, and judicial decisions interpreting such laws. Districts shall provide, where practicable, opportunities for racial and ethnic communities to elect candidates of their choice." Va. Const. Art. II, § 6.

3. Communities of interest - "Districts shall be drawn to preserve communities of interest." Va. Code § 24.2-304.04(5).2

4. Political neutrality - "A map of districts shall not, when considered on a statewide basis, unduly favor or disfavor any political party." Va. Code § 24.2-304.04(8).

5. The Commission may review political data to ensure compliance with this political neutrality provision and may consider incumbent addresses as part of the drafting process.

Protect the
ones you love,
**get your flu
shot today.**



@vaccinatevirginia



VDH VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH

We Need Your Help Again

We are sincerely grateful and thankful to you for helping in 2021 to save one of America's oldest newspapers, the Alexandria Gazette Packet, publishing continuously since 1784

**Alexandria
Gazette Packet**
Publishing Since 1784

And affiliated newspapers

**THE
CONNECTION**
Newspapers & Online

Mount Vernon Gazette
Potomac
ALMANAC **CENTRE VIEW**

Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspapers mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers.

All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Con-

nection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

Visit [connectionnewspapers.com](https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing) or
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing>

Connection Newspapers.... Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette, Centre View, Potomac Almanac
1606 King Street • Alexandria, VA • 703-778-9431

FLOURISHING AFTER 55

Contact: Judy Massabny, jmassa@arlingtonva.us

55+ Programs are virtual, indoors at 55+ Centers and outdoors. A 55+ Membership is required to participate (\$20 annual fee). To join or register, go to registration.arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

Library of Virginia’s genealogy series continues with researching clemency records, Thursday, Jan 27, 3 p.m. Registration # 912400-13.

It takes a village in Arlington, presented by Wendy Zenker, executive director, Arlington Neighborhood Village, Thursday, Jan. 27, 11:30 a.m. Registration # 912400-28.

Who was John M. Langston, presented by Sandra Brown, Langston Boulevard Alliance, Thursday, Jan. 27, 1:30 p.m. Registration # 912400-29.

Social art swap between 55+ members, Thursday, Jan. 27, 10:30 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Details and registration # 912300-04.

Just beneath the surface of paintings by three famous artists, Friday, Jan. 28, 10 a.m. Presented by community arts programmer Jim Halloran. Registration # 912302-05

Salsa instruction for beginners, no partner needed, Friday, Jan. 28, 2 p.m., Aurora Hiss 55+ Center. Registration # 912802-01.

Arts & Crafts Show featuring works by members of the 55+ community, Saturday, Jan. 29. 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 912899-02.

Techniques of famous artists revealed, Monday, Jan. 31, 10:30 a.m. Presented by community arts programmer Jennifer Droblyen Registration # 912302-08.

Art of contemplation, artists Vermeer to Chagal, slide presentation and discussion presented by art historian Joan Hart, Monday, Jan. 31, 1 p.m., virtual, registration # 912300-06 and Aurora Hills 55+ Center, 1 p.m.,

Registration # 912300-07. 2nd part of four part series, \$24, 4 sessions.

Brain games, sudoku, puzzles, trivia, led by Jacqui Stead, Monday, Jan. 31 2 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Drop in.

Ice skating, senior hour, Monday, Jan. 31, 8:30 a.m. – 9:10 a.m., MedStar Capitals Iceplex, Ballston Mall, \$1, includes skates. Pre-register at www.medstarcapitalsiceplex.com, click on Senior Public Skate.

Ukulele class, learn basic strumming, Tuesday, Feb. 1, 4:30 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 912304-04.

Volleyball, beginners and experienced welcome, Tuesday, Feb. 1, 3 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop in.

Local history discussion to feature Washington-Liberty High School, Wednesday, Feb. 2, 1:30 p.m. Registration # 912402-12.

Black history in Arlington (part 1) presented by Karl VanNewkirk, Arlington Historical Society. Two part program begins Wednesday, Feb. 2, 1 p.m. Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 912400-02.

Drop in basketball for women age 50+, Wednesday, Feb. 2, 7 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Bring basketball, white and dark color shirts.

Normal versus abnormal aging discussion presented by representative from the George Washington Institute for Brain Health and De-

mentia, Thursday, Feb. 3, 6 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912500-11.

Tai Chi practice, experience helpful, led by experienced volunteers, Friday, Feb. 4, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Drop in.

Spellbinders, volunteer storytellers, to meet for continuing education, support and camaraderie, Friday, Feb. 4, 9:30 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center Registration # 912301-07

Early morning art activity with community arts programmer Jennifer Droblyen, Monday, Feb. 7, 9 a.m. Registration # 912303-03.

Recreating art masterpieces, Monday, Feb. 7, 1 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912303-11.

Step-by-step painting demonstration with a community arts programmer, Monday, Feb. 7, 10:30 a.m. Registration # 912303-19.

Ice skating, exclusive time for 55+ members, Mondays, 8:10-9:10 a.m., MedStar Capitals Iceplex, Ballston Mall, level 8. Skate rental, \$1; parking \$1. Drop in.

Samsung phone help, basics and more, Tuesday, Feb. 8, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Bring device and specific questions. Registration # 912909-01.

Rock music legends, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen, Tuesday, Feb. 8, 1:30 p.m. Registration # 912400-34.

Continuum of care professionals discuss options, answer questions, Tuesday, Jan. 8, 1 p.m.. Registration # 912500-15.

Black history in Arlington, Part 2, Wednesday, Feb. 9, 1 p.m., Au-

rona Hills 55+ Center. Presented by Karl VanNewkirk, Arlington Historical Society. Registration # 912400-03.

History roundtable, Wednesday, Feb. 9, 11:15 a.m., the impact of WWII on history. Registration # 912402-09.

The Rocking Chairs rock-n-roll band, open rehearsal, hits from the 50s through the 70s, Wednesday, Feb. 9, 11:30 a.m., Madison Community Center. Drop in.

Open art studio for artists who work at their own pace, no instruction or materials available, Wednesday, Feb. 9, 10 a.m., Friday, Feb. 11, 11 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Drop in.

Sgt. Rodney M. Davis, one of only 88 African-Americans to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor for extraordinary courage and patriotism, Thursday, Feb. 10, 1:30 p.m. Presented b John Hollis, author of Davis’ awe-inspiring story. Registration # 912400-30.

Line dance classes, beginner level, Thursday, Feb. 10, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center; Friday, Feb. 11, 10:30 a.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Drop in.

Movie discussion, “The Last Daughter,” (2021), Thursday, Feb. 10, 3 p.m. Registration # 912402-06.

Mah Jongg, American style, Thursday, Feb. 10, noon-4 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 12, noon – 3:45 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Drop in.

Open House at Arlington Mill 55+ Center, Saturday, Feb. 12, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Preview programs, visit open art studio, meet staff. Registration # 912899-01.

Seven School Boards File Suit

FROM PAGE 3

er an executive order can unilaterally override that constitutional authority, according to a statement. Also at issue is whether a governor, through executive order, could rescind a lawfully adopted statute, Senate Bill 1303, without the Virginia General Assembly’s legislative action.

Former Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam (D) signed Senate Bill 1303, on March 30, 2021, which requires that each school board offer in-person instruction to students five days a week. “Each school board shall also provide that in-person instruction” in a manner in which it adheres, to the maximum extent practicable, to any currently applicable mitigation strategies for early childhood care and education programs and elementary and secondary schools to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 that have been provided by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.”

Monday, Jan. 24, marked the first day that Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s Executive Order went into effect.

The Virginia Health Department stated on Monday, Jan. 24, that COVID-19 transmission rates remained high. Hospitals around the state had a reported seven-day case average of 3,804 patients.

Two weeks earlier, on Monday, Jan. 10, and five days before Youngkin signed the Executive Order on masks, Gov. Ralph Northam had issued a limited state of emergency for hospitals already overburdened by historic coronavirus caseload increases. Hospitals had entered crisis level, and the CDC continued its recommendation to retain universal mask-wearing as part of layered health and safety mitigation strategies.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 2

reserve spots, which are open on a first come first served basis. To reserve a spot, please call 571-210-5551 or email bdesai@seniorhelpers.com. Visit www.dementiacareconnections.com/memory-cafe or www.seniorhelpers.com/arlington-alexandria-va for more.

Arlington County, in partnership with the Human Rights Commission’s Equality Task Force, has launched a web page with resources for the LGBTQ community. The new webpage compiles LGBTQ resources on a variety of topics, including homelessness and housing, domestic violence and sexual

assault, and health. There are also topics specifically for teens and youth — such as scholarship opportunities and school clubs — as well as ones targeted at seniors and older adults, such as SAGE. Visit topics.arlingtonva.us/lgbtq-resources.

Aging Matters. 2-3 p.m. Tuesdays on WERA 96.7 LP FM on Arlington’s community radio station. Each week host Cheryl Beversdorf interviews individuals with expertise about a broad array of aging related topics affecting the lives of older adults and their loved ones. Visit www.facebook.com/aging-matterswera to listen to programs. MICHAEL W. SMITH Returns to The Birchmere, May 19, 2022, 7:30pm, Alexandria, VA.

Volunteer Bike Repair Night. First Tuesday of the month, 6-9 p.m. at Phoenix Bikes, Barcroft Park, 4200 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Volunteers gather to refurbish bikes, sort parts or help with essential tasks. No experience necessary.

Public Financial Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline. Arlington County launched a new public hotline that offers a confidential and secure way to report suspected incidents of financial fraud, waste and abuse. Anyone can submit a complaint to the hotline at 1-866-565-9206 or at arlingtonva.ethicaladvocate.com. The hotline website is available in English and Spanish. Phone calls can be taken in many languages. Created by the Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy (AIRE) in partner-

ship with the Arlington Public Library,the nation’s First Energy Lending Library made its debut on Earth Day. Meant to resolve energy issues in the Arlington community, efficiency tools such thermal imaging cameras, energy meters and books play a vital role in achieving a “greener” home. Open Sun-Sat 10 a.m.-9 p.m. 1015 N. Quincy St. Visit library.arlingtonva.us/locations/central-library or call 703-228-5990.

Arlington Rotary Club Lunches. Thursdays, 12 - 1:30 p.m. now on Zoom. Organization brings together political and business leaders for humanitarian

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

Beaver Stay Busy in the Winter

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE CONNECTION

You have beavers here?" National Public Radio journalist Sabri Ben-Achour asked incredulously when he visited Dyke Marsh a few years ago, not expecting them in Northern Virginia's suburbs. The answer is yes, and there are beavers around Mason Neck and in Huntley Meadows Park too. Beavers live in or around ponds, rivers, marshes and lakes.

Because much aquatic vegetation is dormant, beaver lodges are more visible in winter than in other times of the year. The lodges are typically rounded stacks of logs, sticks, mud and vegetation that protrude from the water. They have two underwater entrances. Freshly-gnawed trees are also sure signs of beavers. They cut down trees to build dams and lodges with their strong teeth.

As for spotting a beaver, they are mostly active at night so few people see them. The best time is at dusk or sunrise. They are active year-round and do not hibernate.

"Engineers"

North America's largest rodents, beavers (*Castor canadensis*) are dark brown mammals with long incisors, short legs, webbed feet and a long, flat, scaly tail. They can dig and grasp tree limbs with their claws. They are three to four feet long including the tail and typically weigh 40 to 50 pounds. Some can weigh up to 80 pounds. They primarily eat herbaceous vegetation, woody and aquatic plants.

Beavers breed in the winter and live in family groups or colonies. Their young are born in May and June. They have a home range size of eight acres, according to state wildlife experts.

Known as "nature's engineers," beavers build dams and lodges with the trees they cut down. The result can be viewed positively or negatively, depending on how or whether people want to use the land. The ponds formed by beaver dams provide habitat for waterfowl, reptiles, amphibians and aquatic insects. Ponds can filter pollution and help control flooding. They can also flood crop and timberland, roads and backyards.

If there are leaks in the dams, they will patch them with mud, sticks and brush. Their industriousness in building and repairing dams may be the origin of the terms "busy as a beaver" and "eager beaver."

"Local" Beavers

Most public land managers hesitate to estimate how many beavers or lodges are around.

At Huntley Meadows Park, "We do not



A beaver eating the bark off a tree branch.



A beaver swimming.



A beaver lodge in Dyke Marsh.



An unusually good look at a beaver's tail.

know how many beavers or lodges are within the park," says Karen Sheffield, the park's manager. "The largest and most visible lodge can be seen from the boardwalk during the winter months, if you know where to look."

When the Fairfax County Park Authority acquired the park's land in 1975, Barnyard Run was an intermittent stream. In 1977,

beavers dammed the stream and created the central, freshwater wetland. In the 1970s and 1980s, the park's wetland was around half open water and half vegetated wetland, productive and diverse. Silt began coming in in stormwater runoff in the late 1980s and the beavers, nomadic animals, moved out. After many years of deliberation and public meetings, park managers decided to restore the marsh and artificially manage water levels, a project completed in 2014. The control system is a 500-foot-long, three-foot-high earthen berm with metal slide gates.

On Mason Neck, there is one large beaver lodge clearly visible at the state park on the Bay View Trail and likely others further inland and in Kane's Creek. "Beavers have been active in the Little Marsh part of the Elizabeth Hartwell Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge for many years," says Ran-



Beaver can cut down trees with their strong teeth, this one in Dyke Marsh.

dy Streufert, a board member of the Friends of Mason Neck State Park. A lodge is also visible from the Great Marsh Trail viewing platform.

For many years, beavers maintained a dam and lodge in the part of Dyke Marsh behind the River Towers Condominiums, but they moved on several years ago, as is their wont. Since the beavers left, more cattails and wild rice have moved in, plants that grow in shallow water.

The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources' website says that beavers are likely present in every Virginia county. People have seen them in Alexandria and Arlington over the years.

By the mid-1800s, beavers were effectively extirpated from much of their eastern U.S. range because of the fur trade. People made their soft pelts into coats or hats, shipping many to Europe. Today, Virginia manages beavers as a game species.

"Beavers pose little threat to humans, their property or pets," according to Fairfax County's website.

For more information, visit <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/information/?s=050069>

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/wildlife/beaver>

OUTER BANKS, NORTH CAROLINA • VACATION RENTALS



TOP BEACHFRONT RENTAL

coolest destination, best rates, great value!

Don't miss out on your chance to soak up the sun once quarantining is done.

Over 500 vacation homes in all price ranges!



Call today to reserve your vacation home...

www.brindleybeach.com

877-642-3224

Protect the ones you love,
get your flu shot today.



@vaccinatevirginia



VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**Life is short.
Don't make it shorter.**

Choose life. Make sure your kids get their HPV vaccine and protect them against cancer.

@vaccinatevirginia



VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 8

services. Listen to guest speakers on various topics of interest. Visit <https://arlingtonrotaryclub.org/> Job Seeking Help. 5-9 p.m. at Columbia Pike Branch Library, 816 S. Walter Reed Drive. Receive job-related help from the staff and volunteers with applications. Free, but requires registration. Visit www.arlingtonva.libcal.com.

Arlington PFLAG Community Group. 7:30-9 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month, PFLAG promotes the equality and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender people and their families. Meets at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Boulevard. Contact arl.pflag@gmail.com for more or go to www.pflagdc.org

Helmsmen Toastmasters meet Thursdays, 7:30-8:45 a.m. at Pentagon Library and Conference Center. Toastmasters is an international organization that helps everyone speak, think, lead and listen better. Most clubs are meeting online at this time. Contact Carl Sabath carl.e.sabath.civ@mail.mil or 703-695-2804 or Elizabeth Femrite elizabeth.m.femrite.civ@mail.mil or 571-256-8674.

Donations Needed. Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, 2700 South 19th St., is seeking to replenish its food pantry. Particularly needed are rice (large bags appreciated, the pantry will rebag), dry beans, canned vegetables, soup, small jars of peanut butter, small jars of jelly, pasta and pasta sauce. Donations are collected during Mass each Sunday. Visit www.our-ladyqueenofpeace.org for more.

Soil Testing. Virginia Cooperative Extension is offering soil testing services to analyze soil and determine what is needed to condition soil for plantings. The routine soil test is all one normally needs for a fertility evaluation. Pick up soil sampling box at the Virginia Cooperative Extension Arlington office, 3308 S. Stafford St., 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Send filled soil sample box with form and fee to the Virginia Tech Lab for analysis. Fees vary, visit www.soiltest.vt.edu/Files.

Alzheimer's Association Support Group has meetings currently conducted online. They are open to people with Alzheimer's, their caregivers, family members and friends. Free. Call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at 703-359-4440 or 800-272-3900 before attending a group for the first time to verify meeting information, obtain directions or other information about the group. A complete list of all groups in the National Capital Area region can be found at https://www.alz.org/nca/helping_you/support_groups.

Pentagon Legacy Toastmasters meet Tuesdays 5:15-6:30 p.m. in the Pentagon Main Cafeteria/food court, left of Dunkin' Donuts. Most clubs are meeting online at this time.

Toastmasters is an international organization that helps people speak, think, lead and listen better. Call 703-695-2604 www.toastmasters.org.

The Friends of the Planetarium Visit www.friendsoftheplanetarium.org

to find up-to-date show times, a schedule of future events, information about Friends of the Planetarium membership, astronomy news and events, the history of the David M. Brown Planetarium, a link to the Friends' store, and more.

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority announces that cyclists and pedestrians will now have access to the W&OD Trail beyond normal daylight hours. The new W&OD Trail hours are from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., from Shirlington in Arlington County, to the western town limit of Herndon in Fairfax County.

Lifeline Personal Alert System. Virginia Hospital Center Senior Health staff locally manage the personal emergency response system. Help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Monthly cost starts at \$42. Call 703-558-6859 for more.

Musical Instruments Wanted. Instruments of any type or size — from a piano to a piccolo, in response to school's needs. Donations are tax exempt. Contact Miriam Miller, Opera NOVA for pick up. 703-536-7557; mcdm1@verizon.net; www.operaguildnova.org.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is seeking volunteers to participate in a free, non-profit program, offered in conjunction with the IRS, that provides tax filing assistance to people of low- and middle-income, with special attention paid to those aged 60-plus. Training will be available in December and January to help taxpayers Feb. 1-April 18, 2017. Visit www.aarp.org/taxaide.

CLASSIFIED

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

TO ADVERTISE IN THIS PAPER, CALL BY MONDAY 11:00 AM 703-778-9411



Brown v. Board of Education SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS
THROUGH MARCH 25, 2022

The Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program was established by the Virginia General Assembly in 2004 to provide educational opportunities for persons who were denied an education in Virginia between 1954 and 1964 due to the closing of the public schools during Massive Resistance. The program is now open to eligible applicants for the 2022-2023 school year. For applications and information on eligibility, visit:

BROWNSCHOLARSHIP.VIRGINIA.GOV

or contact Lily Jones, Division of
Legislative Services, at (804) 698-1888.

Legals

ABC LICENSE

Chipotle Mexican Grill of Colorado, LLC trading as Chipotle Mexican Grill, 3000 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Arlington County, Virginia 22201. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Beer On Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Timothy Luskin, Member. 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.

CALENDAR

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**Let us know
about an
upcoming event**

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

NEWS

U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA) Will Seek Reelection to Represent Virginia's 8th Congressional District

U.S. Rep. Don Beyer's statement:

"Today I announce that I am seeking reelection to Congress because of the powerful sense of urgency I feel about continuing my fights to build a strong and equitable economy, to protect our democracy from those who seek to undermine it, and to confront the threat of climate change.

"This year I worked harder than ever to help my constituents, opening thousands of constituent cases with federal agencies on behalf of Northern Virginians and returning millions of dollars to VA-8 taxpayers. I helped enact major legislative accomplishments, including the American Rescue Plan, the enhanced Child Tax Credit, and the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. My bipartisan anti-hate crime legislation was signed into law by President Biden. I represented the United States at the Glasgow Conference on Climate Change, and chaired Congress's Joint Economic Committee during one of the swiftest economic recoveries in American history.

"We have much more work to do in the year ahead and beyond, starting with comprehensive action on climate in the Build Back Better Act, which I helped draft as a



U.S. Rep. Don Beyer

member of the House Ways and Means Committee. We must ensure that we have an economy that allows everyone to succeed, which means making health care, child care, and housing more affordable. We must protect Americans' right to vote, and pass

reforms to prevent gun violence. I remain focused on the goal of delivering guaranteed paid family and medical leave to every American worker.

"These objectives require capable, experienced leadership to succeed, and as a member of the House I will continue to be the most effective advocate I can be for progress that improves my constituents' lives. I am honored by the trust Northern Virginians have placed in me as their elected Representative since 2014, and look forward to a robust campaign in 2022. Most importantly, I will make the best case I can for reelection by continuing to work hard and deliver results for the people."

For more, visit [FriendsOfDonBeyer.com](https://www.FriendsOfDonBeyer.com).

CALENDAR

MONDAY MORNING MUSIC (MMM) will begin its spring semester Jan. 31 under the directorship of Victoria Gau who is partnering with Ellen Myers Kliman to focus on the theme of Opera. These zoom classes take place on alternate Mondays from 10-11:30 a.m. and are available by recording for those unable to attend the session. The classes focus on opera as developed around its political/social context. Gau is an Oberlin-trained violinist and conductor who wears many musical hats in the area and Kliman is also Oberlin trained and has performed early music, cabaret, opera, operetta, musical theatre and chamber music throughout the Washington area. For more information contact glpasley@gmail.com.

NOW THRU FEB. 22

Jane Franklin Dance Presents Forty+ Project. 12:30-1:30 p.m. At 3700 S Four Mile Run Drive, Arlington. Forty+ is starting a new project with choreographer Andie deVaulx. Designed for movers who enjoy participating with others, the upcoming Forty+ Project is a rewarding experience. The weekly sessions help dancers to hone physical skills and dance technique while engaging in the creative process. This project culminates with performances at Arlington's Theatre on the Run, February 26 at 7:30 pm and February 27 at 5 pm. The project is open to people of all physical facilities. No previous performance experience is necessary. Visit www.janefranklin.com or call 703-933-1111.

NOW THRU JAN. 30

"A Midsummer Night's Dream." At Thomas Jefferson Community Theater, Arlington. Presented by The Arlington Players. Adapted by Erin Branigan and Katie Rey Bogdan. A Midsummer Night's Dream takes you into the Athenian woods, full of magic and fairies, to

celebrate the wedding of Duke Theseus of Athens and the Amazon queen, Hippolyta. However, a feud between the king and queen of the fairies has caused the natural world to become unbalanced. Visit www.theArlingtonPlayers.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 12

NCE Valentine Concert. 7:30 p.m. At Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Blvd, Arlington. National Chamber Ensemble presents Beguiling Brahms and Schumann (Valentine's Concert). February's Valentine's Concert will present two great Brahms Sonatas for Violin and Piano - exciting, moving, superb and deeply passionate works reflecting Brahms' wondrous lyricism and romantic flair. These works will be paired with Robert Schumann's riveting Sonata in A Minor. Schumann, another great composer, was a personal friend of Brahms, and his music will provide the perfect addition. An exquisite program featuring romantic music for violin and piano with the artistry of pianist Carlos Cesar Rodriguez and violinist Leonid Sushansky. Visit <https://www.nationalchamberensemble.org/tickets.htm>.

SATURDAY/FEB. 12

Imagine. 2:30-4:30 p.m. At Lubber Run Park (Fire Ring) and Lubber Run Community Center (Oak Room), 200 N. Columbus Street, Arlington. What would a climate-solved Arlington look like? Grab a hot beverage, make s'mores by the campfire, and get inspired by listening to climate- and nature-related literature. Then, learn from local community organizations about their long-range climate action plans, and contribute your own solutions to climate problems facing Arlington. All ages welcome. Visit the website: <https://arlingtonva.libcal.com/calendar/apl/our-environment-our-future-imagine>

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CALL 703-549-0004

FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION

ELECTRICAL	ELECTRICAL
K & D ELECTRIC	
COMMERCIAL / RESIDENTIAL SERVICE	
Family Owned & Operated	
Recessed Lighting Ceiling Fans Phone/CATV Computer Network Cabling Service Upgrades Hot Tubs, etc...	Licensed/Bonded/Insured Office 703-335-0654 Mobile 703-499-0522 lektrkman28@gmail.com

LANDSCAPING	LANDSCAPING
Quality Tree Service & Landscaping	
Reasonable prices. Licensed & insured.	
Expert Tree Work	
Tree removal, topping & pruning, shrubbery trimming, mulching, leaf removal, planting, hauling, gutter cleaning, retaining walls, drainage problems, etc.	
25 years of experience - Free estimates 703-868-5358	
24 Hour Emergency Tree Service	

Landscape Drainage	Landscape Drainage
ProDrainage	
A JES Services, Inc Company	
Eco-Friendly Landscape Drainage Experts	
Drainage, Erosion, Landscaping, Hardscaping, Patios, Retaining Walls & More	
Your Neighborhood Company since 1987!	
703-772-0500 www.Prodrainage.com	
VA. Licensed Class A Contractor	

Sign up for
FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION
to any or all of our 15 papers
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/SUBSCRIBE

Not Bad, Considering



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

By the time this column prints, a month or so after I wrote it, I will be approximately one month into my three-month warranty extension. That meaning, as I'm regularly able to joke - THANK GOD!, that my end of December quarterly scans indicated tumor and bone weakness as stable. Not that I have a clue how quickly my fortunes could change but, I figure I have at least until my next quarterly scans in March before there might be a metaphorical fan involved. Since my oncologist is not in the predicting business nor inclined to discuss scenarios either, my life as a stage IV papillary thyroid cancer patient will continue to be one gigantic/ongoing wait and see.

Which for the past nearly 13 years - from my initial late Feb., '09 diagnosis to the present has been my m.o. And quite thankfully/amazingly, my 'operandi' continues. And since I'm not, as it concerns my cancer diagnosis/evolution from non-small cell lung cancer to papillary thyroid cancer, a particularly deep thinker, or even much of a researcher into similar case studies, I sort of roll merrily/naively along. Though I wouldn't quite characterize my 'roll' as care-free and unencumbered; nonetheless, I am rarely bogged down or depressed by most of it.

As for the least of it, as a cancer patient I am part of unfortunately a much larger group of similarly disease-impacted people. We all share a mostly unspoken bond and I'd like to think, there is strength in our numbers. Whenever I meet/have met a cancer patient, there is, as you might imagine, an immediate connection of shared experiences. Whether the cancer is the curable variety - as generally speaking, papillary thyroid cancer is supposed to be, or the terminal type - like my original stage IV non-small cell lung cancer diagnosis was "prognosed," ("13 months to two years" I was given), once cancer is added to your everyday vocabulary, life takes on a whole new meaning, dare I say, urgency.

As an example: both my parents lived into their mid-80s, and were mostly healthy, no cancer. Given that we're related by birth, I figured I'd have a similar life expectancy. Then a month or so after my widowed mother died in early Dec. '08 at age 86, I experienced a pain in my left rib cage. A few days later the pain had migrated to my right rib cage. By the weekend, I could barely bend over at the waist and had difficulty inhaling. Even I had to admit there was "something rotten in Denmark." Later that New Year's Day, I went to the Emergency Room and the rest as you regular readers know, is cancer. I was age 54 and not quite six months and about to be diagnosed with a "terminal" form of lung cancer. Age 86? I'd be lucky to reach age 56. Based on the prognosis I received from my oncologist in late February, '09, I just lost 30 years of my life.

Yet here I am, almost 13 years later, and still droning on about being an active cancer patient. Too bad for you. Perfect for me, however. Who would have thought? In talking with my oncologist over the years and living and learning - and processing all the information I've been given; I've managed somehow to survive. I know Lou Gehrig was "the luckiest man on the face of the earth," but given my original diagnosis and subsequent prognosis, to still be alive and reasonably well in 2022 is nothing short of a miracle. I've been pretty lucky, too.

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



ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA



START THE YEAR OFF RIGHT!

**NEW 2022 TOYOTA
COROLLA LE SDN**

LEASES STARTING FROM...

\$189
/MO



MODEL# 1852. MSRP \$21,520. LEASE OFFER FOR QUALIFIED LESSEES. BASED ON 39 MONTHS, 10K MILES/YR & \$2999 DUE AT SIGNING. SECURITY DEPOSIT WAIVED. PLUS TAX, TAGS, FREIGHT AND \$789 PROCESSING FEE. FACTORY PROGRAMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

**NEW 2022 TOYOTA
CAMRY LE SDN**

LEASES STARTING FROM...

\$269
/MO



MODEL# 2532. MSRP \$26,320. LEASE OFFER FOR QUALIFIED LESSEES. BASED ON 39 MONTHS, 10K MILES/YR & \$2999 DUE AT SIGNING. SECURITY DEPOSIT WAIVED. PLUS TAX, TAGS, FREIGHT AND \$789 PROCESSING FEE. FACTORY PROGRAMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

**NEW 2022 TOYOTA
PRIUS**

LEASES STARTING FROM...

\$269
/MO



MODEL# 1223. MSRP \$26,730. LEASE OFFER FOR QUALIFIED LESSEES. BASED ON 39 MONTHS, 10K MILES/YR & \$2999 DUE AT SIGNING. SECURITY DEPOSIT WAIVED. PLUS TAX, TAGS, FREIGHT AND \$789 PROCESSING FEE. FACTORY PROGRAMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

**NEW 2022 TOYOTA
HIGHLANDER**

LEASES STARTING FROM...

\$359
/MO



MODEL# 6948. MSRP \$40,220. LEASE OFFER FOR QUALIFIED LESSEES. BASED ON 39 MONTHS, 10K MILES/YR & \$3999 DUE AT SIGNING. SECURITY DEPOSIT WAIVED. PLUS TAX, TAGS, FREIGHT AND \$789 PROCESSING FEE. FACTORY PROGRAMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

SERVICE & PARTS HOURS: MON-FRI 6A-7P & SAT 7A-5P

**BATTERY
SPECIAL**

FREE

BATTERY CHECK-UP
INCLUDES: CHECK COLD CRANKING
AMPS AND VISUAL INSPECTION OF
BATTERY CONDITION. INCLUDES
BATTERY CONDITION PRINT OUT.

TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT
TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL.
VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.

**LUBE, OIL &
FILTER SPECIAL**

\$39.95

\$44.95 FOR SYNTHETIC OIL CHANGE
INCLUDES: CHANGE OIL (UP TO 5 QTS.), INSTALL
GENUINE TOYOTA OIL FILTER, INSPECT & ADJUST
ALL FLUID LEVELS AND COMPLIMENTARY MULTI-
POINT INSPECTION WITH PRINT OUT.

NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON
MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. TAX
AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.

**ALIGNMENT
SPECIAL**

\$89.95

4-WHEEL ALIGNMENT
INCLUDES: 4-WHEEL ALIGNMENT,
INSPECT SUSPENSION, BALL JOINTS,
STRUTS & SHOCKS, TIRE CONDITION
AND SET TIRE PRESSURE.

TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT
TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL.
VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.

**BRAKE PAD
SPECIAL**

\$99.95

BRAKE PAD REPLACEMENT
INCLUDES: INSTALL GENUINE TOYOTA FRONT BRAKE PADS,
INSPECT FRONT & REAR ROTORS AND/OR DRUMS, CHECK TIRE
CONDITION AND INSPECT ALL HARDWARE. TCMC PADS ONLY.
MACHINE ROTORS AN ADDITIONAL \$189.95

NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON
MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA.
TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.

**TOYOTACARE
PLUS**

\$329.00

SPECIAL
MAINTAIN PEACE OF MIND BY
EXTENDING YOUR TOYOTACARE
COMPLEMENTARY MAINTENANCE
PLAN TO 4 YEARS/45,000 MILES!

TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT
TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL.
VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.

**SERVICE
VARIABLE
DISCOUNT**

**THE MORE YOU SPEND,
THE MORE YOU SAVE!**

\$10 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$50-\$99
\$15 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$100-\$199
\$20 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$200-\$499
\$50 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$500+

TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT
TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL.
VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 01/31/22.

CALL TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY: 703-684-0710



**Toyota's
President's Award
34 years in a row!**

Se habla español



ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA

3750 Richmond Hwy • Alexandria

703-684-0700

AlexandriaToyota.com