

The Arlington Connection

for the Love of
Goodies

Allie Jankens braving the frigid temperatures on Sunday morning to offer some Valentine confections at the Westover Farmers Market.

Shop Local for Valentine's Day

PAGE 3

Protect Your Pets From Starting Fires

PAGE 6

New Real Estate Trends

PAGE 8

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OPINION, PAGE 4 ♦ FLOURISHING AFTER 55, PAGE 10 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11

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Local Bakers Make Valentines Pretty Sweet

Support to small businesses and Valentines go hand in hand.

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

Chef Patrice Olivon was at the Westover Farmers Market on Sunday selling treats for Saint Valentine's Day along with other French specialties. His stand, "J'aime Madeleine" is a creative take on the traditional madeleine cookie/cake. Each hand-crafted cookie is uniquely flavored, glazed and can be made fresh to order.

It is just so "Arlington" to find a chef of Olivon's calibre selling french pastries at the farmers market. Olivon has an impressive ca-

reer of more than 40 years of culinary experience. He has cooked for the White House, served as Executive Chef at the French Embassy, and competed on prize-winning teams on Food Network television shows. Olivon holds a culinary degree from the prestigious Ecole Hôtelière de Marseille. He recently served as program director for "L'academie de Cuisine," one of the nation's top culinary schools, and now conducts recreational classes for home cooks, including his on-line "Cooking Live," as well as offering his pastries for sale online or at the market.

To learn more about Chef Patrice, or to place an order, see: <https://cooking-live.com/about/>

com/about/

Chef Allie Jankens founded "For the Love of Goodies" in 2018 to share her handmade treats directly with the local community. With over 10 years of professional baking, restaurant, and chocolate experience, she's built a small business that gives her the ability to delight others while balancing family and life. She offers Valentine's goodies online made to order and will have a wide selection of her heart-themed cookies at the market. She can do any theme and her "paintable hearts" are fun for children. Jankens is supportive of her local community,

raising money for causes in her "Cookies for a Cause" effort. She donated \$459 to the Asian Americans Advancing Justice cause most recently.

For more about Allie Jankens' cookies, or to place an order, see: <https://www.fortheloveofgoodies.com/about>

The Heidelberg Pastry Shop on Langston Boulevard is hopping this week with heart-shaped cookies, chocolates, clever Valentine's messages, and traditional baked goods like Linzer tortes oozing raspberry jam tempting the Valentine's Day romantic.

To learn more or place an order at the Heidelberg: <https://heidelbergbakery.com>



A high-end heart filled with hand-made chocolates at the Heidelberg Bakery.



"Just for the record, I love you," at the Heidelberg Bakery.



Heidelberg cookies boxed for Valentine's Day.



Allie Jankens braving the frigid temperatures on Sunday morning at the Westover Farmers Market.



Patrice Olivon at his Westover Market stand, "J'aime Madeleine."



"For the Love of Goodies" Valentines cookies. More heart themed cookies will be on offer next Sunday.



Strawberry and Nutella filled cookies by Chef Patrice Olivon. "Sables" are a french staple. Olivon has "Palmiers" and Marseillaise "Navettes," as well as other traditional pastries on his market table too.

PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

Putting Crime Guns in the Cross Hairs

BY SEN. ADAM EBBIN

As the co-chair of the General Assembly Gun Violence Prevention Caucus, confronting the gun violence crisis has been a priority of mine for years. While I support the Second Amendment and the availability of firearms for hunting, self-defense, and sport, we must implement common-sense gun safety laws that keep dangerous firearms out of the hands of those who will not responsibly use them. I have two bills this session focused on gun safety. The first, addresses the growing threat of “ghost guns;” the second targets firearms without serial numbers being used and traded. Mirror versions of these bills are being carried by House member Del. Marcus Simon (D-Falls Church). Both bills passed the Senate Judiciary Committee and await floor votes.

Ghost guns are undetectable, untraceable firearms which can be bought online, assembled with ease, and function precisely like any other firearm. These weapons pose a serious and deliberate prob-

lem. Law enforcement report seeing a rise in the use of these weapons in criminal acts as well as accidental shootings. It can be easier to build a ghost gun than to assemble an Ikea dresser. The process of converting ghost gun parts — which can be purchased without a background check, license or record of sale, into a functioning firearm — involves just a few steps and can be completed without any specialized skill. Due to the nature of their component parts, these weapons cannot be detected by normal security screening methods, like those you would encounter in an airport. They are particularly enticing to people who cannot pass a background check — domestic abusers, minors, organized crime, and those with a violent felony record.

In 2018, a man prohibited from accessing guns built his own ghost gun from parts ordered online and perpetrated a mass shooting at his workplace in Middleton, Wis-



Sen. Adam Ebbin

consin. In late 2019, a 16-year-old, too young to purchase a firearm, used a ghost gun to kill two students and injured three others at Saugus High School in California.

My legislation fixes a loophole: manufacturers are required to put

a serial number on finished firearms but not on individual parts. This bill requires manufacturers, dealers, and distributors to add a serial number, which legitimizes a weapon and makes it traceable if used in a crime, to the parts sold in Ghost Gun kits.

My second bill, SB 643, has garnered support from a broad coalition including the Virginia Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, the Virginia Citizens Defense League, prosecutors, and the State Police Association.

This bill addresses the people using or distributing firearms that are already illegal: guns that have had their serial number removed. Removing the serial number makes the devices untraceable

when found or connected to a crime. Federal law makes possessing, transporting, or delivering a gun with an altered serial number a felony. Under current Virginia law, only the removal or alteration of a serial number is a crime, but not the use or sale of such a gun. Commonwealth’s Attorneys cannot prosecute people in state courts for this offense.

Considerable effort is required to remove a serial number from a weapon. At minimum, welding tools and drills are needed. Removing the serial number is an intentional act aimed at avoiding accountability for actions taken by the person wielding the weapon. These are crime guns, full stop.

While no one law can prevent all violent incidents, I believe that smarter gun regulations are a part of the solution to prevent some of the tragedies that we all wish to end including homicides, domestic violence, children’s accidental deaths, and suicide by firearm. I am certain that the lives that we save will be worth the effort.

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

Black History Month at the State Capitol

BY DEL. KENNETH R. “KEN” PLUM

For nearly 250 years of Virginia’s history Black people in the state were enslaved. Following emancipation there was a denial of the rights of Black people in the state, and Jim Crow laws curtailed their freedom. The Lost Cause movement after the Civil War sought to obscure the treatment of Black people as slaves and downplay any contributions they made to society. Only in recent years with the Civil Rights and Black Lives Matter movements have Black people started to receive the recognition they deserve in society and in the state legislature.

Each day in the Virginia General Assembly history is being made as a record number of 18 Black members serve in the 100-member House of Delegates and three Black members are in the 40-member Senate. For most of my career as a delegate the number of Black legislators in the General Assembly could be counted on the fingers on one hand. For the first time ever, Black women are in leadership



Plum

roles with the Lieutenant Governor of the Commonwealth, the President pro tempore of the Senate, and the House Minority Caucus Chair. A small but significant example of the changes being made are the daily speeches in the General Assembly during February about notable Black Virginians who have not received the attention they deserve.

President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976 to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.” Events leading up to the designation of a Black History Month extend back as far as 1926 when the Association for the Study of African American Life and History founded by historian Carter G. Woodson and Minister Jesse E. Moorland started a Negro History Week. The second week of February was chosen as the date to correspond with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.

Hopefully the writing and teaching of more complete histories will

reduce the need for separate historic celebrations, but there is so much to do in filling in the blanks of histories in the past that left out so much information or distorted it in so many ways.

There is a continuing effort on the part of many who see one-sided historical accounts as benefiting the false narrative they continue to present.

There are real concerns that I and others have about what is happening currently in Virginia. As I discussed in a recent column, the Governor’s Executive Order Number One “ending the use of inher-

ently divisive concepts, including critical race theory” has fueled this concern. Adding to the Order, the Governor’s setting up a snitch line for parents and others to report on teachers teaching “divisive concepts” raises further concerns.

It’s impossible to teach accurate history without some seeing it as divisive. Hopefully the celebration of Black History Month in the General Assembly will demonstrate that celebrating each other’s successes will not be viewed as divisive but rather as strengthening our common histories and aspirations.

Let Us Know Your View

Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name.

Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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Man Dies After Being Found Unresponsive in Arlington Jail

Paul Thompson, 41, died on Feb. 1, 2022, after he was found unresponsive in his cell in the medical unit at the Arlington County Detention Facility.

Deputies and medical staff found Mr. Thompson unresponsive in his cell at 3:06 p.m. and began immediate resuscitation efforts before Arlington Fire & Rescue units (Medic 104) arrived on scene at 3:13 p.m. Thompson was transported to Virginia Hospital Center and pronounced deceased at 4:24 p.m.

Thompson was arrested and charged with Trespassing on Jan.

13, 2022 and was awaiting his court hearing.

Thompson's family was notified of his death.

The death is being investigated by the Arlington County Police Department. An autopsy will be conducted by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to determine cause of death. Anyone with information related to this investigation is asked to contact ACPDTipline@arlingtonva.us. Information may also be provided anonymously through the Arlington County Crime Solvers hotline at 1-866-411-TIPS (8477).

Suspected Rabid Fox; One Person Bitten

On Wednesday, Feb. 2, beginning at 10:45 a.m., Arlington County Animal Control and the Arlington County Police Department began receiving complaints regarding a fox aggressively approaching people and dogs around the 3500 block of N Utah Street and 4507 of 33rd Street North. The incidents are believed to involve the same fox.

The fox had potential contact with three domestic pets and bit one human unprovoked causing injury. The fox in question was exhibiting signs and symptoms consistent with rabies. The suspect aggressive fox has not been located or captured at this time.

Rabies is a disease that people and animals can catch from the bite or scratch of infected animals. It is fatal if medical care is not given promptly.

Arlington County Animal Control and the Arlington County Department of Human Services are urging anyone who may have been bitten or scratched by any wild animal, including a fox, to reach out immediately.

If you, your children, or your pets had any potential contact with this animal, please call Arlington County Animal Control promptly

at 703-931-9241.

Residents are encouraged to:

Ensure pets are up to date on their rabies and distemper vaccines

Keep dogs on a leash at all times and keep cats inside

Do not approach or feed any wild animals

Feed pets inside

Remove wildlife attractants from yards, such as unsecured garbage cans, open containers of food and compost

Arlington County Animal Control is also urging residents to remain vigilant, and if they see a fox that appears sick, lethargic, disoriented, or aggressive to stay away from the animal and call Animal Control immediately: 703-931-9241.

The County asks that pets and children are not permitted outside unsupervised at this time.

Do not attempt to haze or make loud sounds at this animal. Back away slowly while facing the animal at all times.

If you come across a deceased rabies vector animal (including cats, dogs, foxes, raccoons, and groundhogs) in your yard or a public space, contact Animal Control promptly and do not handle the animal.

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.

FRIDAY/FEB. 11

Virtual Breakfast. 9-10 a.m. Online.

PathForward will hold a free virtual breakfast to update those living in or near Arlington about the latest programs it is offering to those who are at risk of, or are, homeless. This will include information on the newly launched mobile medical care team. Visit <https://pathforwardva.org/> and on PathForward's YouTube page. Register here: <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/Weblink.aspx?name=E12354&id=9>

FRIDAY/FEB. 11

Sustainable Landscape Design: The Basics. 10-11:30 a.m. Online. Sustainable landscaping builds on the conditions of your yard to create a healthier and more ecologically-friendly outdoor space. Join Extension Master Gardener

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Jurisdiction	Fed Struc Id	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
LEE	10832	626	DELVALE RD	N F POWELL RIVER	1/31/2022
LEE	10876	648	ROUTE 648	TOWN BRANCH	1/31/2022
LEE	10897	662	ROUTE 662	SIMS CREEK	1/31/2022
GRAYSON	8912	734	CHESTNUT GROVE RD	FOX CREEK	1/31/2022
WASHINGTON	25100	616	LITTLE WOLF RUN	ABRAMS CREEK	1/20/2022
BUCHANAN	23115	755	STILTNETS BOTTOM RD	LEVISA RIVER	1/19/2022
BUCHANAN	23116	1025	MEETING HOUSE RD	LEVISA RIVER	1/19/2022
WYTHE	19666	610	PEPPERS FERRY RD	COVE CREEK	1/18/2022
RICHMOND (M)	21358	0	COLUMBIA STREET	GOODES CREEK	1/13/2022
FRANKLIN	7902	688	POTEET RD/ROUTE 688	GILLS CREEK	1/11/2022
CARROLL	4780	881	CROSS CREEK RD/ROUTE 881	LITTLE REED ISLAND CR #2	1/11/2022
AMELIA	1235	602	BEVILS BRIDGE RD	APPOMATTOX RIVER	1/6/2022
FRANKLIN	7907	695	ISOLANE RD/ROUTE 695	HATCHET CREEK	1/5/2022
MONTGOMERY	12292	663	WALTON RD/ROUTE 663	CRAB CREEK	1/4/2022

The list above is not a comprehensive list of all structures with weight restrictions in the Commonwealth, but shows only structures that have new or changed weight restrictions within the last 30 days. The list contains only basic structure identification and location information and the date the new or changed weight restriction and signage became effective.

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit <https://www.virginiadot.org> and navigate to Info Center/Trucking Resources. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

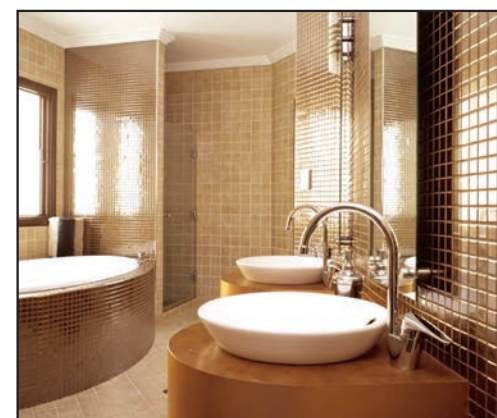
Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact, haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT's Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730.

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Protecting Your Pets from (Starting) Fires at Home

Pets cause at least 1,000 fires a year; fire departments rescue many pets too.

BY ASHLEY SIMPSON
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Do you ever wonder what exactly your pets are doing when you're not at home? Even if you have a pet-monitoring camera rooted somewhere in your house, you mostly just have to hope that your animals don't get into any mischief — or start any fires. Literally.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that pets start around 1,000 house fires every year. And, this number could actually be higher, because, as Captain Nathaniel Hiner of the Arlington County Fire Department pointed out, there is often no sure-fire way to conclusively determine whether a pet's actions cause flames.

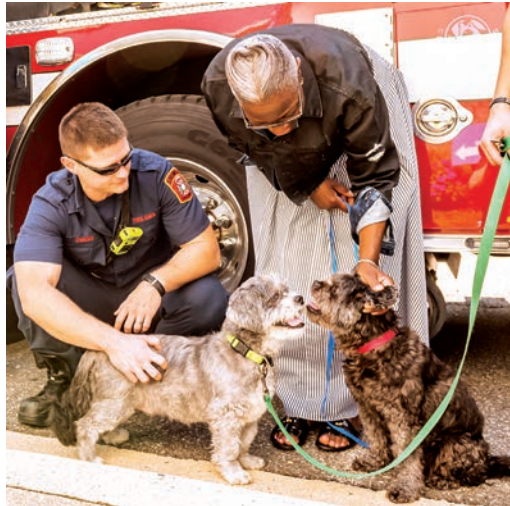
Really, it's not so hard to imagine. For example, how easy would it be for your nimble cat to leap onto the kitchen counter and paw at the knobs on your stovetop?

Or, can you say with certainty that your curious dog would never be able to accidentally knock over a burning candle?

Removing the Potential for Pet-induced Fires

Fortunately, there are ways to prevent your pet from becoming an accidental arsonist. Even if you don't keep your animals in crates when you leave home — or even the room they are in — you can take certain measures to keep everyone safe.

"The ways we teach people to prevent their kids from starting fires overlaps with how we teach people how to prevent pets from starting them," Hiner said. "Acci-



Lt. Owens walking a dog during an ACFD / AWLA donation / adoption event.



The crew of 102 - B shift walking dogs up for adoption from the AWLA.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

dents happen for everyone, and you'd be surprised how common the hazards are that do lead to fires — for example, it's easy for people to forget about burning candles and other open, accessible flames when children or animals are around."

So, when you do leave home without your pet, make it part of your routine to conduct a fire hazard audit:

First of all, scan each room to make sure there are no active flames — burning candles, even dying fires in your fireplace, or cook/stove tops in use. Flameless candles are also a great aesthetic option to prevent fire risk.

Then, it's all about training the eye to spot potential flames.

Generally speaking (since the Arlington Fire Department doesn't have a way of specifying pet-related fires), the most common ways for local sparks to fly "have been

electrical in nature or appliance malfunctions," according to Hiner.

"Especially around this time of year, we see a lot of home heating related fires," he explained. "If you are leaving home, or any space in general, unplug heaters from the electrical source altogether so no one at home accidentally turns it back on. Or, if the heater has an automatic shut-off mode, it will shut off automatically if a child or animal knocks it over."

Even when these heaters are on and in eyesight, he added, their cords should beat least three feet away from all combustible items. Also, note that space heaters should always be plugged directly into a wall socket — not into a surge protector or extension cord.

Leveraging surge protectors are important for other appliances, though. They prevent people from overloading sockets, and a surge protector provides one source for

turning off multiple sources of electricity, very efficient for pet fire prevention routines.

As for your stove, the best way to ensure that your pet won't turn it on is to remove the knobs.

And, of course for absolute certainty, keep your pet in a crate or otherwise secure space.

Saving Your Pets in Event of House Fires

Regardless of a house fire's cause, firefighters are trained not only to save people from burning homes; they are also equipped to rescue animals.

"We are always ready to rescue pets from fires, and paramedics and EMTs on the scene can provide initial medical care," Hiner said. "We actually have animal oxygen masks that we can administer oxygen to the animal with, and then transport them to an emergency vet if needed."

When calling to report a fire, it is important to let emergency dispatch operators know how many people and pets there are in your household — so that emergency personnel will have the correct equipment on the scene.

The American Red Cross suggests that pet owners "affix a pet alert window cling and write down the number of pets inside your house and attach the static cling to a front window." Having this window sticker — and keeping it up to date — could literally be a lifesaver.

Hiner added that, although it may be instinctive, it is critical for people not to go back into a burning home to look for animals. Firefighters are the experts here, and they will be the most effective in getting everyone to safety.

Reach out to the Arlington County Fire Department for more information on fire education and prevention.

Arlington Free Tax Preparation

Due to the pandemic, the organizations that usually help residents prepare their taxes are making a number of changes. We will provide updated information as it becomes available.

Bring with you:

- ❖ Government identification with picture, both spouses
- ❖ Social Security Cards (or ITIN letter) for each family member
- ❖ All W-2 and 1099 Forms
- ❖ Information on all other income received in 2021
- ❖ Copy of last two year's return (if you have it)
- ❖ For direct deposit of your refund, bank account and routing number
- ❖ Form 1095-A/B/C (if you purchased health insurance thru the marketplace)
- ❖ Income information for all your dependents
- ❖ RS Letters 6419 (if received)

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

Enterprise Development Group (EDG)

- 901 South Highland St., Arlington, VA 22204
- ❖ From February 1 through April 15
- ❖ Language(s): English
- ❖ Appointment Required
- ❖ Volunteer-prepared and self-prep
- ❖ For an appointment call 571-321-6976

Community Tax Aid

Department of Human Services

- 2100 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA 22204
- ❖ February 1 to April 12
- ❖ Drop off by appointment only
- ❖ For an appointment call (703) 831-2918
- Solo por cita
- ❖ Para una cita: Llama a (703) 831-2918

AARP Tax-Aide

Central Library

- 1015 N Quincy St., Arlington, VA 22201
- ❖ February 10 to April 14
- ❖ Drop off by appointment only
- ❖ Tuesday and Thursday
- ❖ Call 703-829-6192 or visit Tax-Aide for details

<https://www.novataxaide.org/>

AARP Tax-Aide

Columbia Pike Library

- 816 S Walter Reed Dr., Arlington, VA 22204
- ❖ Now to April 14
- ❖ Drop off by appointment only
- ❖ Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday
- ❖ Call 703-879-4696 or visit Tax-Aide for details

<https://www.novataxaide.org/>

NEWS

Campaign Finance Reform Bills Are Struggling

Big money remains.

BY EDEN BROWN

Think campaign finance reform legislation isn't important to you? Big money in campaign finance can affect our lives directly from the amount of our electric bills to the quality of the water we drink. Arlington residents are overpaying for energy because Dominion Power gets to write its own rules, according to Del. Sally Hudson (D-57) who spoke on the topic to an audience of Arlington energy activists.

Two bills, HB71 and HB1288, which came before House of Delegates this session comprise the Rate Protection Act and would end contributions from energy utilities to candidates for the House and Senate in Richmond.

Dominion gets to help elect representatives who will protect their rate-setting, "and that's just a wild conflict of interest," said Hudson.

Hudson is one of the legislators who has led on energy reform work. She notes, "We live in a world where Dominion Energy is the single largest donor to both parties. They write the laws, drop them on the legislators' desks and then shepherd them as they go through the system."

Hudson wants energy companies to be more accountable to the customers they serve. "The price you pay is wildly overpriced," she said. "Every three years the energy companies have to have prices reviewed by the State Corporation Commission. But the SCC doesn't have the freedom to set those prices fairly because Dominion can write its own version of laws which affect them. Last year was a three year review period and they charged more than a billion dollars over the correct amount. Customers will only get about a third of that back."

The reform bills are an attempt to (re)empower the regulators, and it is impressive that Republicans and Democrats have teamed up to write reform bills this year. Hudson, who "got into politics to fight back against the corporate players that run the show in Richmond," notes that "because the higher energy costs get charged to those who are least able to insulate and modernize their houses, the energy bills end up being a kind of "pernicious regressive tax."

It's been discouraging for campaign finance activists (and clean energy activists) who saw the clear mandate from Virginia voters in a Christopher Newport University poll, and the bipartisan support for campaign finance as an opportunity to make reform happen in Richmond. Out of 24 campaign finance bills, 15 are dead with 7 "tabled" just last week in the House P&E Sub-Committee, including Sen. Mar-

cus Simon's (D-53) personal use bill (HB 973) and a companion Republican bill patroned by Del. Mike Cherry (R-66).

All four bills proposing bans on public service corporations' financing of campaigns died.

HB1288, proposed by Del. Hudson, would provide that in any annual rate review of a public utility by the State Corporation Commission, the Commission may find that the rates of a public utility, including an investor-owned incumbent electric utility, are not just and reasonable and may take corrective action. Under the bill, the Commission may conduct an investigation into the rates of any public utility on its own initiative or upon application by an affected party. Additionally, when capped rates of service for investor-owned incumbent electric utilities expire or terminate, the bill permits the Commission to find that the rates are not just and reasonable and take corrective action. This House subcommittee on Commerce and Energy recommended continuing the bill to 2023.

HB71, proposed by Del. Lee Ware (R-65) would prohibit candidates, campaign committees, and political committees from soliciting or accepting contributions from any public utility, as defined in the bill, and prohibits any public utility or any political committee established by such public utility from making any such contribution. It was laid on the table. A bill "laid on the table" can be reconsidered prior to the deadline established by the procedural resolution that sets the schedule for consideration of bills, but while it is a less definite status than "passing it by" it is still not likely the bill would be under consideration again during the session.

There are still nine bills in play, two disclosure bills by Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31) and Sen. Jeremy McPike (D-29) that passed out of the Senate, and two House Bills, one Del. David Bulova's (D-37) oversight bill and Sen Tim Andersen's (R-83) disclosure bill which sets up an electronic database. But bills like Chap Peterson's (D-34) SB44 are not making it, and it would be hard not to draw a direct line between Dominion Power and the defeat of those bills.

The bill prohibits persons from making any single contribution, or any combination of contributions, that exceeds \$20,000 to any one candidate for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, or the General Assembly in any one election cycle. No limits are placed on contributions made by the candidate or the candidate's family to the candidate's campaign or by political party committees. Civil penalties for violations of the limits may equal up to two times the excess contribution amounts. This bill died on Jan. 18, 2022.

To follow campaign finance reform efforts, see: <https://vmop.org>

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

Amy Crumpton to explore how the principles of sustainability coupled with conservation gardening methods offer resourceful solutions for improving and managing your home landscape. Free. RSVP at <https://mgmv.org/events/> to receive link to participate.

FEB. 11-12

On Friday, Feb. 11, Arlington's St. George's Episcopal Church will formally present Northern Virginia with an extraordinary and lasting

musical gift, a magnificent \$1.2 million pipe organ designed by world-renowned organ builder Martin Pasi. The grand instrument, to be used in public concerts as well as for congregational services, is described by Pasi as 'unique in the Northern Virginia area and comparable to the best in Europe.' The grand organ will be dedicated on Feb. 11 at an 8 p.m. concert performance by Kola Owolabi, Professor of Organ at the University of Notre Dame. An in-demand solo recitalist, Owolabi will perform spirituals,

classical works, and the premiere of Brenda Portman's 'Aspects of Light,' based on St. George's story-telling stained-glass windows. On Saturday, Feb. 12 at 10 a.m., St. George's will introduce the organ to the community's children with 'Dinosauria and Donuts,' a free concert featuring dinosaur-themed music and a demonstration for families followed by light snacks. The concerts are free and masks are required at all events. For more information visit www.saintgeorgeschurch.org and click on 'music.'

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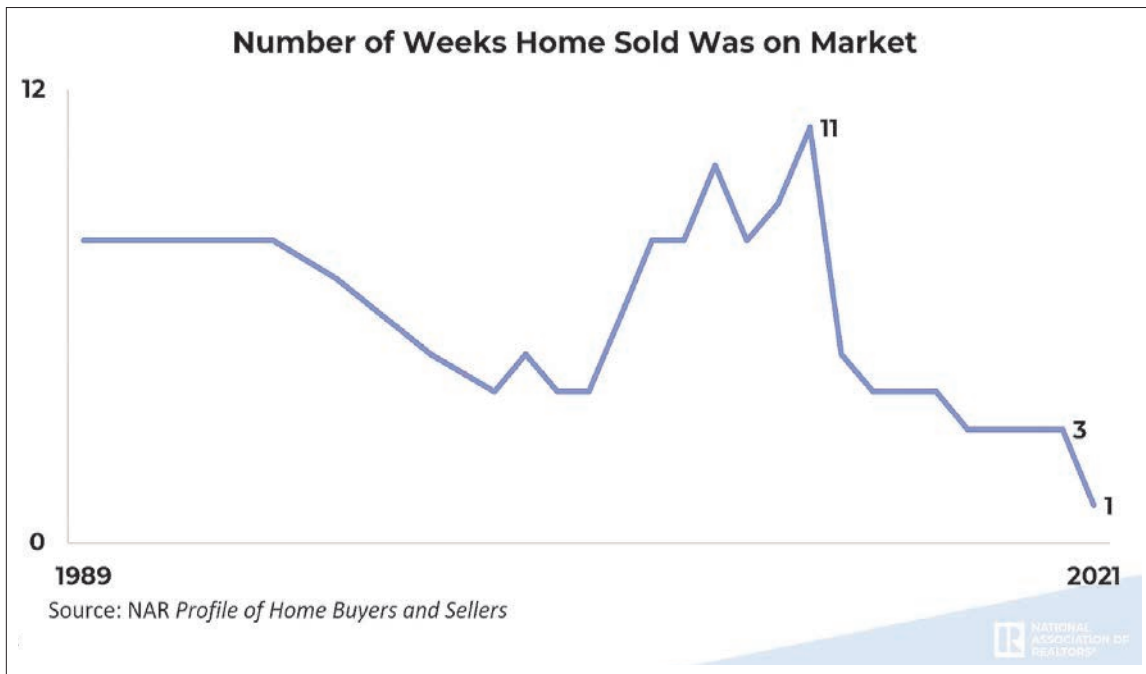
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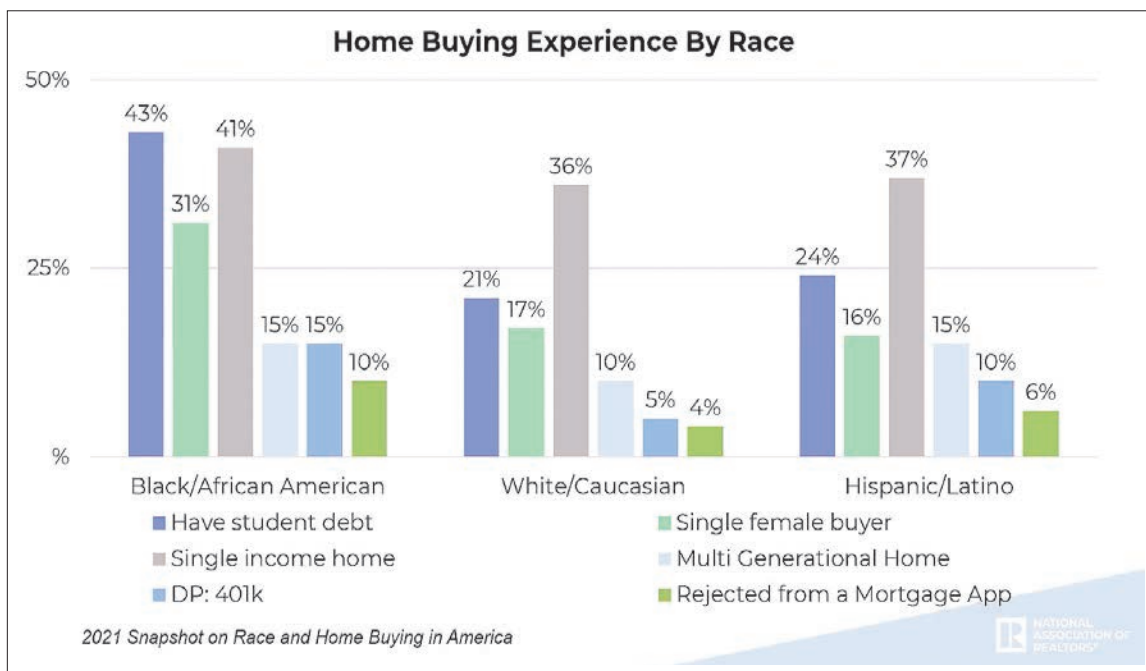
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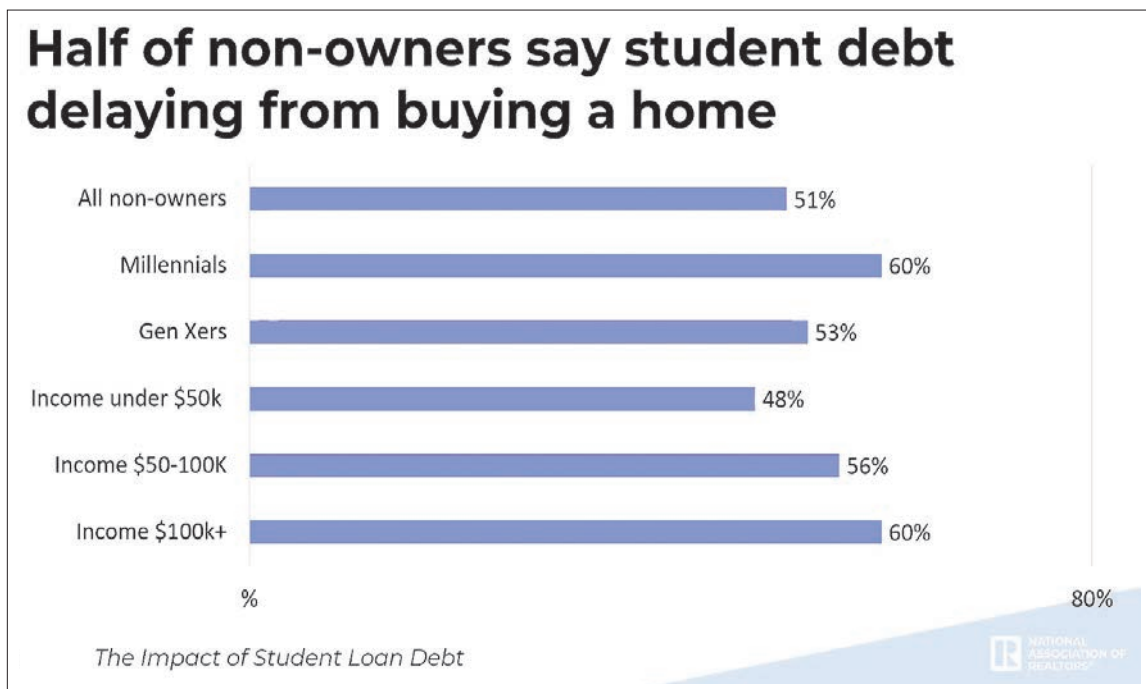
Seeking Shelter: Changes in Housing Preferences



The number of weeks a home is on the market nationally.



Homebuying experience by race.



Student debt impacts the ability to buy a home.

Center for Real Estate Entrepreneurship at George Mason University School of Business presents.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The national housing market is experiencing 118 consecutive months of home price gains and the greatest selling price to listing price ratio ever documented. A third of all listings sell for more than the asking price due to numerous bids. Adding to the mix, people have changed how and when they move. It's important to know that a 20 percent down payment isn't the norm.

Dr. Jessica Lautz, vice president of Demographics and Behavioral Insights at the National Association of Realtors, examined these topics and more on Feb. 2 during her presentation, "Seeking Shelter: Changes in Housing Preferences" hosted by the Center for Real Estate Entrepreneurship at George Mason University School of Business. Fairfax County is in line with the national trend as home values and mortgage rates are expected to follow suit.

According to Lautz, multiple factors come into play when attempting to purchase a home, work habits, support systems, and ready cash. On top of that, regardless of the buyers' age, the rising Gen Z generation, maturing millennials, or retiring baby boomers all face an extreme lack of housing inventory nationwide. "We have under 1 million units right now available on the market. That is the lowest level that we have recorded back to 1999 when we first started recording that data at NAR (National Association of Realtors)," she said.

According to Lautz, estimators say about 6.5 months of inventory is needed to have a balanced market. Instead, there is a strong seller's market. "They really are getting their asking price for that home," she said. In comparison to pre-pandemic 2019, Lautz reported a 30 percent increase in property prices and a 60 percent decrease in inventory.

Consumers who previously did not intend to purchase are now doing so, and COVID has altered

household requirements. "Maybe not a home office, but two home offices or a room for kids to zoom school. Perhaps it is a place with a bigger yard where they can grow their vegetables and then put them in their brand new kitchen," said Lautz.

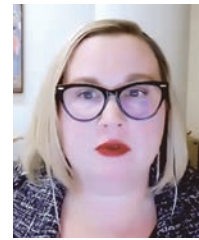
Younger millennials opt for more affordable markets, purchasing in suburban and small towns over urban areas. Aside from pricing and inventory, proximity to friends and family is another motivation. "We see that support systems have redefined themselves in the last two years, and people need their community around them in a different way than they had before," said Lautz.

Cash is king in the primary residence market. "What we see is that 17 percent of the market who are repeat buyers in the market are actually paying all cash as well. So that's an elevated share from what we have seen historically," said Lautz.

Homeownership is uneven, especially for Black and Latino communities. According to Lautz, among last year's successful homebuyers, Black homebuyers were more likely to have student loan debt than their white counterparts. "In fact, double that amount has student loan debt," said Lautz. Black homebuyers were more likely to be single-income households and single female buyers.

"We know that single female buyers overall are purchasing homes on a lower household income in comparison to single men. They are actually more active in the market ..., especially among first-time homebuyers. But they're making more financial sacrifices to be able to enter homeownership. They have to save for a longer period of time," Lautz said. "We also know that individuals who purchase homes are more likely to be purchasing multi-generational homes, and they're equally likely to be Hispanic Latino buyers."

Lautz said African American homebuyers are more likely, one in six, to tap their 401k for the down



Dr. Jessica Lautz,
Vice President of
Demographics
and Behavioral
Insights at the
National Association of Realtors.

SCREENSHOT PHOTOS

Seeking Shelter: Changes In Housing Preferences

FROM PAGE 8

payment. While it is positive that they are now homeowners and able to have the wealth gains ownership provides, they are degrading the wealth gains from their 401k.

The denial rate for mortgages for successful purchasers is also an issue. Compared to successful white purchasers, Black homeowners had a two-and-a-half-time higher denial rate. Although their debt-to-income ratio was low enough and they had enough savings in the bank, they were still denied a mortgage.

Lautz cited the importance of this because net worth has to do with homeownership and the nest egg that is built into the home. A home buyer, regardless of race, who bought a home ten years ago, the equity that they have earned on their home in the last ten years has a net worth of \$225,000. "When we think about homeownership or home prices increasing by 30 percent since 2019, we know that there is a lot of net worth and a lot of wealth gains that can be had for homeownership," she said.

Lautz dispelled the myths that young adults waste their money on avocado toast, transportation, and fancy cars. "Looking at the data, what we can see is that it is just not true," Lautz said.

Younger millennials under the age of 25 spend a disproportionate amount of their income on housing, accounting for 35 percent of their income, compared to younger boomers at the same age, who spent 29 percent on housing. Student loan payments and spending on education out-of-pocket costs impact young adults' incomes. Transportation costs for young adults have declined over time, with the use of public transit and rideshare services.

Another common misconception is that homebuyers must put down

Question and Answer Session

Q: Are there homes available for buyers below 50 percent AMI (Area Median Income)?

A: That's where we're seeing the real lack of housing inventory for affordable properties right now. Those homes are moving even faster, and some of that has to do with investors coming into the market.

Q: These figures that you presented, along with rising interest rates, signal that this is becoming a nation of renters due to the affordability of homeownership.

A: It really is a very difficult time to become a homeowner if you're not already. But with rising rates, what we have seen is a rush to lock in rates. I have to say, too, that even though we have rising prices and even though we're facing rising rates, the wealth gains that homeowners have is outnumbered by anything that could be done on paper.

Q: Why are homeowners not selling their homes as much as they have been in the past years?

A: People are staying in their homes longer. We have seen the tenure in recent years rise to as high as ten years in a home before selling... Traditionally, people have moved because something in their lives changed — they had a baby, they got married, or they got divorced. So, all of those demographic changes are happening on a lower scale. The other big change is that in the last year compared to 10 years ago, we've seen a drop in people who are moving because of work change because you can work remotely.

Q: If the baby boomers are the biggest generation demographically and they are passing away, why aren't their homes helping the inventory of properties for sale?

A: Not all the baby boomers are dying off. I will say, we are seeing that people are living longer and they're working longer ... We're seeing that perhaps it is a widow whose kids are all grown up, left and married, or just moved to different areas of the country. What we're seeing is that she's staying put in that single-family home.

20 percent of the purchase price. "When we look at the typical down payment of individuals, what we can see is that for first-time homebuyers, it's been six to seven percent," said Lautz. She went on to say that repeat buyers typically put down 17 percent. One of the great resources available to first-time homebuyers is looking at hud.gov because it has low down payment options and programs that are

available on a state and local basis...Also, an FHA loan is just 3 to 5 percent. "

Lautz concluded by talking about the use of agents. Homebuyers want that person's expertise when negotiating and closing. An agent can help sellers price their houses competitively, market them, close the deal, and move them onto their new property.

Submissions for Pet Connection

Our next Pet Connection will publish the last week of February, Feb. 23, 2022. Photo submissions are due by Sunday, Feb. 20, 2022. Sooner is better. Please complete a submission form and send us your photo(s). <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/pets/> or email editors@connectionnewspapers.com

We welcome short stories about how you got your pet, a noteworthy talent or anecdote about your pet, tales of the bonds between your family and your pet, plus drawings, paintings or other artwork of your pet by children or adults. Please tell us a little bit about your creature, identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description of what is happening in the photo, and include address and phone number (we will not publish your address or phone number, just your town name)



Special Edition: PET Connection

Publishes:

February 23, 2022

Ads submitted by:

February 17, 2022

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Obituary



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Daughter, Neighbor, Friend,
April 6, 1932 - February 4, 2021.

Our guardian angel now. In keeping with her generous, adventurous spirit, Mom is helping Georgetown University with their research; a memorial service will be held at a later date.

To celebrate her life now, please donate to the C&O Canal Trust, 142 W. Potomac St., Williamsport, MD 21795.

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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.

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 by 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.

Crochet enthusiasts meet to swap patterns and share techniques, Monday, Feb. 14, Thursday, Feb. 17, 9 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Drop in.

Volleyball, Monday, Feb. 14, 9 a.m., Tues., Feb. 15, 3 p.m., Wed., Feb. 16, 9 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop in.

Scale down, weight loss support group, private weigh-ins, interesting programs, Monday, Feb. 14, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop in.

Monday morning meet-up with fellow 55+ members, general conversation, BYOC (Bring Your Own Coffee), Feb. 14, Feb. 21 and 28, 10 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Drop in.

Ukulele lessons, basic strumming, Tuesday, Feb. 15, 4:30 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Taught by Sandy O'Shea. Registration # 912304-05.

55+ Live! Talk Show, preview programs, activities, demonstrations, meet 55+ staff, Tuesday, Feb. 15, noon. Registration # 912801-03.

Genealogy 101 with experienced genealogist Eileen Bogdanoff, Tuesday, Feb. 15, 11:30 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912402-18.

Acoustic afternoon with Ed Girovasi and Phil Rosen, featuring classical, pop, folk and blues, Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 912301-02.

Open art studio for artists to work at their own pace, no instruction, share ideas with other artists, Wednesday, Feb. 16, 10 a.m., Friday, Feb. 18, 11 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Drop in.

Documentary discussion, "Presidents Truman to Ford," Wednesday, Feb. 16, 1 p.m. Registration #912402-03.

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ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THRU FEB. 25

Changing Perspectives. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Gallery Underground, 2100 Crystal Drive, Arlington. Gallery Underground's Focus Gallery in February presents Changing Perspectives, a national juried show with works from 32 artists from across the United States. Artists for this exhibition were invited to present art depicting literal interpretations of a changed perspective: unusual, off-kilter or innovative perspective as seen by the viewer, or figurative or symbolic changes to our collective perspectives. Artwork for this show was selected by juror and artist Scott Hutchinson. Additionally, the Main Gallery features new works by gallery members, in media including oil, acrylic, pastel, watermedia, sculpture, glass, and ceramics. Visit the website: <https://www.arlingtonartistsalliance.org>.

STARTING JAN. 31

Monday Morning Music (MMM). 10-11:30 a.m. Via Zoom. Begins its spring semester 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 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.

9th Street Quartet Performs Rush Hour Concert: 'Dances and Trances'

Friday, Feb. 18 at 6:30 PM

St. George's Episcopal Church, 915 N Oakland Street, Arlington, VA 22203
In this second concert of their 2021-22 Rush Hour concert series, 9th Street Quartet will perform String Quartet No. 5 by the great Brazilian composer Hector Villa-Lobos, as well as music by Elena Kats-Chernin, Arvo Pärt, Caroline Shaw and Charlton Singleton. 9SQ is the quartet-in-residence for 9th Street Chamber Music, LLC. Their Rush Hour concert series features inventive programming that highlights the work of present-day composers alongside the richly vast traditional chamber music repertoire. Concerts are intended to feel informal, a place to come and enjoy beautiful music with insightful commentary. Tickets for 'Dances and Trances' are \$20 and include a complimentary glass of wine for 21+ audience members. They can be purchased at the door or in advance at 9thstreetchambermusic.com.

Miró Quartet to Give Master Class to 9th Street Chamber Music's Youth Musicians

Saturday, Feb. 19 at 2:30 PM

St. George's Episcopal Church, 915 N Oakland Street, Arlington, VA 22203
9th Street Chamber Music announces a master class featuring the Miró Quartet and members of its youth String Quartet Intensive. Musicians will be coached by Miró with an open audience format, and all are welcome to attend for free. Formed in 1995, the Miró Quartet has been awarded first prize at several competitions including the Banff International String Quartet Competition and Naumburg Chamber Music Competition. They are the quartet-in-residence of the Butler School of Music at the University of Texas, Austin. 9SCM's String Quartet Intensive is an advanced youth chamber music program for musicians in grades 8-12. Members are highly engaged in experiencing the personal and musical growth that is inherent in the collaborative nature of chamber music. For more information, visit 9thstreetchambermusic.com and miroquartet.com



Changing Perspectives can be seen at Gallery Underground in Arlington now through Feb. 25, 2022.

THURSDAY/FEB. 10

Great-Grandfather James Parks. 7-8:30 p.m. At Reinsch Library Auditorium, Marymount University, 2807 North Glebe Road, Arlington. James Parks was born enslaved on the Custis plantation in 1843. He is the only person to have been born on the property to also be buried in what would ultimately become Arlington National Cemetery. James Parks' great granddaughter, Tamara Moore, will tell us about him. Visit the website: <https://arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org/> The event will be in person and via Zoom. To attend through Zoom, register at: <https://forms.gle/vZDSy-EU8BZaopkeT6>

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>.

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Apparently, the Time Wasn't Now



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I thought those quarterly scans that I discussed last week came around a little too quick. However, sometimes (heck, oftentimes) life gets to be a bit of a jumble and cooler heads don't always prevail. I was both right and wrong in last week's column. I was right to be surprised by the need timing-wise, to get scanned again so soon. And I was wrong thinking the scans were my usual and customary quarterly lies. They were not. Before the scheduled appointments, I called Member Services to get some clarity. Sure enough, these scans were not the typical, recurring quarterly CT and Bone scans that I wrote about last week coming around so quickly. They were different. They were two MRI scans, one of the brain and the other for the lower abdomen. Scans that I have annually but have no sense when that annual cycle occurs. Of course, the appointments were set by my oncologist - with me, after our last post-scan meeting, but I had totally forgot. Fortunately, I remembered in time, and so far, the results indicate no activity/complication. I am not free and clear by any means, it just means, to quote "Forest, Forest Gump:" "One less thing." News for which I am exceedingly grateful and amazed - and never take for granted.

The MRI scans will take about 35 to 40 minutes each, so long as I remain still during the study. Still, it means lying down and locked in a face cage and then loaded into a claustrophobic tube to endure bangs and knocks and all sort of other auditory interference while the resonance is imaging. The first time I had an MRI 13 years ago, I was loaded into the tube and immediately pressed the panic button to unload. When I slid back outside the tube, the technician advised me to keep my eyes closed. And for 13 years, annually, I have followed her advice. So long as I don't open my eyes and see how close my face is to the machine (inches) and think about how much of my body has been inserted into this tube (almost entirely), I can endure the scan. I've never been given any medication to keep me calm, not an uncommon occurrence for patients (like my father) who couldn't be so confined for so long in such a small place.

But none of that really bothers me. What bothered me was how unprepared I was for the scan appointment. Usually, I know what's going on in my care. The fact - which became a concern, that this time, I was unaware of the procedure and the timing. And after I spoke with Member Services, I realized I had cause for that concern. My most recent quarterly scans were during the last week of December, a mere five weeks prior to this most recent scan appointment. Yet I had no sense of the time/recurrence but instead thought quite mistakenly that it was time for the quarterly scans and got a bit agitated that it seemed to come around so quickly. Boy was I wrong - and right.

But I'll try to take it in stride. After all, being in treatment has its struggles. Invariably, there are complications and confusions. As I was advised to do so years ago: "Blame the cancer."

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

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