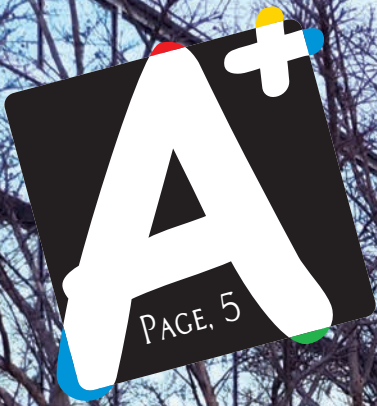


The Arlington Connection



Students and teachers were finally let out of the Yorktown school building on Feb. 10, holding their hands in the air until they had cleared the area and went to a “safe area” where they would be transported to another “safe site.”

Where Dinosaurs Play the Organ

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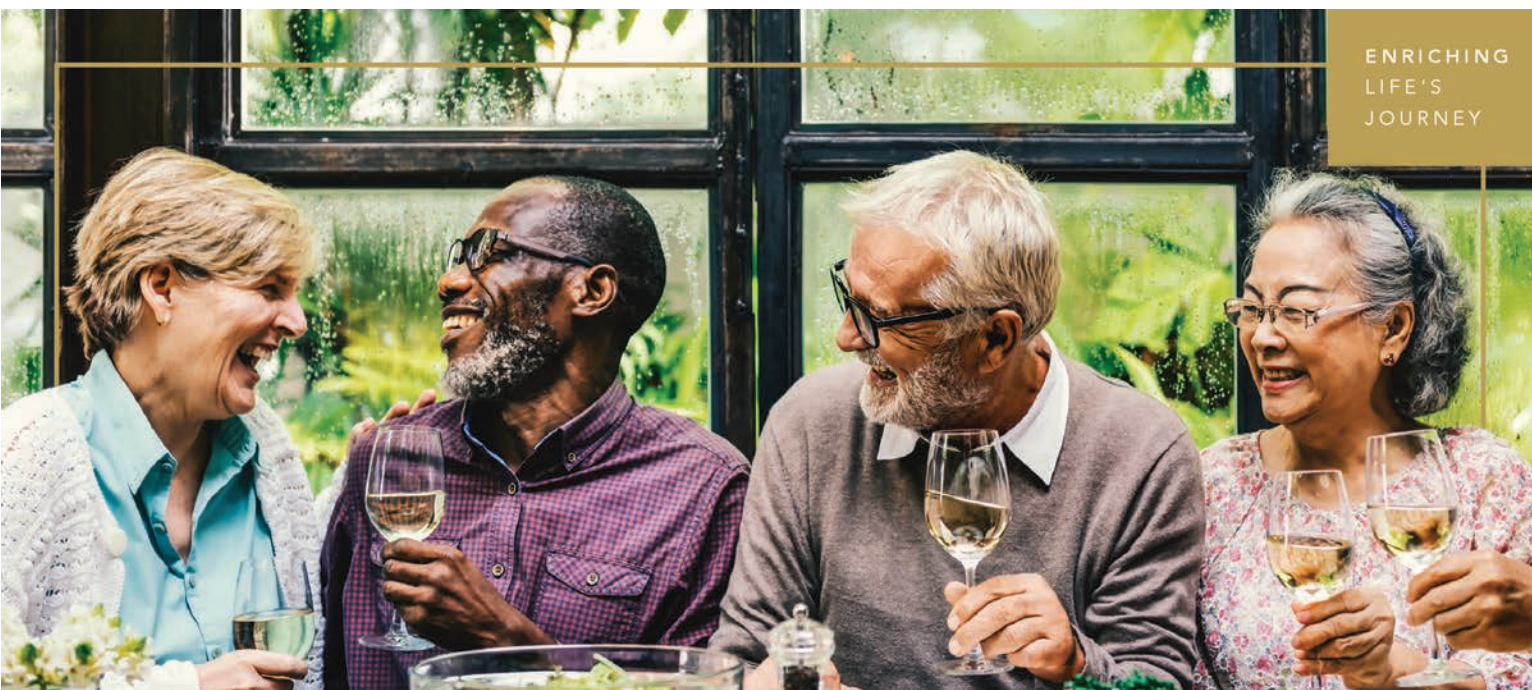
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NEWS



PHOTO CREDIT: CRYSTAL HARDIN

St. George's Episcopal Church, Virginia Square, dedicated its magnificent new pipe organ last weekend, with festivities attracting over 1,000 people including 50 community children. On Feb. 12, the children were introduced to the huge musical wind-whistle machine by dinosaurs! www.saintgeorgeschurch.org



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News

Arlington County Police Respond To Threat at Yorktown High School

Lockdown lasted more than three hours.

By EDEN BROWN
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

At 1:32 p.m. on February 10, ten women swimming laps at the Yorktown High School pool were told by an anxious looking lifeguard to get out of the pool quickly, hunker down in the locker room and await further instructions. Two thousand students were in class or on their way to class as they were also pulled into classrooms and locked down. There was an immediate sense that this was not a drill.

One teacher is still asking herself whether she did the right thing by not unlocking the door to her classroom when one student, arriving late, knocked to come in. She had practiced the drill: quickly pull kids in, lock the door, and don't open it. Should she risk the lives of the 20 students in class? Or save one student who was out in the open? Another teacher was overheard as she left the building saying when she went to lock the door, it wouldn't lock.

If you've never been locked down in a school because of a shooter or bomb threat, it means you are locked IN. For hours. And there is plenty of time to think. In at least some parts of the school, there was no wifi or cell phone coverage, and in a society where twitter and texts constantly update, it was like being at the Superbowl and no one will tell you the score. Scary rumors were flying — it was a student who had tried to commit suicide, a student who had a gun in his locker - and there was no certainty the knock on the door was not threatening.

None of the rumors were true, of course, and the threat — that an armed student had two hostages in a bathroom — turned out to be false. Arlington Public Schools Director of Communications Frank Bellavia, said any threat to a school is treated the same way, whether it is a bomb threat, a hostage threat or a shooter.

The Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) and APS work closely on a threat "SOP" (Standard Operating Procedure). That SOP does not include locking down cell and wifi networks, but where you are located in the school can make a big difference in terms of access to the network.

Police responded quickly. The threat came in at 1:26 p.m. and lockdown was at 1:32 for the swimmers. Ashley Savage, ACPD Public Information Officer, said the response to a threat is tactical in nature and taken very seriously.

"We regularly train for these incidents;



Patrol cars blocked all the exits from Yorktown High and several streets adjoining the school's campus for more than 3 hours on Feb. 10, because the main office received an anonymous call from the suspect who claimed to be a student, making threats to 'shoot up' the school.



Students and teachers were finally let out of the Yorktown school building on Feb. 10, holding their hands in the air until they had cleared the area and went to a "safe area" where they would be transported to another "safe site."

PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

Police Continue to Investigate

Arlington County Police Department continues to investigate a telephone threat to Yorktown High School. At approximately 1:26 p.m. on Feb. 10, police were dispatched to the 5200 block of Yorktown Boulevard for the report of a threat. The reporting party advised dispatch that the Main Office had received an anonymous call from a suspect who claimed to be a student and who was making threats to 'shoot up' the school.

The school was placed on lockdown as police responded to investigate the credibility of the threat.

Upon arrival, officers made telephone contact with the suspect who reported he was armed, had taken two hostages inside a bathroom in the school and was making threats to harm them. A perimeter was established and officers searched the school's bathrooms and found no evidence of the suspect's claims. Officers then completed a cautionary search of the school and evacuated students who were transported by bus to a nearby location for parent reunification. No injuries were reported and no evidence of a crime was located inside the school.

"Yesterday's response highlights how seriously the Arlington County Police Department takes reports of potential violence within our community," said Chief Andy Penn. "I commend our officers and public safety partners on their immediate and coordinated response to ensure the safety of our community. I recognize incidents involving threats have significant impacts on the wellbeing of all involved. I want to thank the Yorktown High School students, staff, parents and community members for their patience and support during yesterday's incident. We will continue to work collaboratively with Arlington Public Schools to ensure the safety of students and staff."

During the course of the investigation, officers determined the call originated from out of state and there was no credible threat to the safety and security of the students or staff. This remains an active criminal investigation and anyone with information that could assist with the investigation is asked to contact the Arlington County Police Department's Tip Line at 703-228-4180 or ACPDTipline@arlingtonva.us. Information may also be reported anonymously through the Arlington County Crime Solvers hotline at 1-866-411-TIPS (8477)

we implement a response based on what the threat is and we don't share a lot of details with the public." The police procedure, even the number of police on the scene, is proprietary and kept confidential because the responders hope to hold the advantage in the situation. But there were a lot of police, and they were heavily equipped.

"In this case, we used assets from across the police department to respond at Yorktown, including the SWAT team," Savage said. Savage could not provide more on the suspect who phoned in the threat because it is an ongoing investigation. The ACPD does believe the suspect who phoned in the threat did so from out of state, a fact they were able to determine in the conversation he had with police officials. "The safety of all concerned is our priority," said Savage.

She highlighted a video on the ACPD website which explains how the public can prepare for events like a lockdown: how to respond to an active shooter <https://vimeo.com/473800825/2dcffde3d5>. Additionally, Arlington's Public Safety Communications and Emergency Management officers a Be the Help: Until Help Arrives course. <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Pro>

SEE LOCKDOWN LASTED, PAGE 11

Fixing the Virginia Employment Commission

BY SEN. ADAM P. EBBIN

An important role of any legislative office is that of constituent service. Before COVID19, we received a variety of requests regarding various state agencies or affiliates, including some regarding unemployment. The pandemic highlighted a dysfunctional system under immense stress at the Virginia Employment Commission like never before. The VEC has been underfunded for years because their main source of funding is based on a federal formula that provides funds based on our state's unemployment rate, which has been historically low. This impacted their ability to do long planned, much-needed system upgrades. During some months my office received nearly 100 requests for assistance with claims. As the pandemic continued, the situations of constituents grew more dire as the delay of their benefits created broad repercussions.

It quickly became clear that there were several recurring issues at the VEC. First was inconsistent communication. Constituents received emails from the VEC constituent service team stating that benefits may be denied if they did not call back within a specific time frame, however, the number provided by the VEC rarely connected to anyone. Some constituents received conflicting information

from different VEC employees depending on who they spoke to. Constituents received emails from constituent service team members stating that benefits may be denied if they did not call back within a specific time frame, however, the number provided rarely connected to anyone. Some constituents received conflicting information from different constituent service members, resulting in confusion and time lost for constituents. Additionally, many constituents who come to us have been told that all their claim issues had been resolved, only to wait weeks for benefits to arrive, and meanwhile are not able to contact anyone at the VEC through phone or email to determine why they are not receiving their benefits. We even heard from some constituents with concerns regarding fraud that occurred on their claims or that misused their identity. Some of these issues were prevalent enough that the VEC was sued in Federal Court April 2021 for delayed payments.

My staff and I have met with some of the hardworking team members at the VEC to get answers on specific cases and learn how their systems operate. There is much work to be done to get the VEC running smoothly and efficiently for Virginians.



Sen. Adam Ebbin

I am the Vice-Chair of the Commission for Unemployment Compensation. Our official mandate is to monitor and evaluate Virginia's unemployment compensation system relative to the economic health of the Commonwealth. This past

summer, I insisted on a meeting of the commission to probe on issues outside that regulatory purview, during which we heard from the then-VEC Commissioner and I asked pointed questions about the transparency of communications and payments to claimants. I was far from satisfied with the pace of response from the VEC to the clear need and obvious calls for changes. I've written to Commissioners of the VEC, Secretaries of Labor, and other officials on the issue over the past year requesting prompt changes and solutions. Most recently, newly-appointed Commissioner Carrie Roth provided in-depth answers to specific questions that will allow my office to better assist constituents coming to us with concerns regarding fraud. I'm glad to see that in this area, Governor Youngkin is on the right track. This is a bipartisan issue that requires pragmatic solutions.

To that end, there are several bills this session based on recommendations made in a thorough study by the well respected Joint Audit and Legislative Review Commission (JLARC) on the VEC process.

The final report offered comprehensive legislative and executive recommendations. I introduced legislation to expedite the process to bring employers filing forms with the VEC online and

require the VEC to plan for a pilot program that aims to reduce the confusion and complexity of the separation reporting process. My office worked with JLARC and the VEC on this legislation, which aims to accomplish two specific recommendations from their report. I am co-sponsoring an even more comprehensive bill with Sen. Jeremy McPike (D-Woodbridge) that implements further JLARC recommendations regarding administrative reforms and reporting methods. The bill requires the VEC to calculate and report important metrics and maintain an unemployment insurance Resiliency Plan for future spikes in unemployment. The legislation also creates within the Commission on Unemployment Compensation, a subcommittee that will be responsible for monitoring the VEC's management of the unemployment insurance program. The bill would also clarify the appeals process and establish a workgroup on staffing. I am also co-sponsoring legislation with Senator Bryce Reeves (R-Spotsylvania) aiming to fight fraud. That bill would require certain verifications of identity for claimants, as well as an annual report from the VEC on fraudulent payments.

I take VEC complaints very seriously — there are constituents whose livelihoods depend on the status of their claims. Some constituents are at risk of losing their homes or are facing hunger. My Legislative Aide, Mollie Montague, has assisted hundreds of constituents with VEC cases. If you are struggling with an issue at the VEC, contact our office at district30@senate.virginia.gov and we will do our best to assist you.

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



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)

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Black History Month: Filling in the Gaps

African American parents are giving their children accurate and comprehensive lessons on Black history.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

When Tracy Grant's fifth-grade son Hunter came home from school one day during Black History Month several years ago, she recalls his recounting of a lesson that he'd just learned. He said that his social studies teacher told the class that most slaves were treated well because their owners saw them as an expensive investment. Grant was speechless.

"I was baffled by that level of ignorance. Did that teacher not know that slaves could have their finger chopped off for knowing how to write or that some small slave children were fed slop in the same trough that were used to feed pigs on the plantation?" asked Grant, a registered nurse and Springfield mother of two. "That was when I decided that if I wanted my children to learn about Black history, I would have to teach them myself."

In the age of racial tension and restrictions around the teaching of African American history, black parents are serving as history tutors to ensure that their children receive a comprehensive and unbridled education on the atrocities, both past and present, faced by members of the African diaspora. A few local parents share their ideas.

"I don't focus on blaming or bad mouthing anyone, but I make sure my children know about the racist things that happened in the past," Anderson said. "They have to know our country's past actions so that they can understand what is going on today and why. Minimizing the realities of slavery does a disservice to not only Black students, but to society as a whole. How can we even begin to deal with racial problems in this country if children grow up with inaccurate views of the tragedies of our past?"

From slavery and lynching to the Jim Crow era and the Civil Rights



PHOTO COURTESY OF VONETIA HARTLEY

African American parents and grandparents, like Vonetia Hartley, pictured here with three of her grandchildren, are giving their offspring in-depth lessons during Black History Month.

Movement, Grant uses trips to historical sites to give her children a lesson in Black history. "When I take my children and their friends to Mount Vernon, I don't go on the guided tour," she said. "I give them my own tour and explain our history. No matter how the media portrays us today, our children

overviews. "Most people think of Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks when they think of Black history, but there are so many more people of color who have made great contributions to this country," she said. "Everyone should visit the African American History Museum. Even though we've made strides, stereotypes and feelings of victimization have caused members of our race to have a sense of hopelessness."

"I have to make sure that my children know about Black heroes

"Most people think of Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks when they think of Black history, but there are so many more people of color who have made great contributions to this country,

— Tracy Anderson, mother of three

need to understand that we come from hardworking ancestors."

As an African American parent, Gloria Anderson, a Chevy Chase, Maryland mother of three, believes that it is her job to offer her children in-depth lessons rather than broad

like Dr. Charles Drew, continued Anderson, referring to an African American surgeon who was known for his lifesaving blood plasma research.

Many Post-Civil War periods in
SEE BLACK HISTORY, PAGE 10

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Our Winter Visitors – Waterfowl

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE CONNECTION

While landlubbers shiver from the cold and retreat to the indoors, out on Northern Virginia's rivers and ponds, thousands of waterfowl paddle, dabble, dive and dine. As North America's northern lakes freeze, even more waterfowl come south. Birds migrate to use resources, especially food, that are seasonally abundant and to avoid places where resources are scarce or weather is very harsh.

Describing the area's wintering waterfowl, Larry Meade, president of the Northern Virginia Bird Club, recently wrote, "They are usually fairly easy to find since they are often swimming around out in the open. There's no need to wait for them to hop out of a bush."

Swans, ducks and geese are waterfowl, birds generally with webbed feet and flat bills. Waterfowl require aquatic habitats like rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands or oceans. Many species gather in groups, sometimes called "rafts."

The Audubon Society of Northern Virginia (ASNV) identified 25 species in the 2021 annual winter survey. This year's survey is now underway.

Waterfowl are excellent indicators of the health of the aquatic environment, notes Greg Butcher, ASNV Vice President.

Swans

Swans are the largest waterfowl species. They have long necks and heavy bodies, fly with slow wingbeats and necks outstretched. Tchaikovsky must have been inspired by their beauty. Think of those "Swan Lake" ballerinas.

In December, tundra swans arrive in the area with up to 500 gathering off Mason Neck in southern Fairfax County. They are especially striking with a black bills, straight neck, a six-to seven-foot wingspan and high-pitched, bugling calls. American explorer Meriwether Lewis called them "whistling swans" because



Volunteers conduct waterfowl surveys on the Potomac River every winter.

their wings "whistle" when flying. They feed on aquatic plants, tubers, invertebrates, mollusks, snails, mussels and shellfish. In March, they return to their breeding grounds in Alaska and Canada's Hudson Bay.

Ducks

Waterfowl watchers delight in spotting many duck species in area waters in winter. In "duck world," there are generally two types – dabblers and divers. Dabbling ducks feed in shallow water by putting their head in the water or dabbling to feed on vegetation, larvae and insects. With their head down, their butts poke straight up. Some, like northern shovelers, skim the surface of the water for food. Diving ducks dive into the water, feed on clams and fish, and can propel themselves underwater.

Wood ducks, mallards, northern shovelers, gadwalls, northern pintails and American black ducks are all dabbling ducks. Diving ducks include lesser scaups, buffleheads, ruddy ducks, mergansers and canvasbacks.

Dixie Sommers, an avid bird watcher, likes to watch the three species of mergansers in the area, especially the hooded merganser. The male has a striking white "hammerhead" crest or hood bordered with black; a black face, neck and back; a white breast and chestnut-colored sides with accents of white stripes. The female

has a cinnamon-colored crest. Mergansers also have an extra, transparent eyelid called a "nictitating membrane" which protects their eyes like goggles when they are under water.

Geese

Geese are long-necked birds, larger than ducks, that feed by tipping up or grazing. They usually gather in flocks. Most people have seen Canada geese grazing on golf courses or big grassy areas. Present in Northern Virginia year-round, they have black necks and beaks, brown breasts and white cheeks. While many people do not welcome the "deposits" they leave behind, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter liked to watch them fly over from the White House roof to listen to "a sound primeval in its tone and rhythm." He watched "long wavering V's, breasts transformed to brilliance by the lights we would have dimmed," he wrote.

Numbers Vary

Winter waterfowl numbers can vary for several reasons. If northern lakes do not freeze, water-dependent birds may not come south. Problems on the breeding grounds can reduce winter populations.

Algal blooms, sedimentation and heavy rains that cause murky water can block sunlight and impede the growth of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). These aquatic plants, also called "underwater



A pair of Wood ducks.



Many bird watchers find a spotting scope useful in studying waterfowls' features.

grasses," grow in the water up to the surface and provide refuge for small fish and shellfish. The roots, shoots and seeds are high carbohydrate food for many waterfowl species. "SAV is essential to waterfowls' winter survival. If they can't find it, they move on," explains Larry Cartwright, a veteran bird-watcher and bird survey leader.

Spring Stirrings

In the winter, males' colors are often striking and females' more subdued. In late winter and early spring, hormones start bubbling, the birds' colors brighten and courtship begins, behavior that can be mesmerizing for people. Male buffleheads, for example, swim in front of females and rapidly bob their heads up and down. Male hooded mergansers raise their crest and jerk their heads backwards, almost touching their back. As they return their heads to the upright position,

they make a frog-like, croaking call. Females bob their heads and give "a hoarse gack," says Cornell University's All about Birds.

How and Where to See Waterfowl

Viewing waterfowl can be challenging since the birds may not be close to the shoreline and diving ducks constantly go underwater and pop back up. Novices may want to go out with experienced birders. Having a spotting scope helps one see colors and wing patterns and varied shapes and sizes of heads and beaks.

Popular Potomac River waterfowl-watching sites include Gravelly Point, the Washington Sailing Marina, Jones Point Park, Belle Haven Park, the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, Riverside Park and Mason Neck State Park and Wildlife Refuge. Also River Park in McLean; and Riley's Lock and Violette's Lock along the C&O Canal National Historical Park in Potomac

People should never disturb or feed waterfowl. Crackers, popcorn and bread bits, for example, are human food, not bird food.

Other Water Birds

There are other duck-like, swimming birds in area waters, in winter and year-round, that technically, are not called "waterfowl," birds like grebes, cormorants and American coots. Keen observers have spotted loons and shorebirds off and on, probably migrating through.



Seeing a common loon in the area is especially exciting, like this one snapped by Ed Eder, former president of the Friends of Dyke Marsh.



A pair of Hooded Mergansers.



Tundra Swans in flight.

NEWS



Bill and Ruth Cleveland have been married for 48 years.

Marion Brunken and Susan Haskew, together for five years, will celebrate three years of marriage in July.



Jackie and Andres Maldonado will celebrate six years of marriage on Feb. 20.



Jamie and Becca Branch, together for nine years, have been married for almost three years.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/THE ARLINGTON



Peter and Jenny Wintermute have been married for 15 years.



Bob Eifert and Michael Curry have been together for 45 years.



Angeli and Max Miller have been married 17 years.

Love Is in the Air Couples share their secrets to success.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE CONNECTION

As Valentine's Day approaches on Feb. 14, the second to be celebrated during the pandemic, couples across the city are making plans to honor their spouses, partners and sweethearts. But just as the pandemic produced myriad challenges for businesses and families, so too were couples faced with changing dynamics in their relationships. Seven Alexandria couples share their secrets to keeping their love alive.

Marion Brunken and Susan Haskew

Marion: "We met at a function at Alex-Renew five years ago. We chatted about living in Del Ray and in time realized we have things in common like hiking, camping and gardening. On July 20, we will celebrate three years of marriage. The pandemic showed us even more what a good match we are. I'm a better person with Susan."

Susan: "I love that Marion is an outdoor person. She is active, happy and energetic and wants to do things all the time. We both enjoy a lot of the same things and that is

important to me. You have to keep a relationship exciting. We are just very lucky to have found each other."

Bill and Ruth Cleveland

Ruth: "We have been married 48 years and now have eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. My advice to newlyweds is to be best friends first, then lovers, then continue to work together. Marriage is a partnership. Share everything, be open to each other and no lies."

Bill: "The secret to a long and happy marriage is to take things one day at a time."

Jackie and Andres Maldonado

Andres: "What is not great about Jackie? She is the most devoted mother and wife. She is everything to our kids which makes her everything to me."

Jackie: "I love that Andres is so hard working and all he does for our family and to

"Trust and the ability to communicate are key to a successful relationship."

— Bob Eifert on his 45-year relationship with Michael Curry

provide for us. The pandemic with kids has been a huge curve ball as was the transition from one to two kids. But Andres is very funny and so much fun to be around and that gets us through. We will be married six years on Feb. 20. Nothing exciting planned. Maybe we will order food once the kids are asleep."

Jamie and Becca Branch

Jamie: "Becca has a very big heart and keeps me in line. I can always tell from the look in her eyes when I need to do something. My best advice to other couples is to be patient, listen, and spend time together. Find something you both love to do and do it together. And it helps if you learn to cook."

Becca: "We met in college at a bar at Ole Miss. We have been together almost nine years and married for almost three. It has been great to share so much time together. What I love most about Jamie is that he is very sincere and very patient ... and I need some-

one with a lot of patience."

Bob Eifert and Michael Curry

Bob: "We have been together for 45 years now. Gay marriage was not legal at the time and over the years marriage was never a huge issue for us. But as we approached retirement we learned that we had to get married in order to share retirement benefits."

So after being together for 38 years, we got married and in July we will celebrate seven years of marriage. Trust and the ability to communicate are key to a successful relationship."

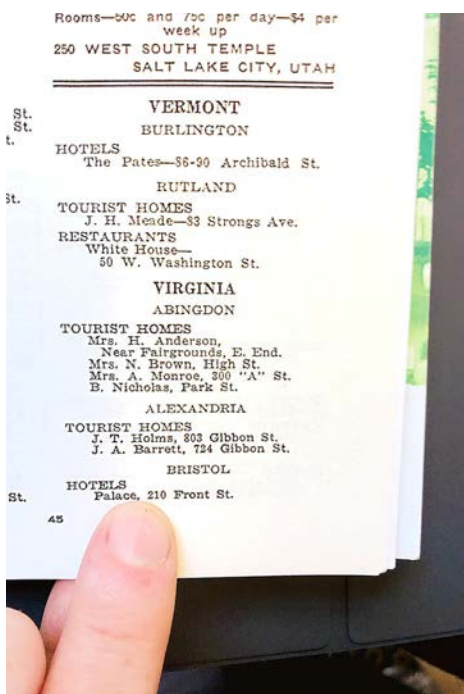
Michael: "We have been in love for many, many years and had some difficult times but it is important to believe in each other and support each other."

Angeli and Max Miller

Max: "We went to school together at Loudoun High School but didn't get together until we met after college on the bike trail. We have been married for 17 years now and my favorite thing about Angeli is her organization and planning skills."

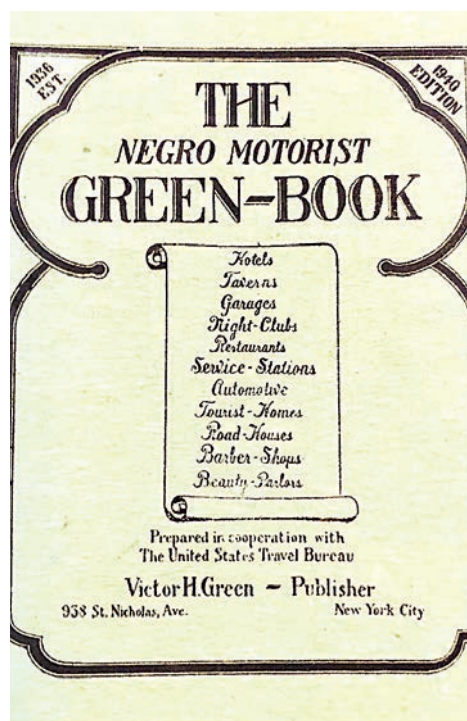
SEE LOVE IS IN THE AIR, PAGE 11

HISTORY



MICHAEL LEE POPE/THE CONNECTION

Alexandria had only two listings in the Green book, both tourist homes at the intersection of Gibbon Street and South Columbus Street in the Bottoms neighborhood.



MICHAEL LEE POPE/THE CONNECTION

The Green Book was created by New York City mailman Victor Hugo Green in the early 1930s. New editions were published until the 1960s.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/THE CONNECTION

Del. Mike Mullin (D-93) looks through a 1940 edition of the Green Book, which identified safe places for Black travelers in the days of segregation.

Commemorating Hidden History

Local 'Green Book' locations may soon be designated historic sites.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

In the 1930s, traveling while Black could be dangerous. Service stations and hotels were segregated, and people traveling for work or pleasure needed to know where it was safe to pump gas or stay the night. Enter New York City mailman Victor Hugo Green. He started publishing the Negro Motorist Green Book in 1936, documenting destination sites for an emerging African-American middle class who owned cars. Now members of the General Assembly are considering a bill that would identify and commemorate all Virginia locations listed in the Green Book editions from the 1930 until the 1960s, when it ceased publication.

"The history of being an African American in Virginia is a history of all Virginians," said Del. Michael Mullin (D-93). "You're talking about a history of people who are still alive today and yet somehow that history is already being lost."

Some cities have many Green Book locations while others have only a few. Richmond, for example, has listings for two hotels, three service stations, a barber shop and a restaurant. Alexandria, on the other hand, has only two listings — both identified as "tourist homes" at the intersection Gibbon Street and South Columbus Street. Councilman John Taylor Chapman, owner of the Manumission Tour Company, says a "tourist home" was essentially a 1940s-era Airbnb.

"That's the Bottoms neighborhood, which is one of the earlier African-American communities in Alexandria," said Chapman.



PHOTO BY BOYD WALKER

The building at 803 Gibbon Street was one of two Alexandria 'tourist homes' listed in the Green Book.

"It's not too far from Alfred Street Baptist Church, and the Odd Fellows Hall is right up the street. So this is one of the central locations for African Americans in the city at that time."

THE BILL TO IDENTIFY and commemorate all of Virginia's Green Book sites began as a casual conversation on the House floor during some down time. Del. Jeion Ward (D-92) was reminiscing with Mullin about the beaches in their part of Hampton Roads. Ward mentioned a hotel that was listed in

the Green Book as a place where visiting African American performers would stay.

"Big stars, they were stars to us. They would come down, and there was only one hotel that they could stay at the beach," said Ward. "That was the one that was all the fun. It was fun."

As they talked, Mullin realized that he knows the location where the hotel was located. The building is gone, and there's nothing there to commemorate it. That's when the idea struck him: What if that location had a historical marker explaining what

happened at that location and what we might learn from it.

"A 70-bed hotel that had some of the most prominent African American singers and entertainers in the country," said Mullin. "And that place no longer exists. In fact, there's no record of it."

The first step in commemorating all the places will be identifying them. The Green Book was in publication from the 30s to the 60s, and the Library of Virginia has none of

"The history of being an African American in Virginia is a history of all Virginians. You're talking about a history of people who are still alive today and yet somehow that history is already being lost."

— Del. Michael Mullin (D-93)

them. Ward owns a copy from 1940 that has a couple of pages of Virginia sites. So if lawmakers approve Mullin's bill, the first step would be for the Department of Historic Resources to gather all the editions and identify the sites so they can go about the work of publicizing them and educating the public about this almost-lost chapter of Virginia history.

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CALENDAR



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

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 perspective.

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>.

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.

FEB. 18-19

9th Street Chamber Music. At St. George's Episcopal Church, 915 N Oakland Street, Arlington. On Friday, February 18 at 6:30 p.m., 9th Street Quartet hosts its second concert of the 2021-22 Rush Hour series, "Dances and Trances." It 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. Tickets are \$20 and include a complimentary glass of wine for 21+ audience members. On Saturday, February 19 at 2:30 p.m., they will be hosting a master class featuring the Miró Quartet and members of the 9th Street Chamber Music youth String Quartet Intensive. Musicians will be coached by Miró with an open audience format, and all are welcome to attend for free. Visit 9thstreetchambermusic.com.

FLOURISHING AFTER 55

Contact: Judy Massabny, jmasa@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.

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.

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.

Estate planning beyond wills and trusts with Elder Law Attorney Ed Zetlin, Wednesday, Feb. 16, 11 a.m. Registration # 912404-02.

Movies and critics, discussion to follow showing of "Just Mercy," Thursday, Feb. 17, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 912804-03.

Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids

demonstration by audiologist Dr. Amy Bernstein, Lesner Hearing Center, Thursday, Feb. 17, 1:30 p.m. Registration # 912500-12.

Library of Virginia's genealogy series continues with how to search marriage records, Thursday Feb. 17, 3 p.m. Registration # 912400-14.

Line dance, easy for beginners, Thursday, Feb. 17, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center; Friday, Feb. 18, 10:30 a.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Drop in.

Acoustic Hour, live music by Carl Gold, Friday, Feb. 18, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 912301-04.

Movie matinee, "The Big Sick," Friday, Feb. 18, 2:30 p.m., Lubber Run Community Center. Registration # 912804-01.

Fast paced walking group walks a two to five mile loop, including some hills, leaving from Aurora Hills 55+ Center, Friday, Feb. 18, 9 a.m. Drop in.

Happiness 101, tips on how to keep smiling, presented by Paul Singh, Tuesday, Feb. 22, 2 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 912500-07.

SEE FLOURISHING, PAGE 10

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NEWS

Black History Month: Filling in the Gaps

FROM PAGE 5

African American history, such as the forced sterilization of African American women, are omitted from mainstream teachings, says Anderson. "Reading historical fiction gives children a sense of the psychological damage that African Americans have endured throughout history," she said. "I make sure that all of my children read books like 'Like Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry' by Mildred Taylor. It paints a real picture of what life was like for sharecroppers.

There are some children who grow up thinking that sharecropping helped Black people get on

their feet and create a better life for themselves after slavery ended. In reality, Whites used lynching, beatings and burnings to intimidate sharecroppers so they stayed chained to the land without the possibility of improving their lives."

Presenting Black history in a way that young children can understand, preschool teacher Vonecia Hartley, Alexandria mother of three adult children and four grandchildren, uses the achievements of prominent African Americans figures to help her students and grandchildren realize that there are no limits to what they

can achieve. "I want them to understand the importance of knowing who they are and how unique they are," she said. "I want them to know that there are so many options in their future. Whether they want to be president, governor, doctor, police officer, airplane pilot or inventor, they can become it."

Extending lessons on African American history beyond 28 days in February is what Grant encourages. "It should be woven into our everyday lives so that it's not seen as something special to think about in February," Grant said. "Our ancestors made contributions that affect us every day."

FLOURISHING AFTER 55

FROM PAGE 9

What's on my plate? Build healthy eating habits, one goal at a time, Tuesday, Feb. 22, 2 p.m., Lubber

Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912501-04.

Resolving to downsize, how to get started, Wednesday, Feb. 23, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center.

Presented by brokers from NoVa House and Home. Registration

912404-04.

Intro to line dancing, basic steps, Wednesday, Feb. 23, 10 a.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Drop in.

Youthful movement dance helps to improve balance, strengthen core, low impact, Wednesday, Feb. 23, 2 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop in.

Library of Virginia's genealogy series concludes with how to research

probate records and wills, Thursday, Feb. 24, 3 p.m. Registration # 912400-15.

The story behind the GEICO cave-man, Thursday, Feb. 24, 1:30 p.m. Presented by Pat Dubin, GEICO's then creative director. Registration # 912400-22.

Fall prevention and home safety tips, Friday, Feb. 25, 11 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912502-03.

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Employment

Advertising agency looking for someone to assist with temporary admin job. 30- 40 hours a week. Data entry and Customer Service. Old Town office although much of the work can be done from home. Must be Microsoft knowledgeable. Attention to details / deadlines is important. Hours are flexible. If interested, please email aiglesias@srcpmedia.com



Let us know about an upcoming event

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

Lockdown Lasted More Than Three Hours

FROM PAGE 3

grams/Emergency/UHA

One of the areas of concern for some of those who experienced the lockdown was the inability to call for help in the event of a crisis in the lockdown unrelated to the threat.

There was no radio on the one APS aquatic staff in the locker room, and no ability to call or signal. One woman who was a teacher in a different school suggested a button that could be activated in an emergency was available in some schools. If there were a heart attack or an injury, the fact could be signaled. The inability to communicate was so stark that when the sound of the intercom clicking came on, they wondered if it was a message in morse code.

Generally, as the lockdown came to an end, the school officials, teachers, students, and pool personnel were impressed with the reaction of everyone, reflective of how

it went in their particular area of lockdown, and anxious to get home, which wasn't possible even after the all-clear because of the logistics of moving students to a safe site.

In the locker room, ten women shared recipes, paced, shared their own personal stories and expertise, meditated and were grateful they hadn't left the oven on. They agreed that if you have to be locked down in a high school because a shooter may be somewhere in the building, the girls locker room is not the worst place to be. There is water, there is a toilet, there is a shower, and there are no windows and there were other women to chat with. But there were also comments like, "If we had to hide from 'him', I guess there are at least places to hide for a minute or two here."

And leaving the building with hands up in the air, as instructed, still not entirely sure what had happened, the gravity of a school threat, and the impressive response of the school and police, was not lost on anyone.

Love Is in the Air

FROM PAGE 7

Angeli: "It is important for us to do our own thing. We do not always have to be together. We get to be individuals and have our own hobbies and hang out with our own friends. My favorite thing about Max is his great sense of humor."

Peter and Jenny Wintermute

Peter: "We met through a friend in Dewey Beach and I proposed at the Daytona 500 in 2004."

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. 18

Winter Pruning for Woody Plants. 10-11 a.m.

Online. Winter is an excellent time to prune many trees and shrubs. Extension Master Gardeners Molly Newling and Angela McNamara will explain why and how to prune to remove crossing and rubbing branches, suckers, water sprouts, and damaged wood. They will discuss the best practices for reducing shrub size, trimming hedges, and carefully removing larger limbs. The results will be trees and shrubs with healthier and fuller growth, better flowers and fruit, and a more attractive home landscape. Free. RSVP at <https://mgvnv.org/events/> to receive link to participate.

ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD APPROVES PENTAGON CITY SECTOR PLAN

The Arlington County Board adopted a new vision for a vibrant and livable Pentagon City, following an 18-month planning process. The Board voted 5-0 to approve the Pentagon City Sector Plan (PCSP) and its associated Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments. The adopted plan creates certainty for the community in the future while allowing flexibility for property owners that will help diversify housing options, prioritize multi-modal transportation, and embrace biophilic design. In addition to establishing clear performance standards for development, the plan includes three linear miles of a Green Ribbon pedestrian network to connect existing and future public spaces,

My favorite thing about Jenny is what a wonderful mother she is to our children. It's not easy juggling outside family and in-laws."

Jenny: "Peter and I have been married 15 years now. I love what an amazing father Peter is. He is very involved and supportive of his wife and children. It is a challenge making time for one another when there is work and children and other responsibilities, but it is important to the success of a relationship."

five acres of new public parks and plazas, a one-acre expansion of Virginia Highlands Park, strategies for locating public facilities, and minimum standards for onsite affordable housing. County Board Chair Katie Cristol highlighted the plan's look to the future, noting that Pentagon City, with its rich transit network and access to economic opportunity, is an ideal place to welcome more homes for Arlingtonians. "The Sector Plan envisions the transformation of privately-owned spaces to public parks, new multimodal connections and streets, as well as more ways for residents to connect to one another and to nature," she said. The Pentagon City Sector Plan replaces the land-use policies that have governed the area since the 1970s and builds on the work of Livability 22202, which is a collaborative effort between three civic associations in the area. It was adopted after an extended public engagement period that included a diverse focus group, online engagement, virtual public meetings and open houses, a site walking tour, as well as individual meetings with residents and other stakeholders.

NEW COVID-19 TESTING KIOSK AT SEQUOIA PLAZA

Arlington County is opening an additional no-cost COVID-19 testing kiosk at Sequoia Plaza. The kiosk is in partnership with Curative, which operates four additional sites in the County. The kiosk is located at 2100 Washington Blvd, on the service road behind the Stambaugh Human Services Center building (Sequoia 1). The kiosk will operate Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 7 p.m. Appointments are encouraged and can be made at curative.com.

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Date With Destiny - Or Not



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Despite having cancer and having been given a "terminal" diagnosis/"13 month to two years" prognosis in late February 2009, I rarely, believe or not, consider my own mortality. Well, occasionally in these columns, but day-to-day, hardly ever. Oddly enough, something occurred the other day which meant very little to me when I first heard about it until I read more about it today on the ESPN website. 'It' being that former Major League baseball player Jeremy Giambi had died. Mr. Giambi was 47, but initially no cause of death or any other particulars were provided. Today's story, an Associated Press release filled in some of the gaps. His cause of death was suicide and listed his date of birth (finally the point of this column) as September 30, 1974.

Why should you care? Probably not for the same reason as I do. Jeremy Giambi and I share the same birthday: Sept. 30, though not the same birth year. Nevertheless, seeing a person you have heard of - which I have, or whom billions of others haven't, die, and whose birthday is identical to yours is - sobering, and I don't even drink. In an odd and complicated way, seeing/hearing/reading about someone dying with whom you share a birthday is unsettling somehow. To invoke a "Star Wars" reference, I feel something akin to a weakening of the force. And in this context, that feeling being whatever intangible/physical/spiritual 'force' keeps us alive. I don't want to see anyone dying, especially anyone who has the same as birthday as I do. It's as if any other person dying who has a September 30 birthday affects my mortality somehow, and that I'm at greater risk because of it, like we have some sort of connection. It's like when another cancer patient succumbs to our shared disease. I don't exactly feel their pain, but I feel the loss, as if I've lost a key member of Team Lourie. And as a cancer patient still undergoing treatment, I don't need any negativity seeping in.

In fact, I can't see how thinking about death in any context is helpful. Early on in my cancer life, I was told by multiple medical professionals how important - and helpful, maintaining a positive attitude would be - and has proved to be. Though there's no real empirical evidence, anecdotal evidence suggests however, that there is a link between attitude and survival. As a longtime cancer patient who has remained positive about this incredible negative, I believe this to be way more than an abstract theory.

For me, and all of you, life goes on until it doesn't, duh. Still, I don't want or need to be reminded of my own mortality, in any context. Moreover, I realize I had already jumped to the head of the mortality class when I was diagnosed 13 years ago. Perhaps I'm overstating the significance of Mr. Giambi's death to me? Perhaps, his having been a Major Leaguer who played his last season for the Boston Red Sox, my hometown team, and I'm a sports' guy from Boston, intensifies the effect on me? Whatever it is, I don't ever want to see my birthday associated with death.

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

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