

The Arlington Connection

Jolie Smith, AFAC Director of Development and Raymond Bynum, warehouse lead, inspect two of the 3,000 frozen turkeys on Monday, Nov. 14, ready for distribution to families in need this Thanksgiving.

Near Record Need For Food Assistance This Holiday

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Time for Children's Connection

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Why Plant for Pollinators at Landfills?

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NEWS

Teen Charged DUI/ Involuntary Manslaughter

The Arlington County Police Department has charged a juvenile male in his teens with DUI/Involuntary Manslaughter following a fatal vehicle crash in the Rock Spring neighborhood. He remains held in a juvenile detention facility.

At approximately 12:29 a.m. on Nov. 11, police were dispatched to Old Dominion Drive at Williamsburg Boulevard for the report of a two-vehicle crash with injuries. Upon arrival, first responders located an unoccupied SUV on fire. The fire was quickly extinguished by the Arlington County Fire Department. The driver of the second involved vehicle, a sedan, was located unresponsive inside the vehicle and pronounced deceased on scene.

The preliminary investigation indicates the driver of the sedan was attempting to

make a U-turn on Old Dominion Drive when he was struck at a high rate of speed by the SUV. The driver of the SUV was taken into custody on scene. Alcohol is believed to be a factor in the crash.

The deceased is a juvenile male in his teens. His identification is being withheld in accordance with Virginia Code § 19.2-11.2 which limits Virginia law enforcement agencies from directly or indirectly identifying deceased juvenile victims of a crime.

This remains an active criminal investigation. Anyone with information that may assist the investigation is asked to contact Detective S. Whalin at swhalin@arlingtonva.us or 703-228-4159.

Information may also be reported anonymously to Arlington County Crime Solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS.

Most Curative COVID-19 Testing Kiosks Closing on Nov. 30

County Curative COVID-19 testing kiosks will close on Nov. 30, 2022, except for the Arlington Mill Community Center location.

The closure of kiosks aligns with a significant decline in kiosk testing demand across the County (an 80% decline since Nov. 2021) and the widespread availability of at-home and pharmacy-based tests.

Arlington Mill Community Center's Curative kiosk (909 S. Dinwiddie St.) will remain open through Dec. 31, 2022, to offer no-cost testing to nearby residents who may otherwise have reduced access to testing services. More than 1-in-3 visitors to Arlington Mill are uninsured, and 55% of visitors live in zip codes 22204 and 22206, areas disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

The Department of Public Safety Communications and Emergency Management will also purchase and distribute rapid COVID-19 test kits to uninsured and under-insured residents through local non-profit organizations. Distribution is anticipated to begin just before Thanksgiving. It will continue through December to provide access to testing during potential holiday gatherings, where the risk of virus transmission may be elevated.

Closing Vaccine Clinic

The Arlington County Public Health Division's COVID-19 vaccination clinic, originally opened nearly two years ago, will permanently close in December 2022.

Demand has significantly decreased at the County's clinic, with COVID-19 vaccines now available in the community through pharmacies, urgent care centers, and medical providers. As such, the final day of operations for the clinic at Sequoia Plaza (2100 Washington Blvd.) will be Saturday, Dec. 17, 2022.

Until that time, appointments and walk-ins are available for primary series and eligible boosters for everyone ages 6 months and older. Now is the best time to get up to date on COVID-19 vaccination for increased protection from severe illness, before spending more time indoors and in crowds during the holiday season.

"What started as a small team in Dec. 2020 quickly grew into hundreds of staff and volunteers, operating six clinics and dozens of special events, allowing us to administer more than 215,000 doses of the vaccine," said Dr. Reuben Varghese, Public Health Director.

Click It

This Thanksgiving holiday, to help keep travelers safe, the Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) is teaming up with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) on the national Click It or Ticket campaign. Law enforcement agencies across the country will increase enforcement efforts from Nov. 16 – 30, 2022, to reduce fatalities. Everyone wants you to reach your destination safely, so it is critical to practice safe driving habits, like buckling your seatbelt on each and every ride.

According to NHTSA, there were 333 passenger vehicle occupants killed in traffic collisions across the United States during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend in 2020 (6 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 25, to 5:59 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 30). Nighttime proved even more deadly, with 67% of those fatal crashes occurring during the nighttime hours. Wearing a seatbelt is one of the most effective things anyone can do to prevent injury or death in a vehicle collision.

Virginia law requires those under the age of 18 to be properly secured in a safety

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Frozen Hands Cart Home Frozen Turkeys at AFAC Turkey Week

You can help with near record need for food assistance.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

It's a cold first day of Turkey Week at Arlington Food Assistance Center on South Nelson Street. Clients line up along the sidewalk on Monday, Nov. 14 with their large empty bags with kids hopping on the sidewalk to stay warm in the 40 degree temperature.

A Sysco truck full of 3,000 turkeys that arrived on Friday is parked along the street. Volunteers had started unloading the turkeys earlier on Monday morning to stack their table as the last stop for the families in need who have come to pick up holiday food. A bin sits on the end of the table filling up with yellow tickets good for "one pavo."

Volunteers from the National Association of Chain Drug Stores are manning the turkey table and assisting in the food line. "They are one of our best corporate supporters," Jolie Smith, AFAC Director of Development says. "They support as with money, donations, and volunteers—all the three that help."

Charles Meng, Executive Director of AFAC says that currently 2,516 families are receiving AFAC supplemental food each week, "close to the peak of the pandemic — just 150 short of the record number."

Smith says their turkeys used to cost \$25,000 but this year cost \$60,000 due to inflation. "And we ordered them this summer when prices were cheaper. Food prices are so much higher, and it's scary right now, no one can make ends meet. They have to come here. One third of the people we serve are children."

Volunteers wheel large cardboard AFAC boxes across the parking lot to the warehouse. The boxes are filled with donations from the annual Scouting for Food drive that was held over the weekend. Smith says they expect to get about 40,000 pounds of food from the scouting drive.

She points to large bins of beans in the warehouse that have already been sorted.

"First we sort the cans and then we look at the expiration dates and

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Jolie Smith, AFAC Director of Development and Raymond Bynum, warehouse lead, inspect two of the 3,000 frozen turkeys on Monday, Nov. 14.



Dave Fitzsimmons (left) and Mike Ayotte from the National Association of Chain Drug Stores hand out bags each containing a 10-12 pound frozen turkey and four COVID test kits.



Volunteers wheel heavy boxes of food to the AFAC warehouse which is overflowing with donations from the annual Scouting for Food campaign.



A line forms outside the AFAC headquarters where families in need are waiting to pick up their free groceries for the holidays.



A bin fills up with yellow "one pavo" tickets deposited in exchange for a 10-12 pound turkey at the AFAC food distribution on Nov. 14.

Be Part of 2022 Children's and Teens' Connection

One week of December for many years, this newspaper has devoted its pages to the creativity of local students, teens and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families. Even readers without children of that age spend time admiring and chuckling over the issue. The annual Children's Connection, including Children's Gazette and Children's Almanac, is a long-time tradition.

You can see last year's editions by visiting <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/> and scrolling down to Children's Edition.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, art classes, individuals and home-schoolers. We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture, gardens and any other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email. Writing should be submitted in text format: docx or google docs, or pasted in the body of an email. Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format. These can be submitted via google drive as well. Please share all google drive files with kimm.mary@gmail.com



Some suggestions, but different ideas are welcome:

❖ Drawings or paintings or photographs of your family, friends,

pets or some favorite activity. These should be photographed or scanned and submitted in jpeg format. Photos of sculpture or larger

art projects are also welcome.

❖ Short answers: What is one thing that you would change about school? What do you want to be when you grow up? What is your favorite animal? What is your favorite possession? What makes a good friend? What is the best gift you've ever received?

❖ Your opinion (100 words) about movies, food, music, sports, restaurants, video games, toys, trends, politics, etc.

❖ Poetry, short story or other creative writing.

❖ News stories or photos from school newspapers.

We must be able to print the full first and last name of the student artist/writer with the submission, along with student's age, grade and school or town name.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Home schoolers' contributions are welcomed.

Please send all submissions by Monday, Dec. 5, 2022. The Children's Connection/Gazette will publish the middle of December, the edition with publication date Dec. 14, 2022.

Email submissions for the Children's Connection to kimm.mary@gmail.com

Make Wishes Come True at Doorways

Doorways is seeking people to fulfill their client families' wish lists to make this holiday season brighter. Winter Wishes sponsors can give clients the holiday they deserve. Grant wishes. Spread joy. Remind them that they have community support.

This year, as the weather starts to change and this season's chill sets in, Doorways is asking donors to provide new winter coats, at or around \$50 in value, to our clients along with a \$100 Target or Visa gift card.

Donors provide not only warmth but joy to the families in Doorways programs.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me at astewart@doorwaysva.org

Give the Gift of Choice

Empower your neighbors at Doorways by donating a gift card today! While Doorways is able to connect parents with in-kind donations of diapers, pack-and-plays and other necessities, gift cards give them the flexibility to fill in the gaps themselves, plus the satisfaction of being able to shop and provide for their family.

Target and VISA gift cards can be mailed to:

Doorways
Attn: Development
P.O. Box 100185
Arlington, VA 22210

To coordinate a gift card drop off, please contact us <https://www.doorwaysva.org/contact-us/#development>

Stock the Shelves for the Holidays

Our emergency shelters are the center of our supportive services. From our bedrooms to our playrooms, each area of our shelters plays such an important role each day for our families. You can help our clients' temporary home

feel as homey as possible this season by replenishing much-needed supplies for our Freddie Mac Foundation Family Home, Domestic Violence Safehouse, and Safe Apartments.

Shopping Doorways' Amazon Wish Lists is a quick and easy way to help during the holidays and all year long. Purchase any of our urgently needed items through Amazon to have them shipped directly to Doorways for fast and hassle-free delivery.

https://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/3IPXPXL06TB-JR/ref=cm_wl_rlist_go_v?

Frozen Hands Cart Home Frozen Turkeys at AFAC Turkey Week

FROM PAGE 3

take out those that have expired." She explains it is important to treat people with dignity with the food that is offered.

Smith says at holiday time they receive large donations from the local grocery stores including ready made pies and also plenty of cans of pumpkin if people want to make their own pies. "We tend to buy root vegetables to give

our clients choices of all different types they might want at holiday time." She said that in addition to the basics which are always on the AFAC request list like tuna, canned beans and tomatoes, cooking oil, and peanut butter, they also suggest that at this time of the year donations can include basic baking supplies, "so people can make their special cake or cookies."

Smith says she is concerned

that donations are down. "I'm counting every little bit. Usually we get 25-30 percent of our donations in December. I hope we make our number. I started worrying about it in July. I think people making the donations are feeling the impact of inflation, too."

Support for AFAC takes a number of different paths. You can distribute, drive, glean or grow. People pledge money or offer

food contributions, and AFAC has over 2,000 volunteers a year. The volunteers provide 50,000 hours a year which allows \$1.5 million in reduced staff costs. In addition, local soccer teams or neighborhood groups sponsor food drives and corporations support major events each year such as the annual Golf tournament. For further information visit the website at: afac.org

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FLOURISHING AFTER 55

55+ Programs are in person at 55+ Centers, unless otherwise noted. A 55+ Pass is required to participate (starting at a \$20 annual fee). To join or register, go to registration.arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

55+ Centers will be closed Thursday, Nov. 24 and Friday, Nov. 25 in observance of Thanksgiving.

Neurographic Art, perfect class for doodlers, no rules, Thursday, Nov. 17, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 911303-10.

Recreate artworks on display at area museums, paint along with Community Arts Programmers, Thursday, Nov. 17, 10 a.m., virtual. Registration # 911303-13.

"Mary McLeod Bethune: A Woman of Firsts," presented by Park Ranger John Fowler. Hear about her unparalleled courage as a powerhouse activist for the rights of African American women, Thursday, Nov. 17, 1:30 p.m., virtual. Registration # 911400-16.

History discussion group led by Dwight Rodgers from Encore Learning, focuses on cultural, economic, artistic and political history, Thursday, Nov. 17, 1 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911402-20.

Name That Tune, songs from the 50s-70s, played by musician Carl Gold, Friday, Nov. 18, 2 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 911304-08.

Community Arts Programmer Jim Halloran will explain the context, history and techniques of famous artists, Friday, Nov. 18, 10 a.m., virtual. Registration # 911302-03.

Aurora Hills 55+ Center Harvest Fest, live music,

refreshments, Friday, Nov. 18, 1 p.m. Bring a donation of canned food items for the Arlington Food Assistance Center. Registration # 911899-13.

Social Art Swap, Sunday, Nov. 20, 1-3 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Bring your own artwork or create one onsite to swap, limited supplies available. Registration # 911300-17.

Yarn circle at Walter Reed 55+ Center, Sunday, Nov. 20, 1 - 4 p.m. All skill levels welcome, members happy to help newcomers. Drop-in.

Morning meet-up with 55+ friends, Monday, Nov. 21, 10 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center, drop-in and Wednesday, Nov. 23, 9:30 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center, drop-in. BYOC (Bring Your Own Coffee).

Current events discussion about local and world news, informal, volunteer led, Monday, Nov. 21, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911402-25.

Short story reading and discussion of "No News" by Connie Regan-Blake and Barbara Freeman and "Death by Scrabble" by Charlie Fish, Monday, Nov. 21, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center, registration # 911300-13 or virtual, registration # 911300-14.

Step-by-step painting demonstration with a Community Arts Programmer, Monday, Nov. 21, 10:30 a.m., Virtual. Picture and supply list sent prior to class. Registration # 911303-16.

Yarn Crafters at Aurora Hills 55+ Center hand knit and crochet items for Arlington charities, Monday, Nov. 21, 10 a.m. to noon. Instruction available. Drop-in.

Crochet enthusiasts swap patterns and share techniques, Monday, Nov. 21, 9 a.m., Arlington

Mill 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Table tennis, players of all levels welcome to participate in friendly games, Monday, Nov. 21, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center; Tuesday, Nov. 22, 10 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center and Wednesday, Nov. 23, 9 a.m., Madison Community Center. Drop-in.

Mexican Train Dominoes, fun and easy to learn, Monday, Nov. 21, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Bridge practice with volunteer instructors Linda and Steve Robinson, Tuesday, Nov. 22, 2 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Do you like to crochet or knit? Join a casual group of crafty individuals to share ideas, Tuesday, Nov. 22, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Ukulele class, learn basic strumming with volunteer Sandy O'Shea, Tuesday, Nov. 22, 4:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911304-06.

Autumn Stroll through the woods and along the W&OD Trail, Tuesday, Nov. 22, 10:30 a.m., leave from Benjamin Banneker Park. Registration # 911106-19.

Scrabble games, friendly competition, coaching available for new players, Wednesday, Nov. 23, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Local history discussed Wednesday, Nov. 23, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 911402-14.

Open art studio for artists to work at their own pace, Wednesday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. No materials or instruction provided. Drop-in.

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.

POLICE PARTICIPATE IN FALL 2022 STREET SMART CAMPAIGN

Fall brings cooler temperatures and less daylight hours, meaning reduced visibility during peak commuting times for all road users. As we adjust to the end of Daylight Saving Time, the Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) is sharing important transportation safety tips to ensure all travelers can reach their destinations safely. ACPD and law enforcement agencies throughout the region will take part in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's Fall Street Smart Campaign from November 7 - December 4. The Street Smart campaign aims to identify and change unsafe behavior patterns amongst motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists, with the goal of reducing the number of traffic related collisions and injuries on our roadways.

WATCH: Police Encourage Travelers to be a P.A.L.

Street Smart Enforcement Activations
As part of the Street Smart campaign, officers will conduct high-visibility traffic enforcement at the following locations:

Thursday, December 1, 2022, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - 5900 block of Little Falls Road

Members of the media are invited to attend the activation events.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9

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Bringing Life to Landfills

By GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE CONNECTION

The word “landfill” instantly conjures up mental images of smelly trash, jumbles of junk and garbage trucks crawling into the dump. Espousing a “Making Trash Bloom” philosophy, Sustainability Matters is out to upgrade this classic landfill image and to transform these dump sites into vibrant habitats that support native insects, birds and other wildlife. Their goal is to replace traditional turf with plants that attract pollinators to an area that otherwise would be an ecologically dead space. Historically, most landfills are covered with non-native turf grasses and are basically wastelands in terms of environmental quality, ecologists contend.

On Oct. 27, Sustainability Matters and Fairfax County officials will hold a ribbon-cutting on a new pollinator habitat project at the county’s I-66 Landfill and Transfer Station on West Ox Road. Volunteers will hand plant seeds on just under an acre and plant almost another acre in the spring. “This is land that cannot be used for anything else, like buildings or growing crops,” says Sari Carp, Sustainability Matters founder and executive director. “And in Fairfax where there is so much development, pollinators, insects and wildlife are in desperate need of habitat so this is a chance to turn something that is essentially a hill of trash into a positive for the environment.”

Over one million people take trash to the I-66 landfill every year, so the project is also “a golden chance to reach non-traditional conservation audiences, like people who never go to an environmental center or wildlife refuge,” says Carp. Another 12 million who drive by will see interpretative signage, she adds.

Eric Forbes agrees. “We see the new meadow as a show piece of nature that will be visible as our residents drop off their recycling and food scraps. Hopefully, visitors will see the meadow as something they can plant in their own yards or neighborhoods.” Forbes is the deputy director for the county’s solid waste management program.

The I-66 landfill project is number three for the organization. On October 16, 50 volunteers hand seeded three plots at the Rappahannock County landfill near Warrenton. The group’s flagship project is at Virginia’s Shenandoah County landfill, started in 2019.

Why Make Landfills Bloom?

Today’s landfills are engineered facilities built to bury and dispose of residential and commercial solid waste. Sites must meet certain legal design, operation and closure requirements and are regulated in part to protect natural resources from leaking contaminants like heavy metals, toxic chemicals and methane emissions. Sustainability Matters plants on what are called “closed” landfills, sites no longer accepting trash.

Landfill managers typically cap closed



The pollinator habitat in bloom at the Lorton I-95 landfill.



High school student Richard Malroy choreographed a seed-stomping dance and volunteers joined in the fun.

landfills with clay and plastic topped with one to two feet of soil. To stem erosion, most landfills historically have planted grasses like invasive Lespedeza sericea.

“Sustainability is all about maintaining our natural resources and helping protect our ecosystem. By implementing the Making

Trash Bloom meadow planting at the I-66

Transfer Station, Fairfax County is enhancing our community’s natural resources and providing an example of what can be done with native plants,” Forbes said.

What and How

To prepare for planting, managers mow



I-66 landfill preparations for the Oct. 27 native plant ribbon-cutting.



and scalp the site down to bare earth. Sustainability Matters’ teams plant seed mixes, some of which have 20 species of native wildflowers and native grasses that thrive in full sun. They prefer perennial plants that can outcompete invasive plants, attract pollinators and bloom throughout the year, plants like blue balm, Virginia wild rye, blue asters and oxeye

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Flowers grow at the Shenandoah County landfill, creating habitat for pollinators. A similar project is sprouting at Fairfax County’s I-66 Landfill and Transfer Station on West Ox Road.

sunflowers.

Sponsors hope to attract insects like bees and butterflies and birds like grasshopper, field and white-throated sparrows. “If you build it, they will come,” argues Rappahannock County native plant vendor and volunteer Janet David, “It can be a goldmine of ecosystem services.”

At the Rappahannock site, local students choreographed a seed-stomping dance to press the seeds into the ground and planters romped around to the tune of “Standing in the Sun” by Beyonce.

Flinging and stomping seeds is no guarantee of success so the group will monitor sites, especially during the first phases. Students and others will collect data. “Meadows are hard their first few years,” says Carp, “to control invasive plants and get sites to a self-sustaining state.”

Native plant meadows do not require the same frequency of mowing as landfill grasses, an advantage that officials applaud as saving energy and taxpayer dollars. Landfill managers may mow the native plant sites at times to discourage trees which cannot survive there long term.

Longer Term

Carp views the projects as pilots to test seed mixes, site preparation, planting techniques, erosion control and invasive plant management and hopes to move to scalable models in expanding the projects. “We are trying to find a model that works,” she explains. “The question was, what can we plant on trash? And I said, ‘Why not native plants?’”

At the Rappahannock landfill, Jack Monsted, an assistant curator at Virginia’s state arboretum, summarized, “Without this, it’s a wasteland. We can reclaim it, make it more productive and provide ecosystem services.”

I-95 Landfill

Fairfax County’s 200-acre, I-95 Landfill in Lorton is home to a honeybee and pollinator habitat project, started in 2017.

The county is converting five acres of turf into native meadow habitat. George Mason University’s Honey Bee Initiative Director Germán Perilla supervises 17-to-20 hives

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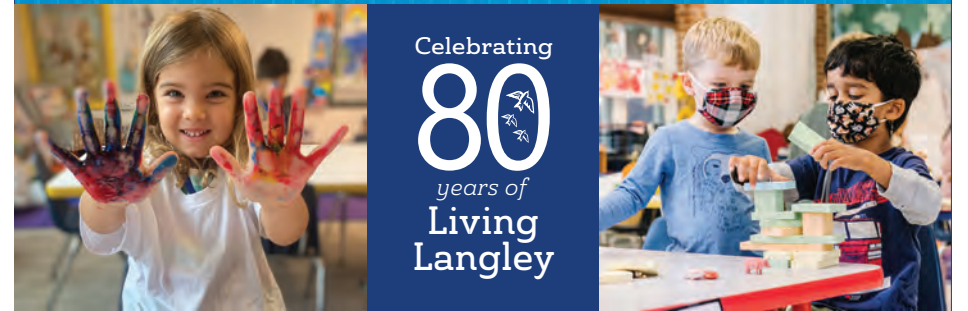
Flowers grow at the Shenandoah County landfill, creating habitat for pollinators. A similar project is sprouting at Fairfax County’s I-66 Landfill and Transfer Station on West Ox Road.

there. Managers hope the project will increase honeybee populations which are in decline, increase a stable vegetative layer of perennial wildflowers and reduce runoff into the Occoquan and Potomac Rivers. Officials say the site also provides educational opportunities, increases sustainability and lowers maintenance costs.

Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck has championed this approach: “Along with the leadership of key residents, I have gotten our County to dramatically increase native landscaping and plantings on public and private properties to lessen yard space and increase natural habitats,” he offers. “Landfills and open space are also perfect locations to create these nurturing environments. Our County is taking a proactive role in this climate mitigation strategy, continuing to repurpose our landfills and planting native gardens in many locations around the County. However, we need every resident’s help to save our pollinators.”

PHOTOS BY ELISE TRISSEL FOR SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS

Join us for admission information sessions on December 6 (in person) and January 6 (virtual).



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Bats Should Be Better Loved

By Glenda C. Booth
The Connection

Bats get a bad rap, from their association with witchcraft to blood-sucking vampires to rabies spreaders. But “We could not survive without bats,” Deborah Hammer, a bat educator told the Friends of

Dyke Marsh (FODM) on Oct. 26. Hammer is a board member of both FODM and Bat Conservation and Rescue of Virginia.

Over 500 plant species rely on bats to pollinate their flowers, including species of mango, banana, durian, guava and agave. Some plants are partially pollinated by bats, including coffee, chocolate

and sugar. “If you like to eat, think of bats,” she said. Also, bats disperse seeds. Bats are the only mammal capable of true flight, said Hammer, adding, “Their acrobatics are quite extraordinary.” They have elongated forelimbs and wing membranes connected to their long fingers, so basically, they “fly with their hands

and have same dexterity as humans,” she said. Like all mammals, bats have hair, their young are born live and mothers feed young with their milk, she explained. They have keen hearing and are most active at night. Bats have an adaptation called “ecolocation” to find insects and dodge obstacles in the dark. They are not rodents. Their next closest relatives are canines.

Many species make a high-pitched, twittering sound inaudible to people. After daylight, most bats roost throughout the day, hanging from tree hollows, caves or other homes by their hind feet, usually upside down, with their wings draped around their bodies.

In temperate regions like Virginia, in the winter, bats hibernate or migrate south. In summer, they often roost in trees.

Hammer unreeled even more bat facts: Worldwide, there are around 1,400 bat species on every continent except the polar regions and some deserts. The smallest bat is the bumblebee bat, weighing about two grams. The largest is the giant golden-crowned flying fox bat with a six-foot wingspan. Virginia has at least 17 bat species and observers have seen at least seven bat species in Dyke Marsh. A 2013 survey identified three bat species on Fort Belvoir: the tri-colored bat, big brown bat and the red bat. “Little brown bats have been previously recorded from Fort Belvoir,” the study stated, attributing their absence to possibly the harmful fungus, white-nose syndrome.

“Almost all bats in Northern Virginia are insect eaters,” Hammer said. A big brown bat can consume 3,000 mosquitoes a night, she remarked. “One little brown bat has been documented eating upwards of 600 mosquitoes in one hour,” reports the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources.

Threats

The world’s bat populations are declining. A major cause is loss of feeding or roosting habitat, usually wooded areas near water sources. Since its 2006 discovery, white-nose syndrome has afflicted bats



Hoary bat smiling for the camera.



Big brown bat being shy.



Deborah Hammer.

in at least 35 states and Canada and killed millions. A white fungus appears on the nose, ears and wings of infected bats. Some infected bats have atypical behavior, like flying outside during the day.

Other threats include outdoor cats, night lighting, pesticides, herbicides, noise and collisions with power lines, vehicles and wind turbines.

Myths

Ever heard the expressions “dingbat,” “going batty” or “blind as a bat”? People have coined several derogatory and misleading colloquialisms for bats. “Bats see perfectly well,” says DWR’s website. Bats are no more likely to have rabies than other rabies vector species, DWR also notes.

So, about vampire bats, of the 1,400 species, only three drink blood, Hammer explained. They are found in Central and South America.

The program was sponsored by FODM, the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park and the Friends of Accotink Creek

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.

LEE	10829	624	RTE 624	CREEK	10/29/2022
GILES	8450	653	EATON CHAPEL RD/RTE 653	LITTLE SUGAR RUN	10/28/2022
ALBEMARLE	800	712	PLANK ROAD	HARDWARE RIVER	10/27/2022
BOTETOURT	3536	1001	UPDIKE LANE/RTE 1001	BRANCH OF TINKER CREEK	10/27/2022
FLOYD	7501	221	FLOYD HWY S/RTE 221	BR OF DOBBINS CREEK	10/27/2022
GILES	8478	700	MT LAKE RD/RTE 700	SINKING CREEK	10/27/2022
MONTGOMERY	12312	705	COAL HOLLOW RD/RTE 705	SLATE BRANCH	10/27/2022
MONTGOMERY	12294	669	UNION VALLEY R/RTE 669	ELLIOTT CREEK	10/27/2022
ROANOKE	14980	609	E. RURITAN RD/RTE 609	BR GLADE CREEK	10/27/2022
ROANOKE	15095	737	GLADDEN RD/Rte 737	BRANCH RNKE RIVER	10/27/2022
MONTGOMERY	12235	629	BRADSHAW RD/RTE 629	BRADSHAW CREEK	10/26/2022
MONTGOMERY	12285	657	MERRIMAC RD/RTE 657	SLATE CREEK	10/26/2022
MONTGOMERY	12279	654	BROOKSFIELD RD/RTE 654	TOMS CREEK	10/25/2022
MONTGOMERY	12264	641	WAYSIDE DRIVE/RTE 641	SPRING BRANCH	10/25/2022
MONTGOMERY	12265	641	WAYSIDE DRIVE/RTE 641	SPRING BRANCH	10/25/2022
MONTGOMERY	12271	643	YELL SULPH RD/RTE 643	MILL BRANCH	10/25/2022
FAUQUIER	7276	610	MIDLAND ROAD	ELK RUN	10/24/2022
PULASKI	14549	613	CHERRYBRANCHRD/RTE 613	BURKS RUN	10/24/2022
FLOYD	7487	221	FLOYD HWY. S/RTE 221	GREASY CREEK	10/22/2022
BOTETOURT	3534	817	OLD RAIL ROAD/RTE 817	CRAIG CREEK	10/21/2022
ROANOKE	15070	677	WILLOW BR RD/RTE 677	BR BACK CREEK	10/21/2022
TAZEWELL	18486	91	RTE 91	LITTLE RIVER	10/20/2022
FLOYD	7477	8	PARKWAY LANE/RTE 8	W FORK DODD CREEK	10/19/2022
PATRICK	13246	103	DRY POND RD/RTE 103	BACK CREEK	10/19/2022
PATRICK	13229	58	JEB STUART HWY/RTE 58	LITTLE IVY CREEK	10/19/2022
PATRICK	13206	8	PATRICK AVENUE/RTE 8	BR. SOUTH MAYO RIVER	10/19/2022
GRAYSON	8900	711	BATTLEFIELD DRIVE	SADDLE CREEK	10/18/2022
HENRY	10022	57	APPALACHIN DR/RTE 57	DANIELS CREEK	10/18/2022
HENRY	10021	57	FAIRYST. PK HW/RTE 57	SMITH RIVER	10/18/2022
HENRY	10057	220	RTE 220	NS RAILWAY	10/18/2022
MONTGOMERY	12113	11	RKE RD/460WBL11SBL	BR. SOUTH FORK ROANOKERIVER	10/18/2022
MONTGOMERY	12137	11	ROANOKE ROAD/RTE 11	WHITEHOUSE BRANCH	10/18/2022
PATRICK	13293	635	GOBLINTOWN CRK/RTE 635	GOBLINTOWN CREEK	10/18/2022
BEDFORD (M)	22407	43	PEAKS RD/RTE 43	LITTLE OTTER RIVER	10/17/2022
BOTETOURT	3159	11	LEE HIGHWAY/RTE 11	THRASHERS BRANCH	10/17/2022
FRANKLIN	7777	220	V H GOODE HWY/RTE 220	S FORK LITTLE CHESTNUT CR	10/17/2022
FRANKLIN	7779	220	VIRGIL H. GOODE HY	MAGGODEE CREEK	10/17/2022
FRANKLIN	7776	220	V H GOOD HWY/RTE 220	N FORK CHESTNUT CREEK	10/15/2022
ROANOKE	14956	311	CATAWBA VLDR/RTE 311	CATAWBA CREEK	10/15/2022
BEDFORD	2672	735	ROCK CLIFF RD/RTE 735	DIFFICULT CREEK	10/14/2022
BEDFORD	2896	755	SIMMONSMIL LRD/RTE 755	BORE AUGER CREEK	10/14/2022
BEDFORD	2915	781	TABERNACLELANE/RTE 781	IVY CREEK	10/14/2022
FRANKLIN	7780	220	SBL RTE 220	BLACKWATER RIVER	10/14/2022
ROANOKE	14933	220	FRANKLIN RD/RTE 220	NARROWS CREEK	10/14/2022
CRAIG	5477	311	PAINT BANK RD/RTE 311	BRANCH OF JOHNS CREEK	10/13/2022
GILES	8436	635	BIG STONY CK RD/RTE 635	LAUREL BRANCH	10/13/2022
GILES	8453	653	EATON CHAPL. RD/RTE 653	SUGAR RUN	10/13/2022
GILES	8325	42	GILES/PULASKITPK/RTE 42	WABASH CREEK	10/13/2022
GILES	8488	722	GLEN ALTON RD/RTE 722	STONEY CREEK	10/13/2022
BOTETOURT	3406	628	PREASE RD/RTE 628	LONG RUN	10/11/2022
BEDFORD	2622	221	FOREST RD	LITTLE OTTER RIVER	10/8/2022
BEDFORD	2605	122	MONETA ROAD/RTE 122	STONY FORK CREEK	10/8/2022
BEDFORD	2621	221	FORREST RD/RTE 221	ELK CREEK	10/7/2022
BEDFORD	2577	24	STEWARTSVILLE RD/RTE 24	BEAVERDAM CREEK	10/7/2022
GILES	8487	720	GRAVELY HILL RD/RTE 720	STONEY CREEK	10/7/2022
BOTETOURT	3394	622	SOLITUDE RD/RTE 622	SPROUTS RUN	10/6/2022
MONTGOMERY	12236	629	BRADSHAW RD/RTE 629	BRANCH OF BRADSHAW CREEK	10/6/2022
MONTGOMERY	12208	614	TAN BARK RD/RTE 614	BRUSH CREEK	10/6/2022
PATRICK	13252	610	HELMS ROAD/RTE 610	BRANCH DAN RIVER	10/4/2022
BOTETOURT	3158	11	LEE HIGHWAY/RTE 11	LOONEY MILL CREEK	10/3/2022
BOTETOURT	3156	11	LEE HWY/RTE 11	JAMES RVR. CSX & RT 1318	10/3/2022

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.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

Transportation Safety Tips

No matter how you travel, remember to always be a P.A.L. – predictable, alert and lawful.

Drivers are reminded to:

Slow down, drive the speed limit and obey all posted traffic signs and signals.

Remain alert for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Stop for pedestrians in crosswalks.

Use caution when passing buses or stopped vehicles.

Yield to people walking or biking when turning.

Allow for at least 3 feet when passing bicyclists.

Avoid using your cell phone and never text while driving. Holding a handheld communication device while driving is illegal in Virginia.

MORE: Share our Roadways Safely:

Laws Pertaining to Cyclists and Motorists in Arlington County

Pedestrians are reminded to:

Cross the street at the corner and use marked crosswalks when they are available.

Use pushbuttons when available and wait for the walk signal to cross the street.

Look both ways before crossing.

Remain visible, especially after dark and in bad weather, by wearing light colored or reflective clothing.

Watch for blind spots around trucks and buses.

Avoid using devices that distract you, such as cell phones, while crossing the street.

Bicyclists and shared mobility device operators are reminded to:

Ride in the same direction as traffic, using bike lanes when possible.

Use hand signals to communicate your intentions with other travelers.

Wear a helmet, which is required for all bicycle riders 14 years of age and younger and recommended for all other riders. (Arlington County Code 14.2-64.)

Keep your eyes on the road and avoid the use of devices that may distract you.

Remain visible, especially after dark and in bad weather, by wearing light colored or reflective clothing.

Use headlights and taillights, especially when riding between sunset and sunrise.

DONATIONS NEEDED

Pet Food Bank. AWLA has established a Pet Food Bank to serve qualifying residents of Arlington County and the City of Falls Church. In consideration of the effect financial obstacles have on a pet owner's ability to afford pet care, the AWLA Pet Food Bank program's goal is to keep family pets out of shelters. If you are an Arlington County or City of Falls Church resident and are in need of assistance in feeding your pet, follow this link and fill out a pre-registration form. Visit goo.gl/forms/s2FuFdaYWdZm4t-Pw2.

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

ONGOING

Online Salary Negotiation Workshop.

AAUW (American Association of University Women) Work Smart is free online for anyone looking to learn how to negotiate a salary increase or promotion. Why is negotiation so important? AAUW's research on the gender pay gap shows that, one year out of college, women are already paid significantly less than men. Visit salary.aauw.org.

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

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

naloxone for details.

Monthly Memory Café. 1-3 p.m.

at 7910 Andrus Road, Suite 6, Alexandria. The Memory Café, a social gathering for individuals living with memory loss and their families, virtually. Registration is free and highly recommended to reserve spots, which are open on a first come first served basis. To reserve a spot, please call 571-210-5551 or email bdesai@seniorhelpers.com. Visit www.dementiacareconnections.com/memory-cafe or www.seniorhelpers.com/arlington-alexandria-va for more.

Arlington County, in partnership with the Human Rights Commission's Equality Task Force, has launched a web page with resources for the LGBTQ community. The new webpage compiles LGBTQ resources on a variety of topics, including homelessness and housing, domestic violence and sexual assault, and health. There are also topics specifically for teens and youth — such as scholarship opportunities and school clubs — as well as ones targeted at seniors and older adults, such as SAGE. Visit topics.arlingtonva.us/lgbtq-resources.

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

Volunteer Bike Repair Night. First

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

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

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

Arlington Rotary Club Lunches. Thursdays, 12 - 1:30 p.m. now on Zoom. Organization brings together political and business leaders for humanitarian services. Listen to guest speakers on various topics of interest. Visit <https://arlingtonrotaryclub.org/>

Job Seeking Help. 5-9 p.m. at Columbia Pike Branch Library, 816 SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

Starry Nights

Waterfront Cabin on 3 Acre Spring Fed Lake



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Search Mayberry Mountain Meadows at Airbnb and/or VRBO <https://mmmlakeretreat.weebly.com/the-white-house.html>

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NEWS

Shepherd's Center Seeking Volunteer Drivers

Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church (SCMAFC), an all-volunteer organization, is seeking additional volunteers to support its mission of providing free transportation to seniors for medical and dental appointments or run errands to grocery stores and pharmacies.

The center is an all-volunteer non-profit organization [501(c)(3)] that has been operating since 2006.

The total number of rides provided in 2022 is expected to exceed 2,500, but to fully respond to recent increases in the number of requests, there is a need for more volunteers to join the current team of 60 volunteer drivers.

"Of the rides provided, roughly 75% are medically related, 25% grocery, and 1% for handy helper needs," said Tom Callanen, Board Chair.

For volunteers there is no minimum commitment. Volunteers are free to choose how often and when they drive.

For detailed information or to apply, please visit the center's website <https://scmafc.org/volunteer> or call (703) 506-2199 and leave a message.

Click It

FROM PAGE 2

belt or child safety seat, no matter where they are sitting in the vehicle, and the driver is responsible for making sure this happens. In addition, Virginia law requires those in the front seat of vehicles to be properly restrained, regardless of age, and those 18 and older can be ticketed.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 9

S. Walter Reed Drive. Receive job-related help from the staff and volunteers with applications. Free, but requires registration. Visit www.arlingtonva.libcal.com.

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

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

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CALENDAR



The Washington Balalaika Society presents “A Musical Journey Around the World” on Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022.

OCT. 14 TO DEC. 3

Cast/Recast. At Mason Exhibitions Arlington, 3601 Fairfax Drive, Arlington. George Mason University’s College and Visual and Performing Arts and Mason Exhibitions is honored to present Cast/Recast, a group exhibition of photography, video, sculpture, painting, site-specific installation, and live performative work for select programs. The exhibit is curated by Alissa Maru in collaboration with Hannah Barco and Sue Wrban. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

OCT. 31 TO NOV. 25

Offbeat: Mixed Media Art. At Gallery Underground, in Crystal City Shops, 2120-A Crystal Plaza Arcade, Arlington. The Focus Gallery presents Offbeat: Mixed Media Art from artists Steena Fullmer and Anna Nazaretz Radjou during the month of November. The works from Ms Fullmer and Ms Radjou deploy glass, found objects, stenciling, fabric, embroidery, acrylic, and printmaking in creating patterns, symbols, and unleashed statements. For more information about the gallery: <https://www.arlingtonartistsalliance.org/gallery-underground>

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 16

Hearing Aids: Say What?! Join in a presentation on hearing aids which will include information about the hearing evaluation, how to interpret an audiogram, types and styles of hearing aids, and how the Over The Counter hearing aids are predicted to change the way many of us will be able to afford hearing aids. Bonnie O’Leary, Certified Peer Mentor and Outreach Manager with the Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Persons (NVRCP), is a late-deafened adult who has been wearing hearing aids for over 25 years. She will talk about the communication challenges of hearing loss, and who are likely candidates for OTC hearing aids. Visit the website at www.arlnv.org Zoom link for Coffee and Conversation at Arlington Neighborhood Village: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88948577106?pwd=eW0rN1R1TTU5ITMJSNnF2QXZINmdUQT09>

FRIDAY/NOV. 18

The Bootlegger’s Guide to the Parks. During Prohibition, illegal liquor was produced throughout Arlington County. Join Park Historian John McNair on Friday, Nov. 18, 3-4 p.m. for stories of local bootleggers and government raids as we take a short walk to one of our area’s drinking establishments at this event for ages 21+. \$5. Meet at the bike racks of Clarendon Central Park, 3140 Wilson Blvd, Arlington. Learn more and sign up here: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Departments/Parks-Recreation/Parks-Events/2022/Fall/Nature-Center/The-Bootleggers-Guide-to-the-Parks-1>

SATURDAY/NOV. 19

Nature Origami. Enjoy a morning of paper folding on Saturday, Nov. 19, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Create origami versions of your favorite animals as we learn about and meet some of the critters found at Gulf Branch Nature Center at this program for ages 13+. \$5. Learn more and sign up here: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Departments/Parks-Recreation/Parks-Events/2022/Fall/Nature-Center/>

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Nature-Origami.

NOV. 19-20

Girls on the Run 5Ks. Girls on the Run of NOVA will be hosting two 5K events on November 19th and 20th in Sterling and Ballston, respectively. Both 5K events are presented by returning sponsor, Cigna. The 5K in Sterling will be held at Dulles Town Center and will start at 8 a.m. while the 5K in Ballston will be held at Wellburn Square and will start at 8:30 a.m. The 5K is the culminating event for Girls on the Run participants and Coaches who have spent the 10-week season participating in a unique curriculum, which integrates physical activity to help increase confidence, create positive connections with peers and coaches, and help students connect with their communities. The 5K provides a tangible sense of accomplishment and goes to show that with hard work and dedication, you can achieve your goals. Register and learn more at www.gotrnova.org/5K.

SATURDAY/NOV. 19

Comedy Karaoke Trivia Funtime Show. 7:30 p.m. At Highline R&R, 2010 Crystal Drive, Arlington. The Capital City Showcase, the variety show that features the DMV’s best performing artists and hosted by Christian Hunt, returns with its new one-of-a-kind blend of entertainment: The Comedy Karaoke Trivia Funtime Show on Saturday, November 19th at 7:30 p.m. Bring a team or fly solo and win prizes by dropping knowledge in a trivia competition, then duking it out in a karaoke battle. November’s headliner is the hilarious Sean Savoy! To purchase tickets, visit funtime-showdmv.eventbrite.com

SUNDAY/NOV. 20

Civil War Discoveries: Build a Fort. Investigate how and why forts were built in Arlington during the Civil War. Then work as a team to design forts to defend the city at this program on Sunday, Nov. 20, noon-1 p.m. for ages 7-11 at Fort C.F. Smith Park. \$5. Sign up here: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Departments/Parks-Recreation/Parks-Events/2022/Fall/Nature-Center/Civil-War-Discoveries-Build-a-Fort-1>

SUNDAY/NOV. 20

“A Musical Journey Around the World.” 3 p.m. At Kenmore Middle School Performing Arts Center, Arlington. The Washington Balalaika Society presents the Baltimore’s Kalinka Dance Ensemble, which will be featured in its fall concerts, “A Musical Journey Around the World.” The Kalinka Dancers, aged 6 to 60, represent over 20 different ethnicities and nationalities. They will perform folk dances from Poland, Greece, and Ukraine. Ticket prices are: Adults \$30; Seniors/Military \$25; Students \$15; children 12 and under \$5. Concert tickets can be purchased online through www.balalaika.org.

FILL THE CRUISER TOY DRIVE

Help spread joy this holiday season by donating new, unwrapped toys during the Arlington County Police Department’s eighth annual Fill the Cruiser Holiday Toy Drive. Your generosity helps ensure the holidays are bright for some of our most vulnerable community members – children in need.

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Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.
 Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.
 Please, help save these historical papers.
 All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.
 The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk.
 The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.
 The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.
 The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.
 Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

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Drugged, But in a Good Way



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I could get addicted to this. What is this, you ask? It's yours truly being rescued from financial oblivion, familial fracture and/or cancer progression.

When last we visited this subject, I had just been told in no uncertain dollars, that continuing my monthly thyroid cancer prescription medicine was going to start costing me \$984 and change. Though the pharmacist maintained that I was covered by my existing plan, the bonus plan (for the sake of brevity) that covered the entire \$20,000+ monthly retail cost (and my \$984 share) had not been renewed. In short, I no longer qualified. The means-tested evaluation had dumped me back on the mean streets.

Paying retail for the drug myself and/or not incurring the cost/not taking the medication at all were equally unattractive. I had to put my thinking cap on, maybe think outside of the box to attempt to remedy this potential hardship. First, I appealed my bonus plan denial by providing additional financial documentation – as requested. However, the automated message said that process would be complete 45 days after receipt. If that timeline was accurate, I would need two months of the medication (or go two months without the medicine) before my renewal was even considered. Two scenarios which were equally unpalatable.

I had about a week or so before this medication hammer was to come down: do or die, quite literally. A few sleepless nights into my life-changing-forever deadline (pun intended), it came to me, or rather I remembered something. Approximately eight years ago, I was prescribed a new heavy-duty chemotherapy drug after my previous medicine had stopped working. The oncologists suggested a drug (a daily pill, actually). I said sure, and he ordered the prescription. (This is all before I had ever heard of this 'bonus plan.') Within a few days, I received a text from the pharmacy advising me that my new lung cancer prescription was ready for pick up. At that time, my co-pays for my various prescription medications were \$10, \$20, et cetera. However, before I went to pick up my prescription, not wanting to assume too much, I thought I should call to find out the cost, just to be on the safe side. The cost: "\$2500." I was told. I asked: (sort of being a wise-ass – and hopeful at the same time): "Is that for a year?" "No. One month," I was told. I was shocked by the price – as I had health insurance/prescription drug coverage and stammered something like I had to get back to them.

I can't recall with whom I was sharing this drug cost problem, but it was suggested that I call the pharmaceutical company that makes the drug and explain my circumstances. Sometimes, I was told, the companies share the cost with the patient. I was still working full time then, had health insurance but was not on Medicare or Medicaid. I was not without means; I just didn't have an additional \$2,500 per month to spend out of the blue on medicine. I called the company and spoke with their patient liaison-type person and explained my dilemma. Amazingly, there was a cost-sharing program and even more amazingly, I was accepted into their program and ended up not paying a dime for the entire next year that I was prescribed this pill – before it stopped working (that's the nature of cancer treatment; the medicine is effective until it isn't and then you switch to a new treatment). It was a great year of not paying for my cancer medicine.

History repeated itself. Although this time, I thought to call the pharmaceutical company on my own. First, I went on their web site and saw "patient enrollment program." I read a little but wasn't certain I qualified. I decided to call and speak to a real person. And boy oh boy did that person understand my situation and appreciate my call. They couldn't have been nicer, any more sincere or more willing to help me navigate their process to determine if I qualified for assistance. I answered their questions, completed an online application, and was told, I'd receive and answer about possible enrollment in the next day. Sure enough, the next day came and so did multiple phone calls to confirm and coordinate my approval and receipt of my next month's prescription cancer medicine. Just like that, the deal was done, and my \$984 monthly prescription bill was eliminated. I received my pills on Thursday of the same week, one day before my last prescription would have run out.

If you heard something that sounded like a gigantic sigh of relief that day, that was me. Breathing normally once again.

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



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