

The Arlington Connection

Arlington's Explosive Detection Dogs

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Bless Small Businesses

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Alex Dobyhan has come to Cherrydale Hardware to buy the biggest ladder he can find to put up his Christmas lights.

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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.

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/s2FuFdaYWdZm4tPw2.

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.ourladyqueenofpeace.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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

NEWS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Pictured are: SEEC Board Members Suzette Lohmeyer, Susan Randall, SEEC Executive Director Andres Tobar, Clare Cherkasky, Arlington Thrive Executive Director Andrew Schneider, SEEC Board Chair Sally Diaz-Wells and SEEC Founding President J. Walter Tejada.

SEEC Honors Arlington Thrive's Andrew Schneider

SEEC's 22nd Annual Fundraising Event was held this past Tuesday evening at SEEC's office in the Arlington Mill Community Center. The purpose of the event was to raise funds to support SEEC's training programs that included how immigrants can start a business in Virginia and driver education classes to help them obtain a Driver Privilege Card to allow them to drive in Virginia.

SEEC Executive Director Andres Tobar stated "We want to thank Arlington County for its continued support of SEEC's mission to provide employment assistance to Arlington's immigrant community, especially the day laborers. The support we received at this event will help us continue providing the training our clients need."

In accepting the 2022 SEEC's Humanitari-

an Award, Arlington Thrive Executive Director Andrew Schneider said, "On behalf of the entire Thrive team, I'm honored to accept this award. For me, this award not only recognizes the close partnership between Thrive and Andres Tobar and the entire SEEC family, but more significantly the collective commitment of Arlington's safety net to those who are too often overlooked, forgotten, and marginalized. We remain committed to this collaboration and equally committed to finding solutions that will allow us to end these inequities in the first place."

The proceeds will go to support the SEEC's Training Programs that include How to Start Your Own Business and Driver License Education. These programs rely on donations for their implementation.

Arrest in Green Valley Shooting

Arlington County Police Department arrested and charged a suspect following a shooting investigation in the Green Valley neighborhood. Kareem Parker, 40, of Arlington, has been charged with Malicious Wounding, Use of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony and Use of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon. He is being held in the Arlington County Detention Facility on no bond.

At approximately 1:49 a.m. on Nov. 27, police were dispatched to Virginia Hospital Center for the report of an adult male who had self-reported to the hospital with a gunshot wound. He was treated by medical personnel for injuries considered serious, but non-life threatening. He remains hospitalized in stable condition.

The preliminary investigation indicates the known suspect and victim became involved in a dispute in the area of S. Monroe

Street and S. Lowell Street, during which the suspect allegedly discharged the firearm, injuring the victim. During the course of the investigation, officers identified the suspect and obtained warrants for his arrest. He was subsequently located in the 1200 block of S. Courthouse Road and taken into custody without incident.

The events preceding the shooting remain under investigation. This appears to be an isolated incident and there is no indication of an ongoing threat to the community.


Anyone with information that may assist the investigation is asked to contact the Arlington County Police Department's Homicide/Robbery Unit 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).

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2022 | PARADE STARTS AT 11AM



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ALXScottishWalk.com | [#ALXScottishWalk](https://twitter.com/ALXScottishWalk)

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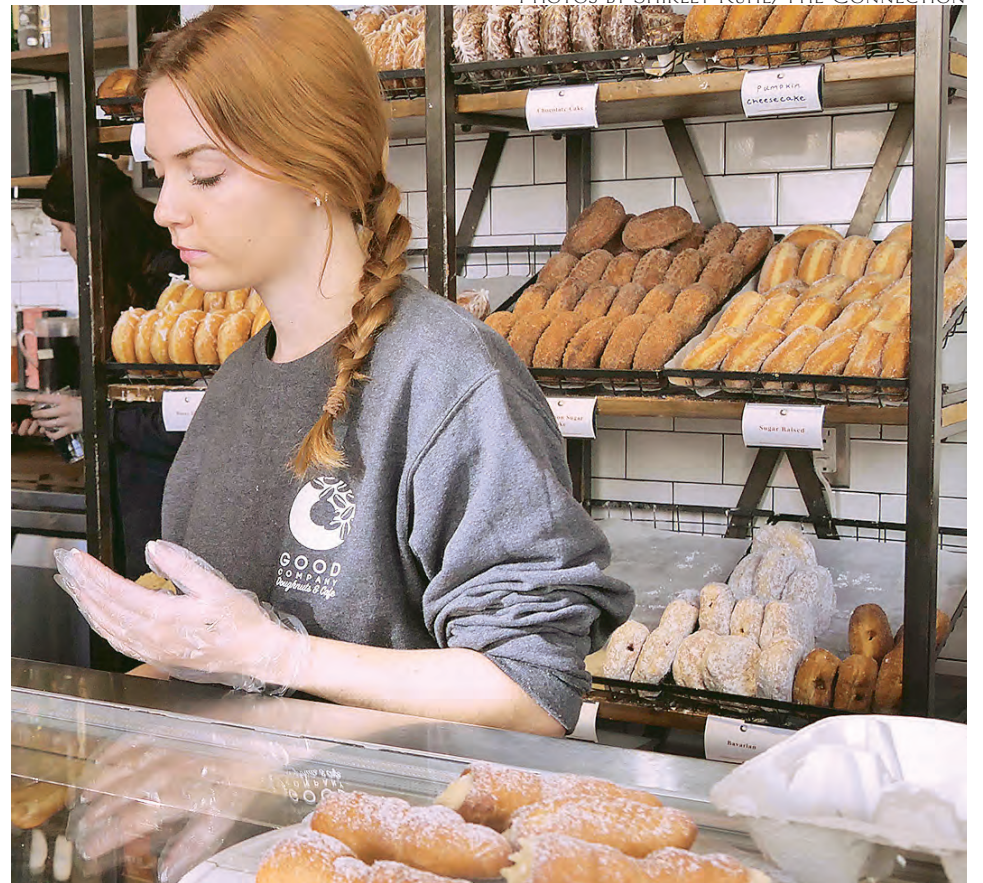
Mount Vernon Gazette



Good Company employee manning the computer says despite all of the choices, classic glazed donuts are still the best seller.



Kate Murphy, one of the owners of Good Company Donuts, decorates chocolate frosted donuts with sprinkles.



Customers line up at the donut case on Small Business Saturday to choose their favorite donut at Good Company Donuts & Cafe.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Small Business Saturday in Arlington

The Saturday after Thanksgiving, this year, Nov. 26, celebrates small businesses.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Good Company Donuts & Cafe

Customers crowd around the donut counter trying to make just the right choice of handmade donuts at Good Company Donuts on Small Business Saturday, Nov. 26. Chocolate cake crullers, jelly sticks, cinnamon buns, mocha-espresso or butter crunch donuts are only a start. Oatmeal with nuts and berries, avocado toast and egg bowls are also available.

Kate Murphy, one of the owners, is in the back of the store frosting glazed donuts and decorating them with multi-colored sprinkles. "This is one of the most popular donuts here; everyone loves sprinkles."

Murphy says the shop has been open since 2019 on this busy corner of Glebe Road. "My husband and I ran a donut shop in a small town of 5,000 in New Hampshire. It was more like a diner." Then she says her brother returned from the military and landed here. He said he needed family around so they looked for a place in the local area to open a donut shop. It took a couple of years to find the right spot.

Murphy says it is different because people in New Hampshire had cars and drove from all around to get their donuts. But here in Arlington it is mostly foot traffic from all the

high rise buildings in the Ballston area and because of the parking problem. "In New Hampshire we had old fashioned donuts but times have changed on what people expect on a donut. When we moved here people asked 'where's all the stuff' so we added other things like the seasonal cider cake donut with apple spices and cider." She says next month it will be gingerbread.

Murphy, her husband, her brother Charles Kachadoorian (who she says is the brains of the operation), his wife Melissa and a friend, Tim Terry, all pooled their savings to be able to open the donut shop. "All the others have a secondary job, but I do this full time." She says business has been growing, and they are opening another location in the Amazon building soon. Murphy says they have a large-scale bakery under construction to finance the second location.

Despite all of the choices, the employee manning the computer says the favorite donut by far is the classic honey dip donut. "We sell two times more than anything else."

Cherrydale Hardware

Cherrydale Hardware, a local favorite since 1938, has just opened its annual Christmas shop. Jacob Pruiksma, the general manager at Cherrydale, is standing behind the counter as customers stream by. He says, "We open the Christmas shop on Black



A high school student employee makes keys at Cherrydale Hardware on Small Business Saturday.

Friday every year. Customers are down there buying lots of cords and lights."

Alex Dobyan and his mother stand by the front counter asking for the tallest ladder that Cherrydale Hardware sells. They are putting up Christmas lights where they live just down the street. "My wife is home putting up Christmas lights right now," Dogyan says. His mother suggests she has been known to climb the ladder herself. She adds, "We buy everything here — dishwashing



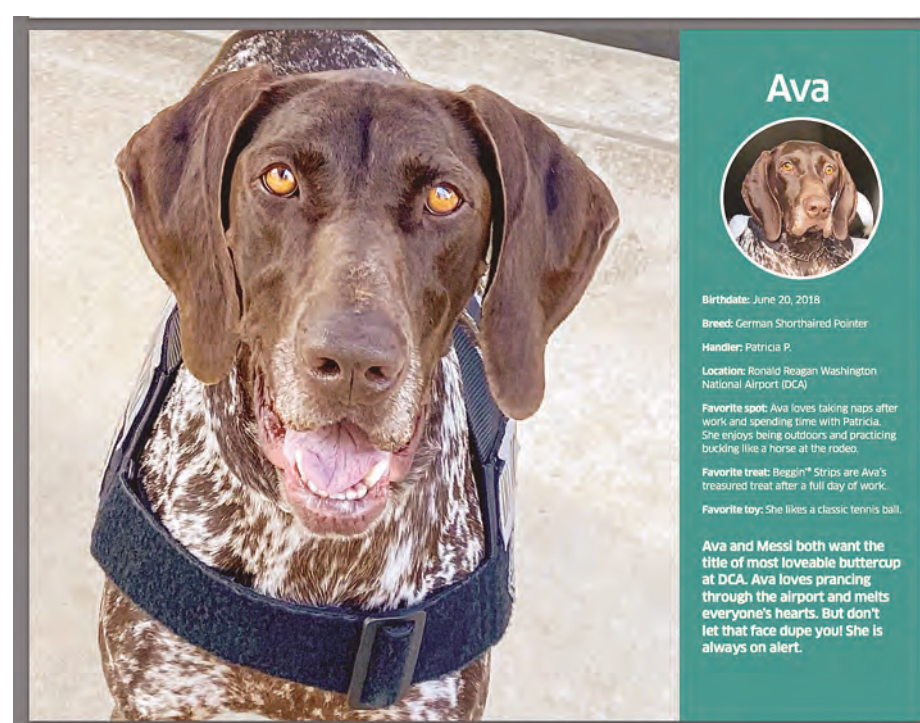
Cherrydale Hardware General Manager Jacob Pruiksma

stuff, cleaning stuff."

Charles Ricci is returning an item today but he says he has been coming since 1987 when he moved here. "I come here when I am doing projects or if something breaks. They always have it. Local residents can't do without them."

SEE SMALL BUSINESS, PAGE 6

CANINES



Of 1,000 TSA explosives detection canines, two from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) made the cut for the calendar, Messi and Ava.

2 Explosives Detection Dogs at National Make the Calendar

The Transportation Security Administration released its annual calendar this week, which honors the agency's more than 1,000 explosives detection canines working in the United States. TSA's 2022 Cutest Canine Contest winner, Eebbers, is featured on the cover of the 2023 TSA Canine Calendar. https://www.tsa.gov/sites/default/files/tsa_canine_calendar_2023.pdf

Eebbers, now retired, is an 11-year-old explosives detection canine who worked at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. He was named in memory of 19-year-old U.S. Army Pvt. James Eebbers who died on Oct. 14, 2002, in Djibouti, Africa, while assigned to the 551st Military Police Company, Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

Of 1,000 explosives detection canines, two from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) made the cut for the calendar, Messi and Ava.

MESSI is featured in February. Birthdate: Feb. 16, 2016; Breed: Yellow Labrador Retriever; Handler: Peter S.; Location: Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA); Favorite spot: On Messi's off days, he enjoys watching airplanes and playing in the grass at Gravelly Point. Favorite treat: Messi loves keeping his pearly whites clean with dental chews. Favorite toy: He enjoys playing with his Chuckit! Rope Fetch and tennis balls. Messi is a lovable and hardworking dog. He enjoys backyard fun with a tennis ball after a long day of work providing explo-

sives detection support in aircraft, cargo facilities, vehicles and buildings.

AVA is featured in June: Birthdate: June 20, 2018; Breed: German Shorthaired Pointer; Handler: Patricia P.; Location: Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA); Favorite spot: Ava loves taking naps after work and spending time with Patricia. She enjoys being outdoors and practicing bucking like a horse at the rodeo. Favorite treat: Beggin' Strips are Ava's treasured treat after a full day of work. Favorite toy: She likes a classic tennis ball.

"Ava loves prancing through the airport and melts everyone's hearts. But don't let that face dupe you! She is always on alert," says the calendar.

TSA uses canines as part of its multi-layered security operations nationwide. These highly skilled dogs are trained to detect the scent of explosives or explosive materials and are paired with handlers who use the working canine's keen sense of smell when on duty throughout the nation's transportation system.

Each canine recruit spends 16 weeks in training at the TSA Canine Training Center, located at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland in San Antonio. The canines meet their handlers, socialize to adapt to busy transportation environments, and learn their craft of detecting a variety of explosive odors before reporting to their duty stations. TSA trains about 300 canines each year.

The 2023 TSA Canine Calendar features photos and fun facts about each of this year's 13 canine win-

ners who were selected from dozens of entries submitted by TSA canine teams from across the country.

Each canine and its handler serve as a reliable resource for detecting explosives as well as providing a visible deterrent to terrorism across all transportation modes. Once on duty, these canines work to safeguard passengers and cargo across the nation's transportation systems. To find out more about what it is like to be an explosives detection canine handler, see the Explosives Detection Canine Handler video. <https://www.tsa.gov/videos/tsa-job-explosives-detection-canine-handler>

The 2023 TSA Canine Calendar is now available for immediate download https://www.tsa.gov/sites/default/files/tsa_canine_calendar_2023.pdf

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2022

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December 9th through December 11th
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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.

Karaoke at Arlington Mill 55+ Center, Wednesday, Nov. 30, 4 p.m. Perform favorite songs, lyrics projected on a large screen. Registration # 911890-04.

Responsibilities of an Executor explained by Elder Law Attorney Ed Zetlin, Wednesday, Nov. 30, 11 a.m., virtual. Registration # 911404-07.

Holiday recipe exchange, get new ideas for tasty treats, Thursday, Dec. 1, 6 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912890-01. Hosted by center director Ashley Gomez.

Who are the Windsors? Three part series exploring key members of the House of Windsor beginning Thursday, Dec. 1, 2 p.m., virtual. Presented by Ashley Craig, Library of Virginia, Registration # 912400-15.

Virtual tour of Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens with Park Guide Joe Cashman, Thursday, Dec. 1, 11:30 a.m. Registration # 912400-22.

History discussion group led by Dwight Rodgers of Encore Learning, Thursday, Dec. 1, 1 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 912402-13.

Origami class will focus on creating 3-D snowflakes, Thursday, Dec. 1, 2:30 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 912310-01. Supplies provided.

Trivia buffs welcome to join a fun-filled Trivia challenge, Thursday, Dec. 1, 11a.m., virtual. Registration # 912600-10.

55+ Travel group to tour the Perry Belmont House, D.C., Thursday, Dec. 1 Cost \$11, Arlington resident; \$13, non-resident. Bring \$10 donation for the tour. Registration # 902212-01.

Social ballroom dance, spacious dance floor, no instruction provided, partners not needed, Friday, Dec. 2, 1:45 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Introduction to line dancing, learn basic steps from instructor Suzie Pratts, Friday, Dec. 2, 10:15 a.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Travel guru Lowell Nelson to share his recent trip to Alaska, Friday, Dec. 2, 1:30 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 912400-11.

Astronomers' view of the Star of Bethlehem, Friday, Dec. 2, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Presented by Dr. Jennifer Lynn Bartlett, president, Friends of Arlington's David M. Brown Planetarium. Registration # 912400-25.

Intergenerational pen pals between 55+ members and high school students from an honors English Club, informational meeting, Friday, Dec. 2, 3:30 p.m., virtual. For additional information, email Elizabeth Poole, Langston-Brown 55+ Center director at epoole@arlingtonva.us. Registration # 912300-01.

Explore drawing with community arts programmer Jen Droblyen, Friday, Dec. 2, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. No experience necessary, materials provided. Registration # 912303-01.

55+ Travel group will travel to Philadelphia, PA for a docent-led tour of the Barnes Foundation, home to one of the world's greatest collection of impressionist, post-impressionist and early modern paintings plus other artwork, Saturday, Dec. 3. Cost \$54, Arlington resident, \$62, non-resident. Registration # 902212-02.

The Arlington Connection

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Free digital edition delivered to your email box. Go to connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe

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Small Business Saturday in Arlington

FROM PAGE 3

Greg Lanzoni is from Berkshire Massachusetts, but is well familiar with Cherrydale Hardware. “My son lives in the area. I come here for the service as well as what I buy. They know where everything is, and they don’t make you feel like you can’t ask a question. This is like a general store in New England.” And he says he can buy screws of different sizes, put them in the same bag and weigh them. “I can find things here I can’t find in a regular store like duct tape or sheet rock screws by the number.

“If they don’t have it here, you don’t need it.”

Rick’s Tattoos

Rick’s Tattoos on Langston Street is the oldest tattoo store in Virginia. Up the stairs and down the hall lined with sketches of flowers, dragons, cartoons, fantasies and up to the front desk where the General Manager will explore what kind of tattoo you have in mind.

Amy Jones has a number of her own tattoos—spiders, roses, hearts, a D.C. flag—everything. She says it is her self expression. “I started with tattoos because I was hurting inside and needed to hurt on the outside. It helped.”

Three of her seven tattoo designers sit along the wall sketching out ideas. First they draw out the design, get approval from the customer and then they settle the customer in what looks like a dentist’s chair where a tattoo can take anywhere from five minutes for a simple letter to five hours or more.

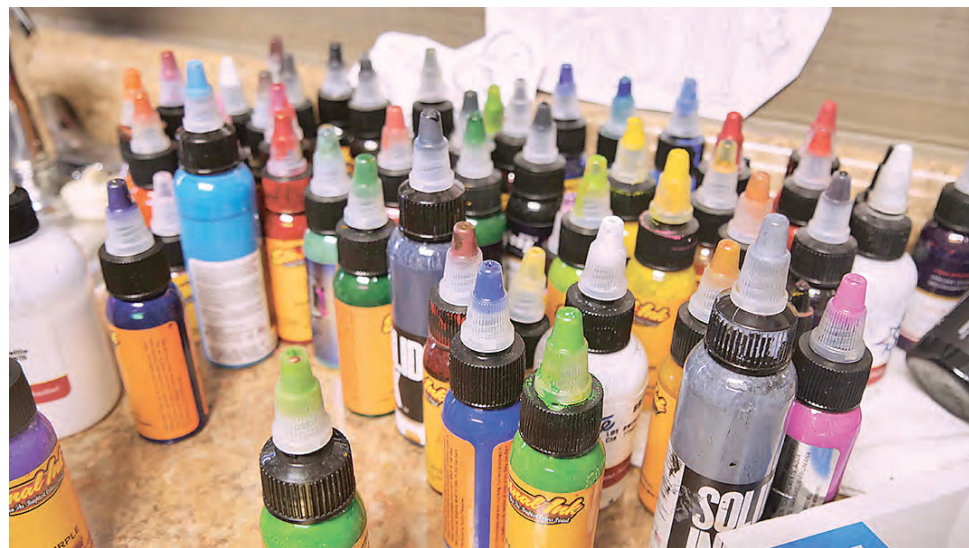
Brick, one of the designers, has just produced a “The World is Yours” design from the movie Scarface for somebody’s leg. “They



Charles Ricci has been coming to Cherrydale Hardware since he moved to Arlington in 1987.



Rick’s General Manager Amy Jones



Tattoos come in many colors.



Rick’s Tattoos on Langston Blvd. is the oldest tattoo shop in Virginia.



Alex Dobyan has come to Cherrydale Hardware to buy the biggest ladder he can find to put up his Christmas lights.



Brick, one of the tattoo designers at Rick’s.

wanted to fill in some space. They trust me to come up with something they like. They come in all the time.” He explains that a person can have a design in mind that doesn’t translate onto paper or onto the skin.

Jones explains a tattoo artist has to have an apprenticeship but actually it takes forever. “It takes 10-15 years to master it. You’re lucky to become that good.” Brick says, “You dedicate your life. All of us are artists who do



Arlington Kabobs chef, Ari, grills kabobs about 50 minutes.



Chef Ari dishes up kebob/kofta combo platter for four

Should every Saturday day be Small Business Saturday?

other things. The front desk guy does online digital art, and I paint toy soldiers. I’ve been doing that since I was a kid. It’s gotten more complicated since I try to make them historically accurate.” He says it’s another way to express your art.

Jones says they tattoo people of all ages over 18. “There is no commonality in what they request. Sometimes it is something they have seen online. There are so many reasons to get a tattoo. Some want to look cool. They are way more popular with the advent of tv shows.” Jones estimates they have about 15 customers a week. Brick says every new tattoo he does is his favorite.

As for the most unusual tattoo, “Where do you start? We have something new come in every day.” One of the most unusual tattoos they remember is a woman who recently came in every day for 2-3 weeks until her entire face was tattooed. Another was “an 87-year-old man who wanted a rainbow and a leprechaun tattooed on his butt.”

Rick’s will be moving soon to a larger

ground-floor place nearby with plenty of parking. But Jones says, “We’re not going anywhere. Being a tattoo artist takes a lifetime.”

Arlington Kabob

Arlington Kabob, located at 5046 Langston Blvd, features a variety of beef, chicken and lamb kabobs all served with rice, one side vegetable and a clay tandoori baked naan. Or have your lamb in a gyro or shawarma.

Skewers of kabobs grill for about 50 minutes while fresh dough naan bakes on the side of a tandoor oven nearby. Chef Ali prepares a carry out family combo platter with scoops of brown and white rice, naan and a combination of kabobs and kofta. A catering corporate lunch menu is also available.

Susan Clemente who opened the restaurant in 2013 said she has retired back here in Arlington and is taking care of the neighborhood. “I cook myself with fresh ingredients in small batches—onions, garlic and meat,

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION



Naan baked in a 700-degree clay tandoori oven.

cinnamon, rosemary—simple food, very light and good for the body. People work all day and want to pick up something healthy.”

Clemente says she came here from England, and she liked America so she stayed here. Her parents were Turkish and Afghan so she grew up early eating a lot of Mediterranean food—simple but tasty. She had been in the restaurant business for 30 years, then took a break when her daughter went away to college in California. Now she’s back and comments that Lee Highway and Wilson Boulevard have changed dramatically since the 80s with all the high rises and thousands of great places to eat.

She has another Afghan restaurant located at Courthouse. Arlington Kabob made it through COVID with curbside pick up and lots of neighborhood support. She says it was difficult maintaining safety protocols in the confined space in the hot kitchen with masks on, especially the employee working 10 hours at the 700 degree naan oven.

But she says the Courthouse location was more difficult because it relied on workers who weren’t in their offices during COVID. But beyond COVID, she says what really hurt was the cost of food going up. “All the places were raising prices but I couldn’t pass on the 17 percent because people weren’t working. It hasn’t let up. I don’t know if it will.”

Clemente says if you are going to start a restaurant you need to be sure of yourself and work person to person. Don’t put somebody else in charge. “You need to walk in yourself and be sure things are fresh. Back home people would hang out at the restaurant; they would know each other. These things are very important. Arlington is a tight knit community. It’s that kind of place.”

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 2

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

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

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

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

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT 2022

NOW THRU DEC. 6

DWCNV Toy Collection. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Drop off items at 13155 Compton Rd., Clifton, or drop off items at 12714 Chestnut St., Clifton. Democratic Women of Clifton and Northern Virginia sponsors of Fairfax Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue, will collect new, unwrapped toys for children of all ages; gift cards to Best Buy, Target, Old Navy, etc for older children, and monetary donations for purchase of new coats. Mail checks payable to FF&FR to DWCNV, P.O. Box 143, Clifton VA 20124, or bring items to any of three collection points: 13155 Compton Rd. or 12714 Chestnut St., in Clifton, or 12301 Delevan Dr., Herndon, before Dec 6th. The Women also are collecting monetary donations (checks or grocery store gift cards) payable to Britepaths, at DWCNV, P.O. Box 143, Clifton VA 20124 by Dec 31, to stabilize low-income working families. Visit the website: www.democratic-womenofclifton.org

DEC 1-23

"Snow Maiden." At Syntetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell St, Arlington. In a frozen forest, a lonely boy builds a girl from snow. When she mysteriously comes to life, mischief, laughter, and enchantment abound. But what will happen when the ice begins to melt? Told through dazzling movement, dance, and acrobatics, Snow Maiden is a magical tale of hope, friendship and the transformative power of dreams. Based on the beloved folktale Snegurochka, Snow Maiden is a holiday treat for friends and fans of all ages.

DEC. 1-31

Home for the Holidays Art Show. At Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Works by local artists on display the entire month of December. Visit www.artsherndon.org. Call 703-956-6590.

DEC. 2-17

The PARC at Tysons Holiday Market. Fridays and Saturdays. Celebrate the holiday season with local makers, crafters, and artisans from the Fairfax County area! Visit the holiday market at The PARC at Tysons on the first three Fridays and Saturdays of December for a pop-up shop of local artisans and small businesses offering holiday-inspired goods. The PARC will be transformed into a festive indoors and outdoors winter village, featuring a local holiday market and (free!) snowtastic activities for the whole family to enjoy! Food and beverages can be purchased onsite from local businesses as well.

DEC. 2-11

Traveling Players presents "Commedia Christmas Carol." Tickets are now available for "Commedia Christmas Carol," which runs Fridays-Sundays, Dec. 2- Dec. 11 at Traveling Players

Studio in Tysons Corner Center. Performed by Traveling Players middle and high school students, the play is a new imagining of Dickens'



Alexandria's Biggest Holiday Weekend

<https://visitalexandria.com/holidays/biggest-weekend/>

Celebrate the return of top signature events, including the 51st Annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade and the Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights.

The Christmas Walk will take place in historic Old Town Alexandria at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022. Alexandria was founded in 1749 by Scottish merchants and was named after Scotsman John Alexander who owned the land that became Alexandria. Bagpipers include the Kiltie Band of York and the City of Alexandria Pipes and Drums plus a bagpiping Santa closing the parade. This year's Grand Marshal is Redella "Del" Pepper, the recently retired, longest-serving member of Alexandria City Council with more than 36 years of service to the community.



Encore Theatrical Arts Project (ETAP) presents "The Perfect Christmas List" Dec. 10-18, 2022 at NOVA's Annandale Campus.

classic ghost story, a perfect holiday treat for the whole family. Visit <https://www.travelingplayers.org/performances/>

DEC. 2-18

Holiday Market. At 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans 27th Annual Holiday Market offers unique handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Choose from wall art, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass, and much more! Plus 2023 wall calendars to support Del Ray Artisans nonprofit. Free admission. Market is the first three weekends in December (Dec 2-4, Dec 9-11, Dec 16-18). Different artists each weekend! Open Fridays 6-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Details: delrayartisans.org/holiday-market

DEC. 2-11

Fairfax City Holiday Market. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The Fairfax City Downtown Holiday Market will be open the first two weekends of December on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Shop at the market of craft vendors as you enjoy Old Town Square in the heart of Historic Downtown Fairfax covered in holiday lights. The festival will include live holiday music, hot drinks, heated tents and gourmet treats, and more!

DEC. 2-3

Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend. Taste of Scotland: Friday, December 2, 2022; Parade: Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022. Campagna Center has a new presenting partnership for the 51st Annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk. The

parade will be produced by Visit Alexandria in partnership with Campagna Center and the City of Alexandria, as part of Alexandria's Biggest Holiday Weekend. Learn more about the 2022 parade at ALXscottishwalk.com, or send questions directly to alxscottishwalk@visitalexva.com.

DEC. 2-3

McLean Holiday Art & Crafts Festival. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. The McLean Holiday Art & Crafts Festival will feature a wide variety of high-quality handmade items just in time for the holidays. This indoor show features the work of 80 talented, juried, regional artisans. Produced by MCC in conjunction with the Northern Virginia Handcrafters Guild, the juried show will be held Friday through Sunday, Dec. 2 through 4. Show hours are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 2; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 3; and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 4. Admission is \$5, free for children ages 12 or younger. The admission price is good for all three days of the show. Visit the center's website, www.mcleancenter.org, or call 703-790-0123, TTY: 711.

DEC. 2-3 AND 9-10

Holiday on the Farm. 5:30-7:30 p.m. (timed entries). At Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. See the farm as you never have before, lit up with hundreds of holiday lights. Wagon rides, indoor activities, food, animal interactions and campfires. One-hour entry in 15-minute slots starting at 5:30 p.m. For times and to register, visit www.fairfax-county.gov/parks/parktakes

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. Old Town's waterfront will shine for the 22nd Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights sponsored by Amazon on Saturday, December 3, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. when more than 50 brightly lit boats cruise along one mile of the Potomac River shoreline. Boat parade dockside festivities will entertain parade-goers from 2 to 8 p.m. The boat parade is part of a weekend of festivities including the 51st annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade. Head to Waterfront Park at the foot of King Street, near the official parade start line at the Alexandria City Marina, for festivities from 2 to 8 p.m. including a pop-up beer garden from Alexandria's award-winning Port City Brewing Company, hot chocolate from Dolci Gelati, gourmet popcorn from America's Favorite Gourmet Popcorn and holiday music from 97.1 WASH-FM.

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

2022 Alternative Gift Market & Craft Fair. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At 1625 Wiehle Ave., Reston. Shop online Nov. 25-Dec. 4. After two years, Unitarian Universalist Reston's Alternative Gift Market and Craft Fair is back in person this year. With the holiday shopping season upon us, enjoy socially conscious gift-giving. Visit UUReston.org/agm

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

Christmastide at Gunston Hall. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Discover Christmases of the past through activities from the 1920s and the 1780s. See how Christmas has changed over time. Help visitors feed their curiosity by thinking about life for different people—enslaved, indentured, wealthy, and poor—at 18th-century Gunston

SEE HOLIDAY CALENDAR, PAGE 10
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Chorale Christmas Concert

The Arlington Chorale will have its Christmas concert on Saturday, Dec. 10 at 5 p.m. at the Westover Baptist Church, 1125 Patrick Henry Drive, Arlington, VA 22205.

Featuring John Rutter's Magnificat and Kirke Mechem's Seven Joys of Christmas, you'll hear some familiar Christmas carols, as well as beautiful music with hints of tango, musical theater and jazz. Accompanied by a chamber orchestra of local professional players, the Chorale's concert will also highlight the talents of soprano Helena Colindres and two of our Youth Community Council students.

After the performance, you are invited to join the Chorale downstairs for a reception with light refreshments. It's a special community event you won't want to miss. Tickets are \$20 for adults and free for children under 12.

Tickets at this link:

https://www.flipcause.com/secure/cause_pdetails/MTcwNjY2

CALENDAR

NOW THRU 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 Wrbican. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 30

Coffee and Conversation. Arlington Neighborhood Village presents an update on National Landing. With the award of Amazon's HQ2 project, South Arlington is undergoing an exciting transformation into a more complete, connected, and walkable urban downtown. Once completed, National Landing will encompass more than 20 million square feet of office, 26,000 residential units and over 4 million square feet of retail in addition to new academic space, new and enhanced parks, enlivened streetscapes, and billions

of dollars of mobility infrastructure investment. Mr. Robert Mandle, Deputy Executive Director with the National Landing Business Improvement District, will give an update on the development of National Landing, and all that it has to offer. Zoom link for Coffee and Conversation: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88948577106?pwd=eW0rN1RTTU-51TmJ5NnF2QXZINmdUQT09> Visit www.arlnvil.org.

DEC. 10

More Than I Should. At Theatre on the Run 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive, Arlington. Jane Franklin Dance returns to Theatre on the Run with More Than I Should exploring themes of vulnerability, balance and control, progression, self-awareness and passion.

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

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 9

for some of our most vulnerable community members – children in need.

Donation Locations
Officers will collect new, unwrapped toys for children ages newborn to 17 at the following locations:
Sunday, December 4 at Ballston-Virginia Square, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
10th Street N. at N. Pollard Street
Wednesday, December 7 at Ballston BID Day, 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.
4035 Fairfax Drive
Those wishing to donate toys, but unable to attend the Fill the Cruiser events can drop off donations at Police Headquarters, located at 1425 N. Courthouse Road, through Friday, December 9 at the 2nd Floor Administrative Support Unit Front Counter from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., Monday thru Friday.

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

Hall during the holiday season. This family-oriented event includes crafts, games, and live music. Visit the website:
<https://gunstonhall.org/events/christ-mastide-at-gunston-hall/>

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

Cookies with Santa. 10 a.m to 2 p.m.
Join Reston Association when Santa makes his first stop in Reston. Join the holiday countdown with a cookie jar full of fun and see Santa Claus before he embarks on his annual journey around the world. With a craft, cookies & cocoa and activities to jumpstart your holiday season and a letter to and from Santa will sure be a highlight. Don't forget your camera! Registration and fee is only for the child, but parents must stay at the event. Contact Ashleigh@reston.org or 703-435-6577.

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

Claus & Paws. 2-4 p.m. Dress up your pet, bring your camera and take a photo with Santa to share with family and friends this holiday season. Santa will also have a gift for your four-legged family member. This event will be held outdoors at the Lake House, Reston Contact Ashleigh@reston.org or 703-435-6577.

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

Historic Clifton Holiday Homes Tour. 4-7 p.m. In the Town of Clifton. Kick off the holiday season at the Clifton Holiday Homes Tour. This year's tour will feature four historic houses, an open caboose, arts and crafts show in the Town Hall, and a gospel ensemble in the Clifton Primitive Baptist Church. Tickets: Prior to Tour \$20 adults, \$5 child; Day of Tour: \$25/adults, \$5 child. Tickets are available for purchase in town shops/restaurants. Visit <http://cliftonva.gov>.

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

Herndon Homes Tour. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tour Herndon homes decorated for the holidays. Tickets \$15 through Nov. 26; \$20 Nov. 27-Dec. 3. Buy in person at Arts Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon; (credit, cash or check) and Herndon Florist, 1675 Reston Parkway Suite G,

SEE HOLIDAY CALENDAR.

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HOLIDAY CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

Reston; (cash or check) or online through Dec. 2 at holidayhomeshernndon.eventbrite.com. More information at holidayhomestou-rofherndon.org

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

Gifts from the Heart Exhibit & Shopping Event. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Reston Community Center at Lake Anne, Reston. People can enjoy the artists' creations on display in the Jo Ann Rose Gallery through January 9, 2023; 3D Gallery exhibit items will remain on display through February 18, 2023. Artist entry fees and 10 percent of all sales will be donated to Cornerstones. The exhibit showcases original works of art in a variety of media – including oil, acrylic, watercolor, collage, stained glass, ceramic, sculpture and mixed media – with a wide range of sizes and prices. The December 3 sales event will offer the community a chance to purchase artwork and get into the holiday spirit. RCC will also offer a virtual artists' directory, which will connect visitors with the dozens of artists displaying their wares at Gifts from the HeART. Interested shoppers can shop directly from the artists' links. Find the directory online at www.restoncommunitycenter.com beginning December 3.

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

Holiday Model Train Show. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. At W&OD Caboose Open House, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. At Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Contact herndonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

Holiday Tree Lighting & Sing-Along. 5-6 p.m. Carols, tree lighting and a visit from Santa. At Town Hall Square, 730 Elden Street, Herndon. Visit dulleschamber.org or call 571-323-5300.

HOLIDAYS AT THE GRANGE

Dec. 3-4. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Great Falls Studios Artfest.

Saturday/Dec. 10. 3 p.m. Holiday Afternoon Tea. Sunday/Dec. 11. 4:30 p.m. Amadeus Presents Sounds of the Season.

Visit the website: www.gfgrange.org.

DEC. 3-4

"The Nutcracker." At Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, 4915 E. Campus Drive, Alexandria. Presented by Metropolitan School of the Arts. Sat., Dec. 3 and Sun., Dec. 4 at 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. on both days. This year, MSA is replacing the Russian musical suite with Ukrainian folk dance in support of the Ukrainian crisis, and invited Colleen Prince, a dancer/choreographer from Carpathia Folk Dance Ensemble of Washington, D.C. to help choreograph the MSA Nutcracker. Tickets range from \$30 to \$32 per person. Go to www.metropolitanarts.org for more information, and purchase tickets at <https://ci.ovationtix.com/35491/production/1140336>.

SUNDAY/DEC. 4

Great Falls Tree Lighting. At Great Falls Village Center Field, Great Falls. Join in on Sunday, December 4 for the annual tree lighting at the Great Falls Village Field. There will be pony rides, a petting zoo, school choir performances, Live Nativity, and a special visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus.

SUNDAY/DEC. 4

Herndon Holiday Arts & Crafts Show. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. More than 70 arts and craft vendors offer unique gifts, decorations and handmade items. Free admission and parking. At Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Visit herndon-va.gov/events. Call 703-787-7300.

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Wintermarkt. 12-7 p.m. Bringing the Old World charm of Christmas in Europe to Herndon. Family-focused events, entertainment, and items for all members of the household. Downtown Herndon, 777 Lynn Street, Herndon. Visit Herndonwintermarkt.com or call 571-323-5300.

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Christmas Around the World. 4-8 p.m. At Parkwood Baptist Church, 8726 Braddock Road, Annandale. "Christmas Around the World," celebrating Jesus' birth features concerts, costumed reenactors, live animals, biblical stories. Tickets at www.parkwood.org/registration beginning Nov. 28. Free parking. Visit the website: www.parkwood.org

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Holiday Cheer. 7:30 p.m. at Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Blvd., Arlington. Presented by the National Chamber Ensemble. This program brings the finest classical masterpieces and traditional holiday favorites together for a fun and memorable evening for the entire family. Festivities begin with a "Sleigh Ride" – Leroy Anderson's classic and "Chanukkah Festival". Soprano Nancy Peery Marriott (soprano), a long-time NCE favorite, will perform seasonal favorites and lead a Carol Sing-along that will have the entire audience joining in the spirit of the holidays. Tickets: <https://www.nationalchamberensemble.org/tickets.htm>

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Christmas Carol Sing-Along. 3-5 p.m. Historic Pleasant Grove is holding its annual Christmas Carol Sing, followed by cookies and hot cider, at our quaint historic site. Free community event at 8641 Lewinsville Road, McLean. Visit www.HistoricPleasantGrove.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Christmas Calamity Improv. 7-9:30 p.m. Come ring the bells! Improv with a seasonal twist! At Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Visit artsherndon.org. Tickets \$15. Call 703-956-6590.

DEC. 10-11

"The Nutcracker." 4 p.m. At Centreville High School, Centreville. Presented by the Mia Saunders School of Ballet. Tickets available at the door or online for Saturday and Sunday shows for \$10 for children under 5 and \$12 for ages 6 & up. Proceeds benefit CVHS Drama Scholarships and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. More info at MiaSaundersBallet.com.

DEC. 10-18

"The Perfect Christmas List." At Richard J. Ernst Theater, NOVA Annandale Campus. Encore Theatrical Arts Project (ETAP) presents a glamorous and dazzling holiday musical that features 30 performers, creative choreography, elaborate sets, stunning costumes, and 20 musical numbers. Show dates: Saturday, December 10th at 12 p.m., 4 p.m., 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, December 11th at 12 p.m., 4 p.m.; Friday, December 16th at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, December 17th at 12 p.m., 4 p.m., 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, December 18th at 12 p.m., 4 p.m. Visit www.ensemble-tap.org

SUNDAY/DEC. 11

Toys for Tots Concert. 6 p.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. The Vienna Community Band is partnering with the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation to celebrate 75 years of giving! There's no charge for admission. They ask you to bring a new unwrapped toy to the concert. All collected toys are distributed to children in Fairfax County. Visit <https://www.viennacom-munityband.org/>

TUESDAY/DEC. 13

Holiday Concert Series. 8 p.m. Presented by Encore Creativity for older Adults. At George Washington Masonic Memorial, Alexandria. Encore's local choral ensembles – Encore Chorales, Encore ROCKS and Sentimental Journey Singers - will perform crowd-pleasing holiday songs with live musical accompaniment in a variety of venues in Virginia. Visit the website: encorecreativity.org/events/category/performance

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CENTREVIEW

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 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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Lucky Me – Or Not



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As a diagnosed-with-lung-cancer-at-age-54-and-half adult, I haven't felt particularly lucky. Nevertheless, I rarely if ever, woe is me. I take the bad with good, and vice versa. I'm never too high and hopefully, never too low. I've always felt, since being diagnosed with cancer in late February 2009 that the cancer/diagnosis was bad enough on its own, so I didn't need to make it any worse by dwelling on it and/or considering how unlucky I was; considering that I was lifelong non-smoker and second son of a family with no "immediate" cancer history. Let alone to then be diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer stage IV and given a "terminal"/13 month to two-year prognosis by my oncologist – at age 54 and a half. A prognosis which, on the face of it, offered very little hope. And to invoke a M*A*S*H comment by Lt. Col. Henry Blake, my oncologist wasn't "blowing any sunshine up my skirt."

Yet somehow, I didn't die. Possibly due to a misdiagnosis, and/or possibly affected by my never-woe-is-me attitude and equally never-say-die approach, literally-ish. I always figured that receiving bad news from my oncologist, whenever it arrived would be disheartening enough so that I didn't need to put the cart before the horse, so to speak and write any epitaphs (sort of like Orson Welles advertising that Paul Masson would "not sell any wine before its time"). Rather, I would let the treatment, side effects, scans, and all, good, bad, or indifferent, happen in due course and not react too much in advance of anything actually happening (as in getting sick/being hospitalized). I decided to look before I leaped, and not jump to any conclusions. I would try to take it all stride and not cart any horses.

And sure, there were highs and lows, growth/progression, delays in treatment due to low white blood cell counts, high and low potassium, high creatinine (still to this day), and as it turned out, many post-scan characterizations of "stable disease;" words to live by, you might say (I certainly have – for years). As you might imagine, I've lived very happily with "stable." Certainly "shrinkage" was preferred/the hope, but it occurred less and less while "stable" I heard more and more. I soon realized – and embraced "stable." As I often say, "stable" is hardly the problem. I can live with 'stable. 'Stable' is unlikely to kill me." Granted, it's not a cure, but neither is it a dreaded complication regarding the underlying problem: cancer and tumor growth.

"Stable" is a way of life for me. "Stable," as I'm extremely fond of saying, has become "my new favorite word." The goal, as much of one as one could have when you're diagnosed with a "terminal" disease, was/is to somehow turn cancer into a "chronic" disease (like diabetes) where you can live a relatively normal life while treatment/monitoring of your disease continues until monitoring is no longer required, if you know what I mean?. Unfortunately, you'll still have doctor's appointments and multiple scans, but you'll be alive and living – with cancer. You'll likely never be cancer-free or have peace of mind, (concerning your cancer), but you'll still have the life expectancy you were anticipating; not one cut short by this dreaded disease. And as an originally-diagnosed-as-"terminal" cancer patient, "chronic" is my brand new/real-time favorite word. And I couldn't think of ever getting here without having previously been "stable." Moreover, it sure beats the alternative, and as the old saying says: "Living is its own reward."

Realistically speaking, I don't need to be cured (of course I dream of that), but it's not front and center, anymore; it's more my subconscious. I'm thrilled to be "chronic." And since (in my mind), "chronic" is the new "stable," ("stable" all grown up, you might say), "chronic" is hardly the problem. I can live with "chronic." Heck, considering that I thought I'd be dead 12 years ago, "chronic" is no more of a problem – for me, than "stable" has been.

Granted, it's not a cure, but it's a living, one I'm incredibly lucky to still have. For a cancer patient who was given a two-percent chance to survive beyond two years, to still be living nearly 14 years later (late Feb. 2023) is a miracle. I was happy to be called "stable." Now, if my life continues as I hope, and I am considered "chronic," I will be just as grateful, every minute of every day, to be called "chronic Ken."

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