

The Arlington Connection

Mardi Gras Comes to School

PAGE 3

Omar Kyenjebyek carrying first place King Cake prize back to his mother at Innovation Elementary School as principal Claire Peters shows him a surprise at the ceremony.

Journey To Affordable Senior Housing

PAGE 4

Pets!

PAGE 8



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE

THE CONNECTION

FEBRUARY 22-28, 2023

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Dr. Whyte's New Book

Released February 14, 2023

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEART DISEASE RISK

JOHN WHYTE, MD

Chief Medical Officer of WebMD



Heart disease is the leading cause of death among Americans. You have the power to reduce your risk, and WebMD's Dr. John Whyte, MD will show you just how easy it is to do it.

You Have Heart Disease

Are words no one ever wants to hear. But, what if there was a way for fewer people, including yourself, to hear those words?

So now what?

Take Control of Your Heart Disease Risk, Dr. Whyte shares straightforward information to help you on your health journey, including:

- A risk calculator to assess your personal risk level
- A four-week meal plan with tasty recipes
- An exercise guide to help you move your body without needing to purchase fancy equipment
- Discussion of various digital tools and apps and whether they're worth the money

Despite advances in diagnosis and treatment, heart disease remains a major cause of illness and death. However, by proactively living a heart-friendly lifestyle, you can mitigate your risk for years to come.

...and this book will show you just how easy it is.

Order this and Dr. Whyte's other books on Amazon.com



Sign up for **FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION** to all of our papers



www.connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe

"FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

Office of 55+ Programs
Department of Parks
and Recreation
300 N. Park Dr.,
Arlington, VA 22203
703-228-4747

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.

America's first Black senators, Hiram Revels and Blanche K. Bruce, presented by historian Dan Holt, Thursday, Feb. 23, 1:30 p.m. View the presentation via Zoom at the Walter Reed 55+ Center, registration # 912899-08 or from home, registration # 912899-09.

Movie night, Thursday, Feb. 23, 6 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center, showing of "Elvis" (2022) (PG13). Registration # 912804-12.

Library of Virginia's Genealogy Series concludes with a presentation of photographs and other historical images, Thursday, Feb. 23, 2 p.m., virtual. Registration # 912400-39.

Open art studio for artists who work at their own pace, materials not provided, Thursday, Feb. 23, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Latte Lounge at Walter Reed 55+ Center, Friday, Feb. 24, 10 a.m. Regular and decaf served by volunteer barista Ben Childers. Registration # 912801-04.

Social Ballroom Dance, Friday, Feb. 24, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+

Center. Spacious dance floor, no partners needed. Drop in. Sunshine Gang band musicians invite you to bring an instrument and join the fun playing rock and popular selections in a low-key and music loving atmosphere, Friday, Feb. 24, 1 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Social art swap at Arlington Mill 55+ Center, Sunday, Feb. 26, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Bring your own artwork or supplies to create a piece onsite to swap. Registration # 912300-10.

Yarn circle, work on knitting or crocheting projects with fellow 55+ friends, Sunday, Feb. 26, 1-4 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. All skill levels welcome. Drop-in.

Explore techniques of famous artists with Community Arts Programmer Jennifer Droblyen, Monday, Feb. 27, 10:30 a.m., virtual. Registration # 912302-06.

Ice skating, exclusive hour for 55+ participants, Monday, Feb. 27, 8:50 a.m. – 10 a.m., MedStar Capitals Iceplex, Ballston Mall, roof level 8. Parking \$1, rental skates, \$1. To register go to www.medstarcapital-iceplex.com, check Senior Public Skate.

Short story reading and discussion of "A Piece of String" by Guy de Maupassant, Monday, Feb. 27, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 912402-24 or virtual, registration # 912402-25.

Aurora Hills 55+ Center's book club will discuss, "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins, Monday, Feb. 27, 11:30 a.m. Drop-in.

Filmmakers interest group, all levels of
SEE FLOURISHING, PAGE 5



Brandenburg and Blue

Chamber series

MARCH 10, 2023 - 7:30 P.M.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

MARCH 12, 2023 - 3:00 P.M.

Westminster Presbyterian Church

J.S. Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 1, BWV 1046, F major

Jonathan Kolm: TBA (World premiere commission)

– sponsored by Virginia American Water

G.F. Handel: Excerpts from Water Music Suite No. 1

Adult: \$45 Student: \$15 Youth: \$5

(703) 548-0885

alexsym.org

Mardi Gras Comes to Innovation Elementary

The more over the top the better, their wildest imaginations.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Chef David Guas stands in the library at Innovation Elementary School beside a table of shoeboxes decorated with the wildest imaginings of fifth grade students.

“And the second place winner in the Mardi Gras Shoe Box Float Contest is Edwin Pancheco. Now let’s have a drum roll — the first place winner is Omar Kyenjebyek.” A round of shouts and clapping erupts from the student audience. Edwin won for the soccer match shoebox float and Omar for his lego creation.

Both Omar and Edwin said it took them about a day to finish their creations. Omar said he really liked Minecraft, and his winning float featured legos with a lake on the top as well as legos filling the inside. His friend Adam helped Omar come up with the idea of the island.

Edwin’s inspiration was the World Cup. The top of the shoe box featured a net at each end with a ball in the middle and Messi (because lots of people like him) playing Ronaldo, who is a favorite of Edwin’s.

Principal Claire Peters points to the mothers beaming proudly in the back of the room as each winner receives two famous Bayou Bakery King Cakes—one to share with their family and another with their classmates. The King Cake is a tradition during Mardi Gras—a sweet cake with a small plastic baby hidden inside. The person who finds the baby is said to get good luck for the year. Peters says while she has celebrated Mardi Gras she had never ordered her own King Cake and is looking forward to getting a taste.

Guas’s version of a King Cake is a Danish style European cake filled with creole cream cheese, dusted with cinnamon sugar and frosted with fluffy vanilla icing sprinkled with the three Mardi Gras colors — gold for power, green for faith and purple for justice. And of course the plastic baby for the lucky winner.

Guas is the owner of Bayou Bakery located just around the corner by Courthouse and a NOLA native through and through. He decided to share his childhood tradition growing up in New Orleans with the students of Innovation Elementary by sponsoring a shoebox float competition among the fifth grade students. The third and fourth grade students were the judges of the contest.

Peters says, “You should have seen the excitement when the third and fourth graders walked into the room full of the shoebox floats. I hope they are energized about what they will do when it is their turn to make the shoebox floats in fifth grade. And I love this cooperation with our neighbor who came up



Chef David Guas at Innovation Elementary School awards ceremony for Mardi Gras shoebox floats competition which he sponsored.



David Guas with second place winner Edwin Pancheco, first place winner Omar Kyenjebyek and principal Claire Peters.



Third and fourth graders judged the room full of fifth grade entries in the Mardi Gras shoebox float competition.

with the idea.”

Guas remembers creating a float every year at Lake Castle Elementary in east New Orleans. “It was a moment I always looked

forward to each year. I think I did Star Wars one year, and the sports teams were always a popular theme — and of course, Cabbage Patch Kids and Garfield.”

Guas donated the materials for the shoeboxes—everything from pom poms, glitter, beads, markers and, of course, glue to hold it altogether. “The more over the top, the better; there’s nothing too much for Mardi Gras.” The students took his advice to heart. One float was covered entirely with pom poms; another with multi-colored beads with a small gingerbread figure in the middle.

Guas urged them to think “outside the shoebox. It doesn’t have to be Mardi-Gras theme; do what you love.” Peters says she combined the shoebox project with a budgeting learning experience. “They had to make decisions on what they could afford to put on their float.”

The festivities began on Monday, Feb. 6 when Guas presented to the students his personally designed slideshow about the history and tradition of Mardi Gras. He explained besides being a big ol’ party, Mardi Gras is held right before the season of Lent which is the time when many Catholics give up meat, sweets or something special as a reminder of their promises to God.

He explained it all started in France a long time ago and has been celebrated in Europe for centuries with the largest and most famous celebrations taking place in France. Artists create paper mache floats for parades which take place day and night. He said French settlers brought Mardi Gras to America in the late 1700s.

“The first official Mardi Gras celebration took place in my home city of New Orleans in 1857.” He explains one of the most iconic features of Mardi Gras is the parade where colorful floats fill the streets just like the miniature versions the students have created for their own shoebox float parade. He quoted Mark Twain, “An American has not seen the United States until he has seen Mardi-Gras in New Orleans.”

While Guas lives in Virginia, he says it is only an address. “The music we listen to, the food we cook; it’s all New Orleans. It’s in our culture. We can’t escape it.” This is evidenced by the Bayou Bakery carnival cake donut and King Cake Hurricane cocktail special for Mardi Gras and the New Orleans themed beignets with chicory coffee, jambalaya, gumbo, deviled eggs with bacon and pickled jalapeños on the regular menu at Bayou Bakery.

The winning shoebox floats as well as a sample of other floats will be on display at Bayou Bakery during the Mardi Gras season.

When Guas isn’t baking scones, pralines and cornbread and inventing dishes like the new Friday special shrimp cakes, he is serving free lunches on the street during Covid and flying to the Ukraine-Poland border to break down forklifts of beef knuckles in the World Central Kitchen international relief effort and receiving recognition as a world class chef. This morning he has already received four to five emails about the ongoing relief efforts in Turkey. He is a longtime community leader who has received numerous awards for his efforts to be a good neighbor.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Black Seniors at Culpepper Garden

The journeys three current Black residents made to Culpepper Garden.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Three current Black residents of Culpepper Garden in Arlington shared their experience.

Brenda Younger was on the waiting list for affordable senior housing for three years in Fairfax County and had done some looking around. "I was desperate to get out of the situation living with my daughter and her three teenage sons." She continues, "My blood pressure was high. I was anxious and nervous all of the time. All that energy; I didn't need that at that stage. I still don't."

Younger has been at Culpepper Garden for going on three years. She had picked up an application but didn't hear back. Then the Department of Aging in Fairfax County made the connection. "Paul from Culpepper Garden called me, and we chatted and joked for half an hour." She filled out "about a 20-page booklet" and after about 2-1/2 months, "I got in."

Younger is satisfied at Culpepper Garden but if she had her way, "I'd have a washer and dryer in my unit. I do a lot of wash. And the heat is loud and wakes me up." But she has found her place volunteering in the community store where residents stop in to get household goods or treats such as popcorn or potato chips. "Candy bars are the big seller, like snickers."

She has also been elected to the resident council where she serves as secretary. "It is a lot of work."

Younger, now 77-years-old, is from Macon, Georgia and remembers back in the day it took two hours to get to Atlanta and now it's just 45 minutes. She remembers when she used to march in the City. "I was a teenager and we all participated. They had rallies at local churches and right around the corner they were trying to recruit teenagers to demonstrate." She remembers marching to integrate a park. "The white folks were all around jeering — the expression and look of hate. You could see it in their eyes; you could feel it."

That's how she met Martin Luther King Jr. "He was just a youngster, just like anyone you would meet on the street, when I met him. But he was a different person in the pulpit."

Younger feels she has been blessed "just a little girl coming from Macon, Georgia. I have achieved success and I'm very thankful and glad I've met the people I have."

Edward Little ("They call me 'pop.'") has been at Culpepper Garden for two years. One day his daughter in Maryland called him at his mobile home in S. Carolina and said, "Get ready to move." He says, "She wanted to get me closer to her." He says his daughter told him they have a room now and his grandson was going to drive down and get him.

"I said no-o-o." He remembers his grandson arrived on a Saturday with a U-Haul and



Edward Little



Timothy Barnes



Brenda Younger



Culpepper Garden residents (from left) Edward Little, Timothy Barnes, Brenda Younger.

Little started pulling out stuff from the closet and the drawers. "I lost a lot of stuff coming here."

Little says he likes it here. But it was an adjustment moving from a mobile home with three bedrooms, two baths and a big yard to an apartment he'd never seen before. "Space, I miss that." Another adjustment was the loss of his truck. "My daughter said 'you don't need a big truck—sell it.' I listened to her."

But it was a big change. "I could go when I wanted to; I had freedom." Now he doesn't have any transportation except the loop that arrives on a schedule at Culpepper Garden to take residents shopping. "And it is on their terms. You only shop for 40 minutes. I like to cook so I go down all the aisles making up meals as I go." He says he cooks anything but his favorites are jambalaya and his special catfish and seasoned grits.

Younger wants to know if Little uses milk in his grits to make them creamy. "No, but I use garlic salt, cheese and butter to make my own spicy recipe."

Little had a hip replacement in September and is currently using a walker but "I had been doing the food bank." Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) stops by weekly to serve the needs of about 70 low-income Culpepper residents for supplemental groceries. Before his operation Little had been a volunteer bagging food like he used to do at his church back home. "It looked like God was moving up here with me."

"I believe God's hand has been over my life." He says when he moved from New York to South Carolina in the 50s his friends warned him about the big difference. But he says he didn't personally feel the hate that Younger experienced. "God gave me extra protection. I don't know why he did it just for me. God don't touch us all in the same way but he does touch all of us."

Little says right now in his life he is thankful for his daughter, Angela Smith, "who has become everything to me. She is my wife, my mother — the love she has for me. She is always right there."

Timothy Barnes says three years ago he had a regular job "just like you — working 14 hours a day." Now he sits in his wheelchair with a leg amputated at the knee as a result of diabetic neuropathy. "I used to be independent. Now having people take care of me is a big change."

Barnes says that his family growing up never went to doctors. He used to soak his feet in epsom salts. "I didn't know." So by the time he ended up in the hospital they told him they would have to take his toe, then part of his leg. "I thought, what am I going to do living without my leg?"

He said, "I couldn't move. They had to bathe me, change me. I was upset with everybody. I was on a flat table made of steel." He said somebody came to get him, and he made some progress in rehab. He was doing

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

SEE BLACK SENIORS, PAGE 5

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

NEWS

Black Seniors at Culpepper Garden

FROM PAGE 4

push ups. "I wanted to go back to work in 2-3 weeks."

Barnes ended up in a nursing home in Fairfax for one-and-a-half years. He says he couldn't get used to different people doing different stuff. "It was eating at me. With some you don't feel it and with others, you feel like you've been stabbed by a knife." But he said he had a lot of really good people working with him and they said they would try to get him out of there. He thought "I gotta get out of here. I don't want to be in this bed staring at the ceiling all day."

He got a call from Culpepper and he thought it was Culpeper, Virginia. He didn't want to move so far away from people he knew. "I didn't take it seriously. Nobody gets out of a nursing home." But when the time finally came to move to Culpepper Gardens in Arlington, he had to get rid of his truck and his tools. "You realize you done when you give up your tools."

Now Barnes cooks for himself, "mostly country food like I'm used to." But he does like the Culpepper chef's roast beef and sometimes he buys a meal. "The food is like a five-star restaurant compared to the nursing home with no salt, no nothing, bland."

Barnes left home at 15 since he was old enough to take care of himself and has been doing just that ever since. "I'm doing fine,

have a positive attitude and keep going."

Culpepper Garden is the largest low-income retirement property in the area and the only one that has a dining plan. Residents pay rent based on their individual incomes with subsidies, contributions and the partnership with Arlington County assuring that no resident ever has to leave Culpepper Garden due to lack of funds alone. Culpepper Garden's growing waitlist tripled in 2022.

Currently 16 percent of Culpepper Garden residents are African American, mirroring the demographics of Arlington County. Of these about 6 percent of Assisted Living residents are African American. Jasmin Witcher, Culpepper Garden Development and Communication Director says, "In these inflationary post Covid (sort of) times, we provide a critical safety net for black older adults who were among those hardest hit by Covid, have seen the highest increases in homelessness and have far less access to affordable housing and services.

"Black seniors face many challenges finding housing. In addition to a lengthy waiting list, they often have fewer financial resources to draw upon which puts them at greater risk for adverse health outcomes."

For more information: culpeppergarden.org

"FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

FROM PAGE 2

experience welcome, Monday, Feb. 27, 4 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Presented by video enthusiast Nick Englund. Registration # 912403-14.

Chess players of all levels and newcomers welcome. Learn strategies and famous moves from Chess Master Macon Shibut, Monday, Feb. 27, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Madison Community Center. Drop-in.

Getting a good night's sleep, practical strategies to develop better sleep habits, presented by Kate Chutuape, Virginia Hospital Center, Tuesday, Feb. 28, 11 a.m., virtual. Registration # 912500-19.

Celebrate National Nutrition Month with a lesson on benefits of eating fruits and vegetables of different colors, Wednesday, March 1, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Presented by Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Food Volunteers. Registration # 913501-01.

Travel tricks and tips presented

by travel enthusiast Shettima Abdulmalik, Wednesday, March 1, 5:30 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 913400-30.

Arlington Senior Golf Club gearing up for a new season, April through October, members play at 26 different courses. For more information, contact membership chairman Dennis MacDonald at dkmacdonald@att.net or visit www.arlington-seniorgolfclub.org.

55+ Travel group to visit Baltimore's American Visionary Art Museum and the "Esther and the Dream of One Loving Human Family" exhibit, Wednesday, March 1. Cost \$24, Arlington resident; \$28, non-resident. Registration # 902303-01.

WhatsApp is a free message app for smartphones. Learn the ins and outs of how to download the app, make calls, send texts and more, Thursday, March 2, 2 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Bring your phone to class. Registration # 913403-04.

Let us know about an upcoming event
www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar



We are proud to be Alexandria's leading nursing facility with a 50-year tradition of excellence!



TOP RATED SKILLED NURSING CARE



- Subacute Rehabilitation
- Ventilator & Respiratory Care
- Next To Home Long Term Care
- Memory Care



WOODBINE
Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center

2729 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22302
(703) 836-8838
WoodbineRehab.com
f in

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

TWO POOR TEACHERS

Kitchen and Bathroom Remodeling



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

Fully Insured & Class A Licensed
Since 1999



10% down
nothing until the job
is complete for the
past 17 years

Free Estimates 703-999-2929

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

Visit our website: www.twopoorteachers.com

Family VACATIONS *on the Outer Banks - North Carolina*

Over 600 Vacation Homes from
entire OBX Corolla to Hatteras Village

BOOK NOW - WEEKS ARE FILLING UP FAST!

Brindley Beach
VACATIONS & SALES

877-642-3224
brindleybeach.com

Call today and receive a
**FREE SHOWER
PACKAGE
PLUS \$1600 OFF**

**SAFE STEP
WALK-IN TUB**

1-877-591-9950

With purchase of a new Safe Step Walk-In Tub. Not applicable with any previous walk-in tub purchase. Offer available while supplies last. No cash value. Must present offer at time of purchase. CSLB 1082165 NSCB 0082999 0083445

**EASE OF USE
CERTIFIED** **MADE IN
TENNESSEE** **BBB
ESTABLISHED
1912** **LIFETIME
LIMITED WARRANTY**

FINANCING AVAILABLE WITH APPROVED CREDIT

Attention: Community Service Providers

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) is seeking applications to establish grant awards to agencies providing comprehensive suicide prevention and opioid addiction programs for Military Service Members, Veterans, and their families throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

To learn more about this grant program, scan the QR code below or go to bit.ly/dvssosrfa2 to access the Request for Application (RFA).

Don't delay. Applications for grants are due February 28, 2023.

Questions? Contact Vivian.Doobay@dvs.virginia.gov or 804.482.8505

 **SCAN ME**



Virginia Department of Veterans Services
www.dvs.virginia.gov
Proudly Serving Virginia's Military Veterans & Their Families

CLASSIFIED
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM
TO ADVERTISE IN THIS PAPER, CALL BY MONDAY 11:00 AM 703-778-9411

Announcements **Announcements** **Legals**

CHESS LESSONS!

**ONLINE OR
IN-PERSON!
KIDS AND ADULTS!**

• Certified US Chess Federation Coach, worked with Grandmasters
• 20+ years of teaching and international tournament experience
• Beginners and all age-groups welcome!

For more info and my methodology visit: <https://byagiz.wixsite.com/premiumchess>
Contact: byagiz@gmail.com • 703 599 8261

Employment **Employment**

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VA
CAREER WORKSHOP & HIRING FAIR**

The City of Alexandria, VA will host a **Career Development Workshop and Hiring Fair** to provide opportunities for job seekers, particularly those who were recently affected by the mass tech industry layoffs around the region and nationally. City Employees exploring other opportunities within the City are also encouraged to attend.

CAREER WORKSHOP
Monday, February 27 • 9 a.m.-12 p.m. • Nannie J Lee Center
1108 Jefferson St, Alexandria, VA
This program will provide job seekers with coaching on interviewing skills, resume reviewing and critiquing and strategies for creating your next opportunity after a layoff.

JOB HIRING FAIR
Tuesday, February 28 • 10 a.m.-2 p.m. • Nannie J Lee Center
1108 Jefferson St, Alexandria, VA
After job seekers are prepared, the City will host a hiring fair featuring representatives from various City departments and an opportunity to apply for vacancies in City government.

To register and learn more, visit alexandriava.gov/jobs

**The Bath or Shower You've Always Wanted
IN AS LITTLE AS A DAY**

\$1000 OFF*
AND
**No Payments & No Interest
For 18 Months****
OFFER EXPIRES 3.30.2023

BCI BATH & SHOWER
CALL NOW (844) 945-1631

*Includes product and labor; bathtub, shower or walk-in tub and wall surround. This promotion cannot be combined with any other offer. Other restrictions may apply. This offer expires 3/30/23. Each dealership is independently owned and operated. **Third party financing is available for those customers who qualify. See your dealer for details. ©2023 BCI Acrylic, Inc.

GENERAC

**Prepare
for power
outages
today**

WITH A HOME
STANDBY GENERATOR

\$0 MONEY DOWN + LOW MONTHLY PAYMENT OPTIONS
Contact a Generac dealer for full terms and conditions

**REQUEST A
FREE QUOTE**
CALL NOW BEFORE THE
NEXT POWER OUTAGE
(844) 947-1479

FREE 7-Year Extended Warranty*
— A \$695 Value!

*To qualify, consumers must request a quote, purchase, install and activate the generator with a participating dealer. Call for a full list of terms and conditions.



PUBLIC NOTICE

AT&T proposes to modify an existing facility (new tip heights 42.2' & 43.3') on the building at 5115 Little Falls Road, Arlington, VA (20230028). Interested parties may contact Scott Horn (856-809-1202) (1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091) with comments regarding potential effects on historic properties.

Be a part of our:

Wellbeing pages, the first week of every month.

Delight in our **HomeLifeStyle** sections, the second week of every month. Peek at the top real estate sales, glimpse over-the-top remodeling projects, get practical suggestions for your home.

Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our **A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun** pages, the third week of every month.

Senior Living, fourth week of every month.

Questions?
E-mail sales@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9431

**THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS**

CALENDAR

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

**Let us know
about an
upcoming event**

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

ENTERTAINMENT

FRIDAY/FEB. 24

Winter Pruning for Woody Plants. 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. Online. Winter is an excellent time to prune many trees and shrubs. Extension Master Gardener and ISA certified arborist, Maraëa Harris, will explain how to get started with pruning the shrubs in your landscape. The main focus is pruning to maintain healthy trees and shrubs. Free. RSVP at <https://mgnv.org/events/> to receive link to participate.

FRIDAY/FEB. 24

Lesson Zero. 9:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m. At 2500 Columbia Pike, Arlington. The Celtic House presents the music of Oasis recording artist LESSON ZERO for a free show. For additional information see: www.youtube.com/lessonzero and www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero

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.

ARLINGTON COUNTY MANAGER APPOINTS FIRST CLIMATE POLICY OFFICER

Arlington County is excited to announce the hiring of Carl “Bill” Eger for the position of Climate Policy Officer. Mr. Eger brings sixteen years of senior-level local government energy and climate experience to Arlington County. He will begin this leadership role on March 6, 2023.

Mr. Eger most recently served for thirteen years with the City of Alexandria as the Energy Manager, where he collaborated across departments and with City partners, leading on energy, sustainability, and climate action policy development, planning, and program implementation. Recent projects include updating Alexandria’s Energy and Climate Change Action Plan, the Alexandria Green Building Policy, and developing an Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Readiness Strategy.

While working in Alexandria, Mr. Eger served on the Board of Directors of the Virginia Energy Efficiency Council and held leadership positions on the Virginia Energy Purchasing Government Authority, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Built Environment, and Energy Advisory Committee. He also serves on the U.S. Green Building Council’s Location and Planning Technical Advisory Group, and various committees through the Urban Sustainability Directors Network. Mr. Eger has also worked closely with the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, Alexandria City Public Schools, and the Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority to implement climate and energy-related priorities.

As Climate Policy Officer, Mr. Eger will lead the Office of Climate Coordination and Policy, funded in the FY 2023 adopted budget. This new office within the County Manager’s Office was created to amplify, coordinate, and add capacity to the County’s ongoing responses to the climate crisis.

AUTHOR AMINA LUQMAN-DAWSON WINS TWO PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS

The American Library Association (ALA) awarded Arlington-based author Amina Luqman-Dawson the John Newbery Medal and the Coretta Scott King (Author) Book Award for her novel “Freewater.”

The Newbery Medal is a literary award given by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, to the author of “the most distinguished contributions to American literature for children.”

The Coretta Scott King Book Award recognizes an African American author and illustrator of outstanding books for children and young adults.

ALA announced the top books, digital media, videos, and audiobooks for children and young

www.connectionnewspapers.com

SATURDAY/FEB. 25

Jane Franklin Dance. 1 p.m., 2 p.m., and 3 p.m. At Mason Exhibitions Arlington, 3601 Fairfax Dr., Arlington. Jane Franklin Dance responds to art and poetry by Bennie Herron from the current exhibition at Mason Exhibitions Arlington, Bennie Herron: Origin Stories.

SATURDAY/MARCH 4

The Comedy Karaoke Trivia Funtime Show. 7:30 p.m. At Highline RxR, 2010 Crystal Drive, Arlington. Bring a team or fly solo and win prizes by dropping knowledge in a trivia competition, then duking it out in a karaoke battle! Hosted by Christian Hunt, this amazing experience features stand-up comedy from the DC area’s finest comics. The new headliner for March’s show is the hilarious Kasha Patel!

adults—including the Caldecott, Coretta Scott King, Newbery, and Printz awards—at ALA’s 2023 LibLearnX conference in New Orleans.

Set in the Great Dismal Swamp, “Freewater” is a middle-grade novel about a secret community of formerly enslaved people. “Freewater” is published by JIMMY Patterson/Little, Brown Books for Young Readers.

Luqman-Dawson is the first woman to win both the John Newbery Medal and the Coretta Scott King Award.

Several female authors have received the Newbery Honor and Coretta Scott King Award in the same year including Renee Watson for “Piecing Me Together” (2018), Jacqueline Woodson for “Brown Girl Dreaming” (2015), Rita Williams-Garcia for “PS. Be Eleven” (2014) and “One Crazy Summer” (2011). The Honor books are those that were not the first place of the year but deserve honorable mention.

Angela Johnson won the Coretta Scott King Award and the Printz for “The First Part Last” (2004).

FOSTER PARENTS NEEDED

Interested in becoming a foster parent? There is always a need for caring foster parents looking to open their homes to foster youth. Get in touch to learn more. Visit fcsvanow@gmail.com or www.FCSVA.org. Or call 703-817-9890.

ARLINGTON ANNOUNCES NEW HISTORIC PRESERVATION GRANT OPPORTUNITY

Arlington County has launched the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF), a competitive grant program that will support community and individual projects related to Arlington’s history, built environment, and cultural heritage. The application period is now open. It closes on April 28, 2023.

In December 2022, the County Board approved the Historic Preservation Fund Grant Guidelines and authorized the County Manager to approve grants and disburse grant funds consistent with the guidelines.

The fund provides a unique opportunity to invest in the future of preservation in Arlington County, including the repair of historic building materials, tours of historic neighborhoods, the creation of an economic strategic plan for a historic commercial area, or another idea that meets the adopted guidelines. The HPF will support projects that:

Enhance the understanding of Arlington’s history and historic character

Have significant impact on the community and advance cultural equity in Arlington

Result in distinctive, high quality, and meaningful cultural experiences in Arlington

Foster community partnerships and advance the vision and values of the Historic Preservation Master Plan

Preserve the historic built environment

For application assistance, email HistoricPreservationFund@arlingtonva.us or call the Historic Preservation Program office at 703-228-3549.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CALL 703-549-0004

FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION

ELECTRICAL

ELECTRICAL

K & D ELECTRIC

COMMERCIAL / RESIDENTIAL SERVICE
Family Owned & Operated

Recessed Lighting

Ceiling Fans

Phone/CATV

Computer Network Cabling

Service Upgrades

Hot Tubs, etc...

Licensed/Bonded/Insured

Office 703-335-0654

Mobile 703-499-0522

lektrkman28@gmail.com

LANDSCAPING

Landscape Drainage

LANDSCAPING

Landscape Drainage

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

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

We Need Your Help Again

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

**Alexandria
Gazette Packet**
Publishing Since 1784

And affiliated newspapers

THE CONNECTION
Newspapers & Online

**Potomac
ALMANAC**

**Mount Vernon Gazette
CENTRE VIEW**

Thank you to the hundreds of donors 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 Con-

nection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

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

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

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

Visit connectionnewspapers.com or <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing>
Connection Newspapers—Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette, Centre View, Potomac Almanac
1606 King Street • Alexandria, VA • 703-778-9431

Sides Can Sometimes Have Scary Effects



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

My mother-in-law, Peggy Morrison died from cancer in late Oct. 1986. Since Peggy was an extremely private person – and lived two hours away from us by car in Harrisburg, Pa., her daughter/ my wife Dina, and I were kept mostly out of her health loop. We knew a little when there was an awful lot more to know. Part of what I remember hearing/learning then was, as insidious as cancer is, sometimes it’s the side effects of the treatment that contributes nearly as much to the patient’s death.

At my initial Team Lourie meeting – where we all first met my oncologist in late Feb. 2009, I remember his reading the diagnostic reports from the multiple doctors who participated in my assessment: “Stage IV, lung cancer,” “Stage IV lung cancer,” “Stage IV lung cancer,” and “Stage IV lung cancer” yet again from the pulmonologist, radiologist, thoracic surgeon and finally from the general surgeon who performed the biopsy (along with the pathologist’s report), all in agreement. Dumb-founded, blind-sided (I’d been symptom free for nearly two months) and completely blown away by this finding/the consensus that I had non-small cell cancer, stage IV, I summoned up the poise to ask a scenario-type question grasping for the unreachable: definitive answers about my future. Remembering the circumstances surrounding my mother-in-law’s death 23 years earlier, I asked if there was any truth to the theory that sometimes it’s not the cancer but rather the side effects that hasten the patient’s death? My oncologist gave me a qualified answer: “Yes. Sometimes.”

With that backdrop – and with minimal cancer knowledge and/or experience from which to draw, I have been emotionally very sensitive (make that scared) when the side effects of my various chemotherapies and immunotherapies were discussed with my oncologist. And even though I’ve been on a roller coaster of emotions these last 14 years, it’s been only recently when there’s been significant side-effect anxiety and an inevitability almost.

It manifested in my most recent bloodwork. Two levels were outside the perimeters (provided in parentheses on the report) even for me: my liver and kidney functions. So much so that my oncologist directed me – and submitted the order, to get an MRI of these two vital organs. Two major organs which, if damaged/compromised, would be, as we say in New England “Katie bar the door,” which means trouble. As you can probably imagine, this blip on my health radar brought back all the fear I’d been keeping “in the vault.”

This is the scan I wrote about a few weeks ago when I had scheduled an MRI on a Fri. (first available) aware that the lateness in the week might mean I wouldn’t get a result until Mon., given the ebb and flow on medical stuff. (It’s not quite akin to the wheels of justice, but it’s never quick enough). Invariably, I suffer accordingly. Amazingly, I was rewarded for my self-control. Later that same day – before the weekend, I received the radiologist’s report in my email: “Stable MRI.” No indication of anything.

Then this week, part two. My internal medicine doctor emailed me requesting that I get another blood test, specifically to measure my A1C (diabetes). He was concerned that my bilirubin level (liver) was trending higher going back three months and perhaps I had crossed over to the dark side (full on diabetes). I returned to the lab for the second visit this week per doctor’s orders, and once again, I was rewarded for my compliance. The light was shining – and it showed these two levels had declined a minimum 20%-plus and my A1C number was still a bit high, as was feared, but not problematic, all things considered.

If you all heard a huge sigh of relief on Tues. afternoon, Feb. 7th, that was me. For the moment it appears as if I can continue my life-sustaining daily medication for the treatment of my stage IV, papillary thyroid cancer, going on two-plus years now. No side-effect complications. No change in my medication/protocol. No urgency. No or else. No nothing. Just plain old “Stable,” which as I’ve said many times before, is an assessment with which I can live.

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

PETS

For Dogs, Warm Day Walks... & Ice Rinks?

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Chasing the warmth in February.

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Teasingly spring-like warm days have popped up amid seasonal and unusually cold ones this February. Many residents are ready to leave the area's coldest month, January, behind to enjoy February's warmer averages of 31 to 52 degrees Fahrenheit. Instead, dog walkers were surprised to find some February days dipping near zero with wind chills after slipping on leashes to head outdoors in past weeks. Those chills helped many, including our dogs, appreciate the unusually warm February days all the more. On those sunny days, we found area dogs out walking jauntily with smiling owners, all in good spirits, brought on by the enjoyment of easy weather and discarding winter coats. Some owners took time to tell stories of the mischief that can come of too much time inside escaping the cold and memories of past fun.

In one last grasp at winter sport, and picking up on the theme of warm love in February, NOVA Parks and the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA) asked animal lovers to extend the warm spirit of Valentine's Day with their "Share the Love" event on Feb 19. By donating needed pet supplies, participants received a discounted entry ticket to ice skating at Cameron Run Regional Park. As temperatures on that day shouted



Enjoying the sun and shared breed friendships, are (back row) Laura Chipkin, of Arlington, Terri Everett, of Alexandria, Danny Reighard, of Alexandria, James Dickey, of Arlington, Evelyn Novins, of Falls Church, and (front row), Mango, Bowen, Tia, and Haley. Though the dog friends have some medical challenges among them, they still insist on nice day outings and the comrade of walks together.



While less well appointed dogs walk, some are able to roll in their own special conveyance, complete with a ramped rear entrance. Although there's no sauna or mini-bar in their limo, yet, Titan and Roscoe, two senior Dachshunds, need chauffeuring these days regardless of weather to enjoy the same trails they once walked with ease. Caring owner Sarah Chey, of Springfield, makes sure they get their beloved outside time, and a chance to do their old men grumbling at passers-by. They know they have a good ride, and they will brook no possible carjackers getting too close.

Spring not Winter, it was a reminder that the skating park is marking its last days until its end of February closure. Soon it will transition into its Spring and Summer role of waterpark, mini golf, batting cage practice and

picnic area with the chill of winter left behind. And while dogs were not invited to ice skate, they are welcome in the park to join their people in celebrating the warm days of spring and summer.

Cameron Run Regional Park is located at 4001 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria; see <https://www.novaparks.com/parks/cameron-run-regional-park> for more information and reservations.



Out enjoying the Spring-like temperatures, the Merkels, once a family of three, expanded with the addition of Cooper, now 13 months old. First "son" Charlie, an 8-year-old-terrier mix, a big cuddler in a small body, has had to give up some lap time to Cooper, but still loves his new brother, say parents Amy and David Merkel, of Springfield.



Lexi, 15 months, is the color of white sand. Turns out she loves everything beach. She's a sand digger, specializing in destroying the precarious foundations of beach chair legs. Being something of a food gourmet, always ready for a treat, and continuing in her beach theme, she scored a counter surfed swordfish. She hangs ten, or would that be 20, with Steve and Tia Noff, of Lorton.