



The Arlington Connection

Avery Park of Arlington is one of the first young women in the country to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout for a project for Doorways.

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Enjoying Green Valley Day
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Early Female Eagle Scout
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21st Annual ALEXANDRIA OLD TOWN ART FESTIVAL

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Play Loteria in English and Spanish to celebrate Hispanic Heritage month, Thursday, Sept. 21, 6 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Loteria is similar to Bingo but played with images instead of numbers. Registration # 911600-05.

Movie matinee, "Chevalier (2022) (PG-13), Thursday, Sept. 21, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Discussion of favorite scenes to follow. Registration # 911804-09.

Proactive strategies and tips to reduce the risk of falling and what to do if you do fall, Thursday, Sept. 21, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Presented by Marymount University Northern Virginia Falls Prevention Alliance. Registration # 911502-02.

Budgeting for the holidays, presentation by Master Financial Educators from Virginia Cooperative Extension, Thursday, Sept. 21, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 911400-14.

Learn about the natural beauty of Costa Rica from Mariana Rosales Aymerich, minister counselor of the Embassy of Costa Rica, Thursday, Sept. 21, 11:30 a.m., virtual. Registration # 911400-15.

Plants and cuttings swap, Friday, Sept. 22, 11 a.m., Walter Red 55+ Center. Bring cuttings and whole plants to trade with others and learn about new-to-you plants. All plants must be pest-

free and healthy. Registration # 911401-02.

Learn the basics of how to create a presentation using PowerPoint and Google Slides, Friday, Sept. 22, 11 a.m., virtual. Presented by Jennifer Weber, Walter Reed 55+ Center Director. Registration # 911403-03.

Welcome back Bingo at Aurora Hills 55+ Center, Friday, Sept. 22, 1 p.m. Open to all 55+ residents. Win prizes, light refreshments. Registration # 911600-06.

55+ Travel group will attend "Bridges of Madison County" at the Riverside Center for the Performing Arts in Fredericksburg, Wednesday, Sept. 27. Cost \$87, Arlington resident; \$100, non-resident. Includes three course waiter served lunch. Registration # 902309-07.

Nostalgic fall recipe swap, bring a favorite recipe to swap, Wednesday, Sept. 27, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 911501-03.

Local history group to discuss the integration of Arlington schools, Wednesday, Sept. 27, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 911402-04.

55+ walking group will explore Arlington's Green Valley neighborhood, Wednesday, Sept. 27, 9 a.m. Registration # 911106-04.

Members of ArlingtonWeaves, a program supporting individuals with disabilities, will demonstrate spinning wool and using a loom to produce handcrafted woven art, Wednesday Sept. 27, 11:30 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911400-07.

Photographer Mac Cosgrove-Davies will discuss his photographs of volunteers working for Arlington now on display at the Central Library, Thursday, Sept. 28, 11 a.m. Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 911400-06.

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Community Turns Out for Green Valley Day

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

The speakers are blaring out music warming up for the Suttle Thought band which is scheduled mid-afternoon. A line is forming early at John Robinson Jr. Town Square for the fish fry and barbecue. Kids are bouncing and laughing in the rubber moon bounce on the hill. The weather has turned out to be a perfect sunny, hot day for the annual Green Valley Day held at Dr. Charles Drew Elementary School and John Robinson Jr. Town Square.

Portia Clark, president of the Green Valley Civic Association and leader of the Planning Team for the event says, "We have been holding these celebrations for more than 50 years. We are commemorating 179 years as a community and 95 years as a Civic Association."

Clark said they had 40 volunteers working for several months to bring it together. "We hold these events to build relationships and to educate and recognize citizens that have been supporting us all year." This year the Gold Star Awards were given to Brother-2Brother, Lavern Langhorn, Gina Ross and Amazon. The Robert Winkler scholarship was given to Arielle Davis, a Wakefield graduate attending Northern Virginia Community College.

Vendor and organization tables line the sidewalk by the parking lot. Ashley Adams has a prime spot for her AA Design which she says is located right here in Green Valley on Oakland Street where she has been in business since 2017. Her table is filled with samples of the graphic T-shirts which are one of her best sellers.

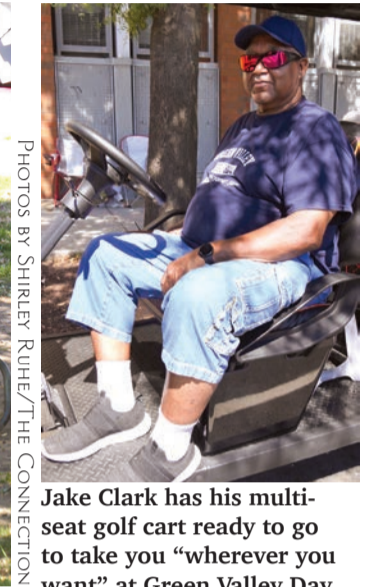
The NAACP has a table just down the way along with the Green Valley Civic Association.

Jake Clark sits in his multi seat golf cart "ready to go wherever you want." He says he made a trip for the event 2-1/2 hours to the beach and brought the golf cart back. Clark says he often uses it to drive around his six grandchildren at the beach.

James McFail, a long time resident of Green Valley, has designed a table focusing on parks and featuring a large poster board with an example of his poetry which he reads to people passing by. He says he is hoping to get the display erected in the park. McFail said he was just sitting down one day "and it came to me — all of these things we will forget."



Green Valley community enjoys a day together at Green Valley Day at Dr. Charles Drew Elementary School and John Robinson Jr. Town Square.



Jake Clark has his multi-seat golf cart ready to go to take you "wherever you want" at Green Valley Day in Arlington on Saturday, Sept. 16.



Ashley Adams, owner of AA Design on Oakland Street in Green Valley, at her table for Green Valley Day.



James McFail (left) and John Tyler reminisce over old times at Green Valley Day on Saturday, Sept. 16.



John Tyler, Green Valley former baseball player back in the day.

McFail has lived in Green Valley since 1972. He remembers when there was always something going on in Jenny Dean Park. "It was the feeding place for the neighborhood."

John Tyler stops by to check out the display. "I went to Drew," he says and he points up the hill "to Kemper when it was up on the hill." They reminisce about the days of the baseball teams. Tyler says, "I shouldn't say this but it was the days in the 50s when Black people played baseball. We were undefeated. I played baseball up until the 80s." Tyler says he just had lunch with their Little League coach last week. "He is 95."

McFail looks around the parking lot. "Trees used to grow wild —cherry, apple. We'd pick off the fruit and have lunch."

And Tyler looks past the moon bounce, "We'd walk up the hill to the barber shop. And have sleigh rides behind the big hill. Some-

times we hopped the train for a ride. Now it's a hiking trail."

McFail added, "We were a community; we knew everybody's business."

But now they say, "Money has priced us out of here; we can't afford the big million dollar houses."

They aren't quite sure when things changed. "Immigration changed a whole lot of things, Tyler says. "Maybe we gained some things but we lost a lot."

McFail adds, "I don't know; a whole lot of things changed. We got drugs in here. The schools changed. And they didn't play sports like we did."

"There was a shift in values to what they see on tv."

The two old friends browse through the memories on the table. A picture of Lucky Seven Food Mart. "It was right here. My mom worked there," Tyler says. Next to it is a picture of The Gents, a group out of Gunston. "Look there

is Judge Newman." And the Green Valley News was 25 cents. "It had all the gossip."

Zanna Ballsun, an attorney with the Arlington Public Defender's Office steps out onto the sidewalk to offer a box of crayons and notebook to some kids who are investigating the table. William Burley, who is a senior probation and parole officer, is Council Chair for the Arlington Re-entry Community Council. He is handing out school supplies and information about the services provided by the Reentry Council to help ex-offenders returning to the community. Among the services offered by the 15 participating organizations are food pantry, clothing, mental health services, shelter placement and voting assistance.

These Councils were set up by the state of Virginia in each County to provide supportive services to former inmates and their families and to coordinate resources.

Burley says the local Council is a collaboration of 15 local agencies.

Carol Garcia-Valenzuela, Council co-chair, says they have just held a job fair for the inmates in the jail where they help give the inmates a head start on employment skills before they have re-entered the community. Burley says the transitional period can be difficult for inmates, and it is proven that they will do better when they get out if they have connections with the community.

Clark says they encountered some obstacles to the event along the way with unexpected fees of thousands of dollars required by the County, and the fees weren't in their budget for the event. "At one point our application wasn't approved because we were required to have four police officers, and the ACPD didn't think they could cover it."

But the weather Clark ordered for the day arrived hot and sunny ... and free and right on time.

Amazon Delivery Vans Support Local School

Hundreds of local volunteers joined Food For Neighbors in the fight against teen food insecurity.

Amazon volunteers joined Food For Neighbors in the fight against teen food insecurity on Saturday, Sept. 9. Working side-by-side with other community members at Arlington Career Center, Herndon Middle School, and Whitman Middle School, Amazon helped sort and deliver nearly 8,000 pounds of food and toiletries donated by more than 570 households for local secondary schools.

In total, eight hundred volunteers, across nine active sorting sites, helped process 23,000 pounds of donations Food For Neighbors collected that Saturday morning from 1,700 Northern Virginia households. The effort will help over 5,800 students in 42 secondary schools in Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun counties.

Amazon's hands-on support underscores a \$155,000 donation from Amazon Fresh last Fall, and



Food For Neighbors volunteer loads an Amazon van at Arlington Career Center.



Amazon volunteers at a Red Bag Event at Arlington Career Center.

the volunteer spirit demonstrates the company's continued dedication to lifting up the communities where its employees work and live.

Amazon participated in Food For Neighbors' Red Bag Program kick-off event during its Global Month of Volunteering, an initiative where Amazon employees in the DMV and across the world come together to volunteer and engage even further with their communities for causes they're passionate about.

"We're committed to supporting the immediate needs of students and their families – these often include providing food, shelter, clothing, and more. Thanks to community partnerships like this, we're able to provide students the support they need to keep learn-

ing," said Melissa Robinson, principal program manager of Volunteering at Amazon.

"We're thrilled to celebrate Amazon as a Food For Neighbors Community Champion and sponsor of our first Red Bag food and toiletry collection event of the new school year," shared Karen Joseph, Founder and Executive Director of Food For Neighbors. "Amazon's philanthropic partnership and \$155,000 donation through Amazon Fresh helped us quickly expand our services into Arlington Public Schools last school year, where we helped approximately 970 hungry students, many of whom received support weekly."

The Red Bag Events are the heart of Food For Neighbors. They mobilize individuals to shop for

nonperishable food and essential toiletries, which they place in a red bag and leave on their doorsteps for collection. Volunteers, organized by neighborhoods, pick up the donations and bring them to one of nine central locations, where volunteers sort and then deliver needed food and toiletries to school pantries. School social workers, counselors, and family liaisons identify students in need and distribute food and toiletries to them.

Complementing programs provide food pantry shelving and storage for schools as well as grocery store gift cards for the most vulnerable students.

Although Food For Neighbors welcomes additional Red Bag donors and volunteers as it continues

to meet the need in the schools it is currently serving, and to say "yes" to new schools requesting support. New in September is Leesburg's Belmont Ridge Middle School, which brings the total number of partnering schools to 42.

Also key are the financial donations from individuals, foundations, businesses, and other organizations, which help keep the Red Bag and Grocery Gift Card programs running.

Hunger is closer than you think. To learn more about becoming involved as a Red Bag donor, volunteer, monthly Hunger Hero, or community partner, visit <https://www.foodforneighbors.org/get-involved/> or send an email to getinvolved@foodforneighbors.org.

New Hope Housing Recognizes Volunteers

Glimpse many ways volunteers make a difference.

Friends, volunteers, and staff of New Hope Housing gathered at the Lyon Park Community Center in Arlington on Sept. 14 to recognize and thank volunteers for their service to the community.

New Hope Housing's new executive director, Ashley McSwain, thanked volunteers for their contributions. "Volunteers are the lifeblood of nonprofits."

Liza Feiler, Director of Community Engagement, distributed New Hope Housing keychains to volunteers describing them as the "symbol of a successful volunteer program, that when clients receive

their keychains, our mission and their dreams are fulfilled."

Hilton Arlington National Landing was named Community Champion for representing the values of New Hope Housing in the community and for creating new opportunities to partner. For the past two years, Hilton Arlington National Landing has been the event space for New Hope Housing's "Over The Edge" fundraising event at which over 100 supporters and donors rappel down the side of the Hilton. The two events have raised over \$400,000 for New Hope Housing. Hilton has donated over \$50,000 in in-kind services by donating rooms, event space, food and drink for VIP night, and more. Since partnering for this event, the staff at Hilton has also volunteered nearly every month at several New Hope Housing locations. They have helped clean up our streets through the Adopt-A-Highway program, provided home-cooked

meals, hosted an ice cream social, and donated towels and linens.

Quenton Rodgers is a new volunteer for New Hope Housing and is willing to do whatever is needed of him. He has volunteered multiple times at a group home for disabled adults called Max's Place, performing maintenance and cleaning the yard. He has hosted resume building workshops with the residents and recruited his wife and daughter, Colette and Paris, for additional help polishing the resumes. Quenton has also developed an eight-week wellness curriculum that begins this fall at two shelters.

Maanvi Patoir earned her yoga instructor certification during the pandemic and began hosting yoga classes at the Residential Program Center Shelter in Arlington in 2022. When she began, she had hoped to have a large regular class weekly. However, after one or two classes, not many residents were

attending. But one person, Ms. Jessamin, did. Every week. They began talking before and after class and Maanvi learned more about Ms. Jessamin's struggles. Several strokes the previous year necessitated regular physical therapy and the yoga class with Maanvi provided needed exercise and personal connection. Maanvi's yoga classes were helpful in Ms. Jessamin's life at the shelter and continue to be now that she is in housing of her own. The quote "To the world you may be one person, but to one person, you may be the world," certainly applies to Maanvi.

Ben Benita is the DC representative for Super Soul Party, a nonprofit that is dedicated to uniting communities and creating a safe space for people who are experiencing homelessness. They wish to facilitate moments of connection between people. Their most popular event focuses on the nation's largest unofficial holiday: the Su-

perbowl. Benita and friends came to the Residential Program Center Shelter in Arlington and threw a Superbowl party for the guests that included a meal, party snacks, goody bags, and many moments of connection between volunteers and residents. The event doubled as a birthday party for a shelter guest as Benita and his friends also brought cake and presents.

Brad Gillespie has been hosting a Men's Group at the Eleanor U. Kennedy Shelter for the past several months. Each week, several men gather to discuss topics important to them in a safe space. Gillespie had previously volunteered in a prison doing similar work and wanted to do this closer to home. The clients have shared how important it is to get things off their chests and get advice from their peers. The early success of this program has led the team at Kennedy Shelter to work on a Wom-

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New Hope Housing

FROM PAGE 4
en's Group.

Jenny Roellke has been leading Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous (AA/NA) meetings at Residential Program Center Shelter in Arlington for the past year. She knows that it can be difficult for people to choose to attend meetings so she always shows up early so that she can talk with residents before the meeting. She works to get to know folks and to gently encourage them to join the circle and share. Jenny has gotten to know several people outside the meetings so that they know they can reach out for additional help. She also bakes cookies every week for further encouragement. She is always rooting for everyone to succeed.

PAL (People. Animals. Love.) is a nonprofit that brings animals and animal companionship to people who lacked regular access to the healing therapy that animals can bring. The local chapter of PAL has been visiting both the Bailey's Shelter and Residential Program Center Shelter for the past 2 years. Every time they visit, many of the clients are overjoyed to sit and play with the dogs. For so many

individuals, getting time to enjoy the friendly and patient animals is truly therapy.

For the past six years, volunteers from Summit Church have been providing dinners, hosting bingo, and serving wherever needed. During the start of the pandemic, Summit Church volunteers made hundreds of bagged meals for several months to deliver to our COVID hotel shelter program. This summer, they deep-cleaned the Residential Program Center Shelter. They are wonderful people, always willing to help out.

New Hope Housing is an innovative nonprofit agency providing shelter, transitional and permanent supportive housing, outreach and support services for homeless families and single adults in Fairfax County, City of Alexandria, Arlington County, and City of Falls Church. New Hope Housing is committed to finding creative and lasting solutions to end the cycle of homelessness by offering homeless men, women and children the services they need to change their lives and succeed. For more information, visit www.newhopehousing.org

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Asian Scout LLC trading as Izakaya 68, 3227 Washington Blvd, STE D, Arlington, Arlington County, Virginia 22201 + 4415.. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Retail Restaurant or Caterer Application - Restaurant, Wine, Beer, Mixed Beverages, Consumed On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Kam Wong, Member. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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iFood Ballston LLC trading as Immigrant Food, 4245 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Arlington County, VA 22209 + 1637. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Mixed Beverage Restaurant with Caterer license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Peter Schechter, Member authorizing advertisement. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or (800) 552-3200.

CALENDAR

			1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9
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16	17	18	19	20	21
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Let us know about an upcoming event

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Ocean Shack LLC trading as Ocean Shack, 2163 N Glebe Rd., Arlington, Arlington County, VA 22207-2248. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Retail Restaurant or Caterer Application - Restaurant Wine, Beer, Mixes Beverages, Consumed On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Yicheng Zhou, owner/partner. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800 552-3200.

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ENTERTAINMENT



“The Tell-Tale Heart” will be performed by Synetic Theater from Sept. 29 to Nov. 5, 2023 in Arlington.

“The Tell-Tale Heart.”

At Synetic Theater, Arlington. Step into the eerie world of Edgar Allan Poe’s The Tell-Tale Heart, where madness takes hold and the boundaries of sanity blur. In this twisted tale, an eccentric old man and his caretaker embark on a lethal dance that spirals into madness and murder. With dark humor and a haunting atmosphere, Synetic invites you to question: who is the crazy one? Visit www.synetictheater.org for dates and showtimes.

MONTH OF OCTOBER

“The Pluviophile” Exhibit. At Gallery Underground, 2100 Crystal Drive, Crystal City, Arlington. Artist Barry Barnett Keith’s art exhibit in honor of his older sister’s recent passing. Keith is a graduate of Alexandria City School (T.C. Williams) and a native Alexandrian with a good following in the area. He is an educator and mentor (21 years teaching art and design) in Prince George’s County Schools. A reception will be held Oct. 6 from 5-7 p.m.

CHECK OUT THE PLANT CLINICS!

The Arlington Central Library Plant Clinic at 1015 N Quincy St, Arlington operates on Wednesdays from 6:00 - 7:45 pm. The Alexandria Old Town Farmer’s Market Plant Clinic at 301 King St, Alexandria operates on Saturdays from 7:00 - 9:30 am. The Arlington Farmers’ Market at N 14th and N Courthouse Roads operates on Saturdays from 8:00 – 11:00 am. The Del Ray Farmers’ Market Plant Clinic at Oxford & Mt. Vernon Avenues, Alexandria operates on Saturdays from 8:30 – 11:00 am. The Fairlington Farmers’ Market Plant Clinic at 3308 S Stafford St, Arlington, operates on Sundays from 9:00 – 11:00 am.

WEDNESDAYS/SEPT. 20, 27

Central Library Wednesday Talks. 6:30 – 7:30 p.m., Arlington Central Library, 1015 N Quincy St, Arlington. Join Friends of Urban Agriculture, Arlington/Alexandria VCE Master Gardeners and other expert speakers as they provide information on a variety of garden topics each month. Topics in September include: Garden Herbs for Teas on 9/6, Fruits for you Taste Buds and Landscape on 9/13, Microgreens for Your Indoor Garden on 9/20, Garlic - Plant It Now on 9/27 Free. No registration required. For more information call 703-228-5940.

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 20

Microgreens for Your Indoor Garden. 6:30 p.m. Meets at Arlington Central Library, First Floor, 1015 North Quincy Street, Arlington. Don’t let wintry chills stop you from enjoying fresh greens. Learn what and how to grow nutritious microgreens all winter long. It’s easy!

FRIDAY/SEPT. 22

The Residential Greenhouse – Gardener’s Tool, Garden Room, or Both? 10:00 - 11:30

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a.m., Online. Do you dream of having your own greenhouse? What kind of greenhouse? Do you simply want to protect your tropical plants in winter, or raise tomatoes in January, or start all your bedding annuals and vegetables from seed? Maybe it is your fantasy to build a Victorian-style conservatory full of exotic plants? Join Extension Master Gardener Beth Buffington, and some of her greenhouse-loving friends to view a number of available options and discover resources to help you with your choices. Free. RSVP at <http://mgov.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/> to receive a link to participate.

SEPT. 23-24

AVAST@3700. At Gallery 3700, 3700 Four Mile Run, Arlington. Select works by Arlington artists will go on view Saturday, Sept. 9 at Gallery 3700, an Arlington County-owned visual art space. AVAST@3700 will display artworks by artists who are participating in the Arlington Visual Art Studio Tour, which will take place Sept. 23-24. Opening and tour launch party on Friday, Sept. 22, 5-7 p.m. Studios in Northwest Arlington are open Saturday, Sept. 23 from 11 to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, Sept. 24, from 11 to 5 p.m. AVAST@3700 includes painting, photography, prints, mixed media, and a small sample of wall-hung sculpture. The exhibit will run through Dec. 7.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

Capitals to Host ‘Garage Sale’. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. At MedStar Capitals Iceplex. The Washington Capitals will host a ‘Garage Sale’ featuring Capitals items and prior giveaways at MedStar Capitals Iceplex in Arlington. Proceeds benefit Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation, the official charity of the Capitals. Season ticket members will have early access to the sale from 10-11 a.m. The sale features Capitals bobbleheads, T-shirts, posters, hats and additional Capitals items.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

Raptor Rapture. 1-3 p.m. At Fort Hunt Park, Pavilion B, Alexandria. Come to Fort Hunt Park, Pavilion B, to see live raptors like owls and hawks up close. Sponsored by the Friends of Dyke Marsh, the National Park Service, and Secret Gardens Birds. Free. Registration is not required for this event.

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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

Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspaper’s mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year’s financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers. All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area’s best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

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

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

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

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On The Cusp of ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... my/our 45th wedding anniversary on Oct. 20, 2023, quite by familial coincidence, my wife, Dina and I attended her Godson’s wedding in Philadelphia last week. Yes, we risked our lives and limbs while escaped prisoner Danelo Cavalcante was on the loose. Nevertheless, we figured it was an acceptable risk, given the occasion. We we’re fortunate however, as were the bride and groom and all invited guests, that the wedding wasn’t happening at Longwood Gardens, a magnificent and well-known, former Dupont Estate, located in Kennett Square – in Chester County, Pa. Due to the escaped convict, the grounds were closed as a precaution. But other than a few raindrops that landed on the assembled guests, as well as on the bride and groom, the late afternoon/early evening festivities went on without a hitch, although none of us remained dry. And though Danelo was a topic of conversation throughout, since he wasn’t an invited guest, we weren’t worried too much, as we all ate, drank, and danced to our heart’s content.

Seeing so many people so much younger than ourselves dancing the night away with their futures very much in front of them was in stark contrast to us as our futures are our present and have pretty much already been lived. The age difference between Chris, Shannon, and yours truly and most of their friends is almost 40 years, a generation and a half. We are contemporaries – of their parents. Yet, we attended as peers of a sort, who happen to be family. In addition, I think our knowing Chris his entire life gave us a certain curiosity and legitimacy among many of Chris and Shannon’s friends. After all, we were there at Chris’ birth.

I wouldn’t say it was awkward being around so many 20-somethings, but I will admit to it being a teachable moment/learning experience as the generations – as worlds did on a long ago “Seinfeld episode,” collided. Though we acted our age, comparatively speaking, we stayed out past midnight, and tried to be as interested in the attendees lives as the occasion allowed. Meaning, the music was loud and hearing any conversation was challenging. Still, we tried to stay in the moment. All of which was made easier at the pre-wedding and afterparties that occurred in the hotel’s bar, as well as the groom’s mother’s house the following day for Sunday brunch. In each instance, the energy and enthusiasm were super positive and amazingly genuine.

All throughout the weekend festivities, I couldn’t help looking around at all the younger people and doing the math, and juxtaposing our ages and marital years, and wondering (A) where had all the time – since we got married in Oct., ’78, gone and (B) how in the heck did we get this old? Granted, you are young as you feel, or as Grouch Marx so famously said: “You’re as young as the woman you feel,” so I don’t feel old even though my wife is age 68. It matters more to me what’s in your heart and head more so than the color of your hair or the lines in your face. I prefer to listen to what one says and does, not focus of what they can’t do. Moreover, I want to see if they still have a rye smile on their face and a bounce in the step, regardless of their age or circumstances. I realize age/years married is just a number but holy smokes, 45, compared to witnessing and participating in a married couple’s day one of year one, gave us both (Dina and I) pause and cause to reflect. I can’t say “What a long, strange trip it’s been,” because unlike The Grateful Dead, we’ve generally colored between the lines and stayed on the straight and narrow. Though we’ve accumulated lots of life’s experiences, we tried not to offer too much advice too soon to too many people, many of whom were getting ready to embark on their own post-college adventures. We figured they’d live and learn on their own. They didn’t need any unsolicited advice from us.

But the occasion and simultaneous reflection of our life together didn’t give us indigestion or constipation or remorse/anxiety in the least. Instead, it gave us/me one of the happiest weekends we’ve experienced in quite a while. Being around all these young people, full of hopes and dreams and ambitions for the future was infectious, even for us old fogies. It wasn’t at all bittersweet. It was more like milk chocolate for me: extremely satisfying.

Best wishes to Chris and Shannon. We look forward to seeing them soon and hearing about their honeymoon abroad, and hanging out with them and their friends, if they’ll allow us. It turns out their energy and enthusiasm were just what this older couple needed – and prefers. “Peace and serenity” is for “Festativus,” not the rest of us.

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

Avery Park Receives Eagle Scout Rank

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

One of first females in country to achieve status.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Avery Park from Arlington is one of the first females in the country to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout. She says usually it takes 7 years to achieve Eagle Scout status but she did it in four. She chose to organize the fifth floor storage space for Doorways and develop an online tracking system as her Eagle Scout project. "I knew I wanted to do something to support women and children."

Park says she knew about Doorways and met with them to get help with ideas. Joy Myers, Development Director of Doorways which provides shelter and protection for women and families escaping violence, came up with the idea. Myers says, "Remember that Doorways encounters families and individuals in crisis. Many are fleeing violence and have only the clothes on their bodies. We try to have everything on hand to make our care comfortable for the survivor and their family."

Myers says, "The beautiful space Avery created for our comfort and care supplies is a bright projection of the combination of who she is and the Doorways mission."

Park said she took several months developing the plan for how many bins, how many volunteers and all the details and had it approved by the Scout hierarchy. It may sound straightforward, but she says the storage room was pretty disorganized in the first place and then Covid came and they got a lot of donations and no one there to organize things. "We had to figure out how to measure — how big is a towel, a box of diapers with 12 in a pack. They had to be sorted by age of child, absorbency, size."

In addition, they sorted cosmetics, hygiene products, children's books and art supplies and cleaning products. She says she had about 25 volunteers including 20 in her Scout troop and five adults who spent the first day moving everything out of the room. The second day they moved everything back into its allotted space and bin with an appropriate label. The second part of the project was uploading all of the supplies into a computer system using online



Avery Park achieves rank of Eagle Scout as one of first females in the country.

forms that she says would make it easy for the Doorways staff to use and maintain.

Linley Beckbridge, Director of Communications and Advocacy at Doorways says, "Avery's plan addressed multiple challenges we faced with maximizing our use of the space, while also preparing us for our upcoming move of our administrative offices, including our storage."

Her plan included multiple game-changing solutions. First, effective organization of the physical storage space and the items there; second, an online inventory system to help us track what we have and what we need; and third, portability, so we can take the systems with us Because her solutions are sustainable, these systems are still in place and working to help us make the most of our in-kind donations today."

Park belongs to one of the first female Boy Scout troops in Virginia. She says she joined Scouts at 13-years-old when they went coed and started a girl's troop. Now she says the troop has about 30 active girls. Park has earned 33 or 34 badges to date with her favorite being the wilderness survival badge.

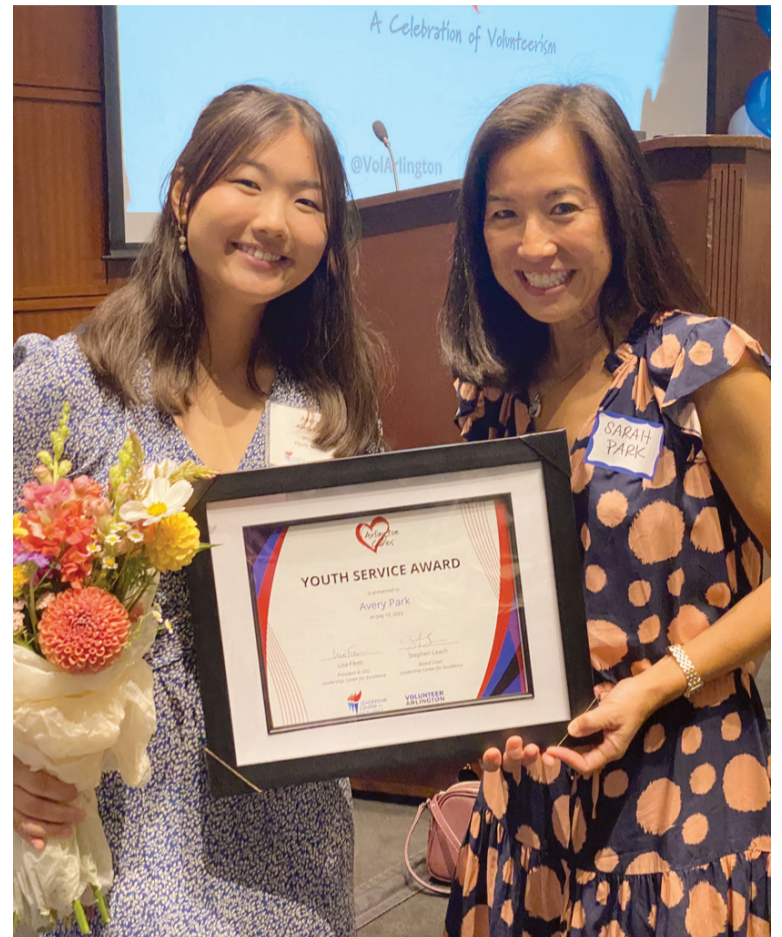
"We had to survive overnight with what we had — build a hut out of logs. It was my first time doing something like this, a little



Doorways fifth floor storage room before and after Avery Park's reorganization and online tracking system.

scary but I was with friends, and it was a good experience overall." But she remembers it did rain and that part wasn't too cool. She also liked working for her rifle badge, I'd never held a gun. It was really fun."

I always knew my brother and dad were involved in Scouts. I saw the leadership, outdoor skills,



Avery Park and her mother at the Volunteer Arlington "Arlington Cares" event where Park received the Youth Service Award.

building character and meeting people. It looked like so much fun."

If you ask her what she really likes to do. "It was that high adventure trip last summer backpacking 150 miles in New Mexico for 12 days. It was so much fun. I really love to be outside."

In July, Park was presented with the Youth Service Award at Volun-

teer Arlington's "Arlington Cares" event. They praised her efforts as going above and beyond her service hours and having a significant impact on lives, finding a passion. Park said she knew the only difference between her and the clients at Doorways was that bottle of shampoo, that box of diapers. "Giving back has given me something."