

“Earth Day Every Day” on Langston held on April 20. Satish, the dinosaur, and Eugeniya Struts, volunteer at the Safe Soil exhibit which advocates across 193 nations for soil restoration.

The Arlington Connection

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PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE & ANNIE RUHE

APRIL 24-30, 2024

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

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Applications for the IUOE Local 99 Apprenticeship Program will be accepted during the period of May 6-10, 2024, inclusive. Applications must be completed in person by the applicant at Engineer Center 9315 Largo Drive West, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. \$35 application fee includes drug screen.

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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.

General history discussion group to meet Thursday, April 25, 1 p.m., virtual. Presented by Dwight Rodgers, Encore Learning. Registration # 913402-13.

Friendly no stakes poker games, all levels of expertise welcome, Thursday, April 25, 2-4 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. No instruction available. Registration # 913600-17.

Plants and cuttings swap and learn about new-to-you plants, Thursday, April 25, 3 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Please ensure all cuttings and plants are pest free and healthy. Registration # 913401-03.

Getting your home market ready, Thursday, April 25, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown. Presented by Nancy Murphy, licensed realtor with Weichert Realtors. Registration # 913404-11.

Retirement: more than the numbers, presented by certified federal coach Sallie Wiley, Thursday, April 25, 6 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center, registration # 913404-12 and Friday, April 26, 10 a.m., Lubber Run, Registration # 913404-13. Learn how to assess your preparedness.

Don't be a financial crime victim by mail. Learn how to avoid being a target from Beth Peter, senior financial crimes analyst with the U.S. Postal Service, Thursday, April 25, 1 p.m., virtual. Registration # 913400-14.

Movie matinee showing of "Tar" (2022) (R), Friday, April 26, 12:30 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 913804-05.

Annual Trash and Treasure Sale, Saturday, April 27, 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Aurora Hill 55+ Center, 735 S. 18th Street. Items for sale are small appliances, decorative items, games, toys, jewelry, luggage, craft supplies and more. Donated items welcome Wednesday, April 24 and Friday, April 26, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the center. For more information, call 703-228-5722.

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SENIOR LIVING

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Marta Hill Gray, President of Culpepper Garden at annual ceremony honoring First Responders April 17.



Daniel Douglass, EMS Supervisor; Fire Chief Daniel Polvitz; William N. Flagler, Jr. Director Arlington County Department of Public Safety Communications and Emergency Management.



Peter Kant, Board Chair; Libby Garvey, outgoing Arlington County Board Chair; Melissa Andrews, CEO LeadingAge Virginia.

Culpepper Garden Honors First Responders

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Marta Hill Gray, President of Culpepper Garden, reaches into colorful bags lined up near the entrance of Culpepper Garden and hands each person entering the event April 17 a shiny first responders pin.

This is the third year for the Culpepper Garden special ceremony and luncheon honoring first responders. Gray says, “They are here all the time. I couldn’t think of a better group to honor. They really take care of us.” Culpepper Garden is a retirement community of care providing specialized assistance for vulnerable older adults living on fixed or low incomes.

One of the special guests, Andy Penn, Arlington County Police Chief, stands chatting with a member of the community while a number of his officers are scattered around the sidewalk waiting for the ceremony to begin. The smell of barbecue burgers wafts over the crowd as the culinary crew prepare the lunch available after the ceremony.

William Flagler Jr., Department of Public Safety Communications and Emergency Management Director arrives with umbrella in hand as Fire Chief David Polvitz and Daniel Douglass, EMS paramedic and EMS Supervisor wait for the ceremony to begin. Douglass has arrived in the buggy. “That’s what we call the red emergency vehicle over there. It goes back to when the fire emergency vehicles were a horse drawn buggy. A lot of the terms we use today go way back—the hook and ladder truck used to be just that—a ladder.”

Peter Kant, Board Chair, says he has been on the Board for six years. “I’ve lived in Arlington since 1997 and I wanted to be more engaged with the community. They wanted to add a different perspective and I’m a businessman. During the time I’ve been on the Board the renovation of the building was key but significantly I have seen Culpepper Garden put on a sustainable path for the next 10 years.”

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Arlington County Police Chief Andy Penn

Gray opens the ceremony by praising the first responders for their dedication, commitment, compassion and caring. She explains that in the early 60s a local pastor challenged his congregation to come up with a livable environment for seniors with limited resources. In 1975 Culpepper Garden was born with the building named for the first Board Chair. Today Culpepper Garden has grown to three buildings on beautiful grounds with 273 independent living apartments and 173 assisted living apartments.

Gray continues, “At the heart of our event is the planting of a redbud tree in honor of our courageous first responders. This tree stands as a living testament to their selfless dedication and unwavering commitment to our community’s safety and well-being. It will serve as a constant reminder of their bravery and sacrifice. Today we will plant a redbud tree that will signify the future for generations of growth”

Kant builds on the analogy of the redbud tree as a symbol of generations to come and a quality home. He equates the health and sustainability of the redbud tree to the future generations at Culpepper Garden.

Libby Garvey, a long time supporter of Cul-



Long line forms for BBQ lunch at first responders ceremony

pepper Garden and retiring Arlington County Board chair, says she thinks about how much this encapsulates Arlington. “It’s all about caring, being safe and cared for.” She remembers a Vonnegut quote that applies to the first responders in Arlington. “When someone asked him the meaning of life he said, ‘I can’t tell you that but I do know it is our job to help each other get through it.’”

Melissa Andrews, CEO of LeadingAge Virginia is the keynote speaker. She explains to the crowd she had lost four people in the last year. “I believe in signs. This morning Marta told me she had seen a flock of cardinals here. Cardinals have gone beyond and I believe they were coming back to say thank you to our first responders.” She said when a plant is taking root it takes gardening and when it blooms, it is for generations to come. “There’s no place like Culpepper.”

Gray concluded by citing one of the many examples of the first responders service when she put out a call to help plant bulbs last fall for their 30,000 daffodil garden. “Everyone showed up. Police Chief Andy Penn came with his crew. Will Flagler came in from a late business trip and showed up early in a business suit. He left with muddy



The planting of the Redbud tree symbolizes future generations at Culpepper Garden, and the commitment of the first responders to the community’s safety and well-being.

shoes but he said he would come, and he kept his word.”

“And Andy took off on his motorcycle with Culpepper dirt under his tires.”

The ceremony adjourned, and the crowd headed down the sidewalk to add a redbud tree to the extensive garden area at Culpepper.

ARLINGTON CONNECTION ♦ APRIL 24-30, 2024 ♦ 3



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Operations Manager DJ Batchelor and Caley Fagerstrom organize the volunteers at Chamber of Commerce Volunteer Day on April 19.

Chamber Volunteers Tackle Projects

Pink “Volunteer Arlington” T-shirts sit stacked on a table April 19 at Kitchen of Purpose on Columbia Pike, the first stop for the Arlington Chamber of Commerce Volunteer Day and Celebration. Kate Bates, CEO of the Arlington Chamber says this is the 25th year for the Chamber Volunteer Day. She explains it connects Arlington businesses to Chamber member non-profits.

Volunteers line up to register, and some grab a burger. Some come as individual volunteers and others have brought a team of friends or business associates. They will leave the first stop and head for their three-

hour volunteer activity at one of the 15 non-profit partners of the Chamber. Examples of the projects include helping seniors declutter their homes at Arlington Neighborhood Village, interacting with animals through enrichment activities at the Animal Welfare League, repainting the office space at Offenders Aid Restoration (OAR), deep cleaning the shelter at New Hope Housing and assisting program participants at Melwood with their indoor succulent planting project.

— SHIRLEY RUHE

SENIOR LIVING

FROM PAGE 2

Jigsaw puzzle contest and swap, teams of three, first to finish wins, Monday, April 29, 10:30 a.m., LangstonBrown 55+ Center. Bring a puzzle to swap. Registration # 913600-24. Puzzles for the contest are provided.

Around the world to Poland with Katarzyna Rybka-Iwanska, head of public and cultural diplomacy for the Polish Embassy, Tuesday, April 30, 1:30 p.m., virtual. Learn about Poland’s famous artists, scientists, culinary traditions and more. Registration # 913400-19.

DNA testing and genealogy may assist in documenting family history, Wednesday, May 1, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown. Class led by experienced genealogist Eileen Bogdanoff. Registration # 913400-41.

Home modification workshop, receive information on what is needed to stay in your home independent and safe, Wednesday, May 1, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Presented by AARP speakers Bob Eiffert and Jane King. Registration # 913404-14.

Opera appreciation group to hear musical selections from “Carmen” by Georges Bizet, Wednesday, May 1, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Professional commentary by George Cecchetti. Registration # 913300-10.

55+ Travel group will explore the “Park Chan-kyong: Gathering” exhibit at the Sackler Gallery, D.C., Wednesday, May 1. Cost \$9, Arlington resident; \$10, non-resident. Registration # 902405-01.

Bunco and trivia games, Thursday, May 2, 11 a.m., trivia, virtual, registration # 913600-09 and bunco, 2 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center, registration # 913600-07.

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ENTERTAINMENT

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“HAIR”. At Signature Theatre, MAX Theatre, Arlington. The sensational, groundbreaking rock musical bursts with the jubilant spirit, raging rebellion and psychedelic color of the 1960s. A company of long-haired bohemian hippies on the cusp of adulthood champion freedom, pacifism, and joy, but confront a world thrown into chaos when one of their own receives a draft notice for the Vietnam War. Visit <https://www.sigtheatre.org/events/202324/hair/>

EVENTS AT

ARLINGTON CEMETERY

Arlington National Cemetery Horticulture Tours. Meet at ANC Welcome Center, Arlington. Join them for spring horticulture tours, where the staff will teach you about Level III Accredited Memorial Arboretum and the plants that inhabit the 639-acre grounds. Learn more at arlingtoncemetery.mil.

SCHEDULE:

April 26 at 9 a.m. -- Memorial Arboretum Walking Tour -- Arbor Day
May 3 at 10 a.m. -- Arlington National Cemetery Garden Tour
June 7 at 9 a.m. -- Turf and Trees of Arlington National Cemetery

MARCH 4 TO APRIL 30

Arlington Artists Showcased. At Fashion Centre at Pentagon City, 1100 S. Hayes Street, Arlington. Over 35 local artists will display their work in a new exhibition at the Fashion Centre at Pentagon City. Over 50 pieces will be displayed in a case located near the Nordstrom store on the lower level of the mall featuring paintings, drawings, sculpture, and mixed media. Featured artists are members of the Arlington Artists Alliance, a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating a vibrant local arts community. All works of art are available for sale, with accessible price points available to local community members starting at \$200 for paintings and drawings, and \$100 for ceramics.

APRIL 4 TO NOV. 21

Ballston Farmers Market Returns. Thursdays from 3-7 p.m. At Welburn Square, near Ballston Metro, Arlington. This year, more than 20 vendors available in Ballston – both fan-favorites and newcomers alike. This year also sees the return of the Mega Markets – sponsored this season by VIDA Fitness. Mega Markets feature the same great produce and vendors with



The St. Andrew's Players will present “The Secret Garden” from April 19 to 28, 2024 in Arlington.

the addition of live music from local musicians and a Beer and Wine Garden - beginning May 2nd.

APRIL 19 TO APRIL 28

“The Secret Garden” Play. Presented by St. Andrew's Players at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 4000 Lorcom Lane, Arlington. A time-honored classic, “The Secret Garden” is the story of two indulged and neglected 10-year-olds. They are miserable souls from different worlds who are lonely, self-pitying, and demanding. Eventually, the children discover each other and the value of friendship, compassion, and hard work from the humble folk with whom they share their “secret.” Yet, it is the garden itself — positively growing and changing thanks to the care they provide — that allows them to “blossom” as well.

Performance Schedule:

Friday, April 26 at 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 27 at 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 28 at 2:00 p.m.

THURSDAY/APRIL 25

EcoAction Arlington. Celebrate our connection to water, the magic of beaches and oceans, and our amazing environmental community. At Clare and Don's Beach Shack, Falls Church. Focus on how everyone can help protect our precious water resources while enjoying the relaxed, fun, and beachy vibe of Clare and Don's Beach Shack. Purchase tickets at <https://www.ecoactionarlington.org/sixth-annual-ecoextravaganza/>

APRIL 26 TO MAY 4

Wakefield High School presents The

Prom (The Musical)! 7 p.m. At Wakefield High School, Arlington. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students.

FRIDAY/APRIL 26

Celebrating Native Trees. 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. Online. Arbor Day, the annual day in April dedicated to tree planting, is a good occasion to discuss the importance of planting trees and the many reasons for choosing native tree species. Join Extension Master Gardener Elaine Mills to learn details on the characteristics and attributes of 20 native trees with suggestions on their uses in the home landscape. General information on planting, care, and other helpful resources will be provided. Free. RSVP at <http://mgnv.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/> to receive a link to participate.

SATURDAY/APRIL 27

Native Plant Sale in Northern Alexandria. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Largest native plant sale in D.C. Metro Area hosts 11 vendors from three states and D.C. selling native perennials, shrubs, and trees for sun or shade. This event is free. 1701 N. Quaker Lane in Church of St. Clement parking lot, Alexandria. Call 571-232-0375 or cscottknudsen@gmail.com or www.NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale.org.

SATURDAY/APRIL 27

Free Bike Skills for Kids. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. At The Woman's Club of Arlington Parking Lot, 700 South Buchanan St. Arlington. For preschool children and older. Bring your child and their bike

to participate in: Safety Helmet Check; Bike Maintenance Check; Games to Teach Basic Biking Skills. Sponsored by velocity bicycle cooperative. For additional information contact The Woman's Club of Arlington at 703-553-5800 or womansclubarlington@gmail.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 27

Live in Arlington Information Fair. 11 a.m. At Walter Reed Recreation Center, 2909 16th Street, South, Arlington. LAIF, Live in Arlington Information Fair, aspires to be a gateway to critical community services and information to those who need it the most. This event is brought to you by Centro de Apoyo Familiar or Center for Assistance to Families (CAF) in partnership with Arlington County Housing Division. CAF is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization that provides access to equitable housing services to underserved communities through its foreclosure prevention, rental and homeownership counseling, and educational workshops as well as a series of other community empowerment programs.

SATURDAY/APRIL 27

National Drug Take-Back Day. The Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) is encouraging the community to take advantage of this designated day to clean out your medicine cabinets to help prevent the risk of prescription drugs falling into the wrong hands, and ensure their proper disposal in one of four permanent drug take-back boxes as improper disposal of medication can potentially contaminate our water supply. ACPD offers four permanent drug take-back boxes where community members can anonymously dispose of unused, unwanted and potentially dangerous prescription drugs for free. The public can safely dispose of prescription medications 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year with no questions at the following locations:
Fire Station #2, 4805 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22203
Fire Station #5, 1750 S. Hayes Street, Arlington, VA 22202
Fire Station #9, 1900 S. Walter Reed Drive, Arlington, VA 22204
Arlington County Police Department, 2000 block of 14th Street N., Arlington, VA 22201
Items accepted at the drug take-back boxes are prescriptions, vitamins, prescription ointments, pet medications, prescription patches and over-the-counter medications.

Items not accepted are needles, inhalers, aerosol cans, thermometers, lotions or liquids and hydrogen peroxide. Free drug deactivation bags are also available through the Department of Human Services.

SATURDAY/APRIL 27

Independent Bookstore Day. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At One More Page Books, 2200 N. Westmoreland Street, Arlington. Independent Bookstore Day was established in 2013 to promote, celebrate, and highlight the value of the independent bookstore community. There will be free book and puzzle tables, Libro.fm Golden Ticket for free audiobooks, OMP Silver Tickets, and exclusive merchandise created specifically for this day. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com

APRIL 27-28

Arlington Festival of the Arts. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. At 1051 N. Highland St., Arlington. Over 125 local and national artists present a stunning showcase of original paintings, mixed media, life-sized sculpture, one-of-a-kind jewelry, photography, fiber art, leatherwork and more. Presented by Howard Alan Events, producer of the nation's top juried art and craft shows. The vibrant event benefitting the Clarendon Alliance takes place in the heart of the Clarendon district with all artists on-site throughout the duration of the festival to discuss the process and inspiration behind each piece. The one-of-a-kind outdoor art walk is all-ages and pet friendly. Ample parking is available. Visit www.art-festival.com or call 561-746-6615.

SUNDAY/APRIL 28

iNaturalist Bioblitz on the Mount Vernon Trail. Starts in Arlington. Sponsored by Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail. Have you used iNaturalist before? Want to learn how to use it? Join them for an iNaturalist Bioblitz on Sunday, April 28. Starting at National Landing, they will walk along the Mount Vernon Trail documenting different species. This is a kid friendly event. Visit MountVernonTrail.org

APRIL 30 TO MAY 31

Together We Rise: United Veterans Group Show. At Gallery Underground, at The Shops at 2100 Crystal Drive, Arlington. Gallery Underground is pleased to present the partnership exhibition Together

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 7



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APRIL 27-28

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Greatest Hits of the 19th Century

Schubert's Cello Quintet and Jane Austen.

9th Street Quartet's final concert of the season features music that evokes the sheer joy of celebration, collaboration and community.

9th Street Quartet welcomes special guest cellist Benjamin Wensel for their series finale at St. George's Episcopal Church. Schubert's Cello Quintet in C Major is one of the most beloved pieces in the chamber music repertoire. The addition of the second cello creates an incredible depth of richness that is best experienced in live performance.

9th Street Quartet will also perform the exuberant Visions and Miracles by Christopher Theofanidis. Enhancing the celebration even further, 9SQ is thrilled to be joined by members of the local chapter of the Jane Austen Society of North America. A reception immediately following the concert will include a post-concert chat with members of 9SQ and JASNA.



Cellist Benjamin Wensel will join the 9th Street Quartet for their concert series finale at St. George's Episcopal Church.

'Schubert and Friends!' will take place on Sunday, April 28 p.m. at Saint George's Episcopal Church, 915 N Oakland St, Arlington, VA 22203. Tickets are \$30 to attend in person, or you can watch via livestream for \$10. 9th Street Quartet will also perform the vibrant 'Visions and Miracle' by Christopher Theofanidis. Complimentary wine will be served as well. Please note that this is not a religiously-affiliated event.

It is a performance like no other. Guests of all ages and backgrounds, from a seasoned classical music concert-goer to a young professional simply looking for a place to unwind, will no doubt leave feeling joyful from the experience.

Event will be held in person and online via livestream. Tickets are available for purchase at <https://www.9thstreetchambermusic.com/event-details/schubert-and-friends>

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 5

We Rise: United, with Uniting US, a nonprofit that empowers veterans, military, and their families to inspire communities to heal, find wellness, and unite through art. Together We Rise: United will feature artwork showcasing democracy's benefit for individual choice, freedom of speech, and the right to vote with a universal commitment to our nations. Website: arlingtonartistsalliance.org/gallery-underground

WEDNESDAY/MAY 1

Coffee and Conversation with Arlington Neighborhood Village. 10-11 a.m. Via Zoom Link. Life with Cancer: As anyone with cancer can tell you, cancer is a family affair. That's where Life with Cancer comes in. They provide a wide range of educational, counseling, nutrition, and fitness services to support the whole family on their cancer journey. Marie Calle, MEd, Pediatric Behavioral Health Therapist 1, Oncology will introduce us to this unique resource and the services they provide to both cancer patients and their families.

THURSDAY/MAY 2

ANV's 10-Year Anniversary Celebration. 5:30-7:30 p.m. At National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, 4301 Wilson Blvd., Arlington. The party—and parking—are free, but RSVP to the office by April 22 so they can have an accurate headcount. This is the founding principle of Arlington Neighborhood Village. In the decade since they began services, ANV has become a critical part of Arlington's senior safety net with hundreds of volunteers helping more than 400 older adults age well.

THURSDAY/MAY 2

Rick "Doc" Walker, Former 1983 Washington Redskins Champion to Speak. At Washington Golf and Country Club, Arlington. The Helping Hands Society of NAIFA-Greater Washington DC announces that Rick "Doc" Walker will be the keynote speaker at their 13th Annual Legacy Luncheon. "Doc" Walker is an award-winning sports broadcaster, NFL Hall of Famer, and former NFL player of the 1983 Super Bowl championship team, the Washington Redskins. His 23-year



The Arlington Festival of the Arts takes place April 27-28, 2024 in Arlington.

career as a sports broadcaster includes commentary on ESPN, Redskins Radio and Team 980. Walker is a veteran of nine NFL seasons and distinguished himself on the football field as an original member of the famed offensive linemen known as the "HOGS". He was inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame in 2017.

MAY 3 AND 10

The Friday Morning Music club will perform two free chamber concerts in May, at St. George's Church, 915 N. Oakland St., Arlington, adjacent to the Virginia Square Metro before taking a four-month summer break. The May 3 concert will feature works by Reger, J.S. Bach, Beethoven and Scriabin; the May 10, works by Higdon, Podowski, Hahn, Debussy, Faure and Ravel. The concerts start at noon.

MAY 4-5

Jane Franklin Dance "On the Run". At Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive, Arlington. Saturday, May 4, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., Sunday, May 5, 2024 at 4 p.m. Jane Franklin Dance performs "on the Run" with a concert that features award-winning choreographers and performances by Forty+ Project. Enjoy movement and dance in the heart of Arlington's industrial district at Four Mile Run.

SATURDAY/MAY 4

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 comedy from the DC area's finest comics. Our headliner for May's show is the hilarious Kyle Cromer. Tickets: \$10/\$15 at capitalcityshowcase.com

SUNDAY/MAY 5

Harmony for Hope Concert. 3 p.m. At Rock Spring United Church of Christ, 5010 Little Falls Road, Arlington. Concert to Benefit the children of Ukraine. Among the singers will be Eduardo Castro, who has performed many times for Opera NOVA in recital concerts as well as children's operas. In addition, Frequent Opera NOVA singers such as Israel Lozano, Darcy Monsalve, Alex Alnurqueque, and our Artistic Director Jose Sacin will perform.

FRIDAY/MAY 10

LESSON ZERO. 9 p.m. to midnight. At Celtic House, 2500 Columbia Pike, Arlington. Admission is free and street parking is available. For more information see www.youtube.com/lessonzero and www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero.

Date to Who Knows When



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Continuing the theme from last week's column: it's been medically documented and agreed that I now have papillary thyroid cancer stage IV, and wait for it: chronic kidney disease, also stage IV. This is my new narrative, my current medical situation. This replaces the narrative that had characterized the previous 12 years (until I began treatment for thyroid cancer, after having an operation to remove my thyroid called a thyroidectomy in 2020) that I had non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. As the Lombardi Center (Georgetown) thyroid cancer doctor told me when we went there for a second opinion; after reviewing my medical records said, "If you (meaning me) had lung cancer, we wouldn't be having this conversation." Which means, for all of you readers who haven't yet had your morning coffee, I'd be dead. That's because lung cancer is a killer. Though I might have laughed at the time, I soon stopped laughing when we discussed the effectiveness of the drug I had been prescribed. The doctor said it was the best drug to prescribe, one she most definitely would have prescribed. The problem: it was not a lifelong solution. In fact, it is a one to three-years-ish solution after which, as we say in Boston: "It will be Katie bar the door," which means trouble.

And that was years before I found myself in my current hot seat: stage IV kidney disease caused as a direct result of the years of chemotherapy and the most recent three years of that exact thyroid cancer drug/treatment. As a result, I am no longer taking my thyroid cancer drug so I am presently drifting along with untreated thyroid cancer and untreated (not much the doctors can do I'm told; kidney damage is irreparable) kidney disease. A "double-header" if there ever was one. As Matt Damon said in a classic scene from the movie "Good Will Hunting": "How do you like them apples?" I don't but I will deal with this new hand as I have in the past with the old, whether there's a fat lady singing: "It ain't over till it's over" or not.

And for those of you following along at home, given the fact that I am nearing the age of 70 and am already a cancer patient, a kidney transplant is completely out of the question. Which leaves me with a bit of an uncertain future with few drugs if any, that can successfully treat my stage IV papillary thyroid cancer without damaging my kidneys. And if I damage my kidneys further, I will be on d,d, dialysis. Once this treatment starts, at present, there is no undoing it. I will be on dialysis for the rest of my life. A life which can last for years with a reasonably normal-ish quality and mobility of life (as we've learned). If I were to cross that Rubicon however, I have been well-informed by my medical provider, and some steps have already been taken to prepare and educate me as to the challenges – and opportunities that await. It is not, from what I have learned, a death sentence nor a situation that necessarily confines me to a Barcalounger at an infusion center Mon., Wed., and Fri. for six hours per day, as I had thought.

Part of that education process has been and continues to be interactions with a renal-specific dietician, a nutritionist, and a pharmacy specialist with the hope of slowing down my descent into dialysis. We can't exactly treat the kidneys I'm told, but we can certainly stop stressing them. Eliminating certain foods, medical supplements, miscellaneous drinks (coffee and colas, for an example), and further reducing the amount of liquid that I do drink. This will put less pressure will be put on the kidneys to filter – which is after all, what they do. With this new knowledge and my acceptance of the somewhat tenuous grasp of my future, I will try to eliminate the bad while adding the good. Bad being sodium, potassium, and phosphorus primarily, and of course all the chemicals that manufacturers put in our food. I have lists to follow and articles to read and reread until this dietary evolution becomes second nature to me. Nonetheless, I don't feel as if I've been left to wither on the vine, so to speak. I have regular calls scheduled with these various medical professionals, aside from regular commitments with my oncologist, endocrinologist, nephrologist and of course, my primary care provider as well - who knows me years longer and better than any of these specialists. He knew me before cancer (in fact, he was the one who called me with the results of my surgical biopsy, 15+ years ago). Moreover, I know I can count on him. He's regularly available whenever I need an assessment of any new medical conditions/symptoms. He is an email away and is super responsive. I'll often receive same day feedback from him which for anyone, especially a cancer patient with stage IV chronic kidney disease complicating his life as a papillary thyroid patient, is a kind of responsiveness that I must have. Furthermore, I need to feel that someone is watching and/or listening to me because my situation is quite serious, and time might not be exactly on my side. I don't imagine that having two major health concerns, thyroid cancer, and chronic kidney disease, makes any of these conversations easy. Nevertheless, I'm glad to know where I'm going since I haven't always known where I've been.

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

EARTH DAY

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE & ANNIE RUHE



Satish, the dinosaur, and Eugeniya Struts, volunteer at the Safe Soil exhibit which advocates across 193 nations for soil restoration.



Spice Cake plays blues and jazz with Yaya Patterson on vocal and Miles Spicer playing acoustic guitar.



Heather Lezla is a potter and weaver who started 20 years ago and now has her own studio, Persimmon Street.

Earth Day—Using What You Can How You Can

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Sunday celebrated “Earth Day Every Day” on Langston Boulevard from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. The 60 booths and vendors featured everything from weaving, jewelry, plastic dishcloths and stationery all made from recycled materials to environmental booths with educational materials on solar energy, solid waste recycling, biking Arlington, and soil renewal.

A larger than life dinosaur welcomes passersby to the Save the Soil display which takes the observer through the stages of healthy soil to gradual degradation without proper safeguarding and nurturing. A map indicates that 52 percent of the world’s agricultural soil has already been degraded.

Inside the dinosaur is Satish who came to America from India in 2011. When he is not entertaining the children walking by, he is explaining to anyone who will listen to a dinosaur about the organization and the goal of Save the Soil to increase organic content in soil to a minimum of 3-6 percent. He explains this is a worldwide movement and that the United Nations estimates that in 60-80 years there will be no agriculture unless the soil is protected now.

Down the way Christina Hernandez sits at Everything Else where she displays her crafts made from upcycled, repurposed and secondhand materials. “I make jewelry, candles, paper, stationery all out of recycled material.” She said she takes apart pieces of jewelry and uses all the pieces to make new creations.

“I want to take good material out of the waste stream. I use what I can, how I can.” She says it is exciting to create new things. This is her first time at the Langston Earth Day Festival. “It’s great to see people so excited about sustainability.”

Barbara Buzzell stands behind a table



Three-year-old Eila Halley enjoys her \$4.95 popsicle at the Earth Day Festival.

with artwork she makes out of birch bark. “I am from New England, and I go foraging for the birch. All of these trees were on the ground; I didn’t destroy any living trees for my art.” Buzzell says, “I do this to relax; it’s not work. You run out of time for fun.”

Buzzell says she loves the beauty of the bark. “I found these on the ground in Vermont.” Right behind Buzzell’s stand is her friend who is making purses, coasters and dishcloths out of recycled plastic bags.

A group of young girls huddle around Oak Lane Soapworks where they are attempting to solve an environmental crossword puzzle to get a coveted handmade lip balm. Melinda Miller has almost run out of the free gifts; “the girls come together in droves.”

Miller has been making soap for 10 years and now owns her business. “It fell in my lap when a man at the Falls Church Farmers Market wanted to sell his business. I bought it with his recipes but then developed new



Christina Hernandez at Everything Else makes recycled jewelry, stationery and candles.

“It’s great to see people so excited about sustainability.”
— Christina Hernandez

scents such as pear, rose garden, coconut and lime and other products such as healing balm and shea butter whip.” Her beautifully wrapped bars of soap range from mango, lavender and seaside which is probably the most popular.

Miller says, “I do this because I believe in basics, living simpler and protecting the environment.”

Heather Lezla is a power and weaver who first got interested in ceramics in college and has been involved with pottery for 20 years. She says she got her own studio 8 years ago.



Barbara Buzzell makes original creations from birch trees she has found on the ground in New England.

She explains her work is environmentally oriented. “It’s clay mostly from the earth and I use leftover clay so it’s a renewable resource.” She uses vegetable dyes for her weaving like avocado, black tea and marigold. It’s a process. “I make a tea with the dye and reduce it a little bit, then dip in the cotton and let it dry naturally to cure it.”

The mellow sound of blues and jazz comes from the stage as Yaya Patterson of Spice Cake sings “It’s All Right” to the audience response (it’s all right) to have a good time. She is accompanied by Miles Spicer on the acoustic guitar who has been playing his music around the DMV area for over 30 years. The festival began with “Singing Books With Emily” at 11 am and ended with New Orleans-influenced funk and greasy soul by “Sol Roots.”

CONTRIBUTING WRITER ANNIE RUHE
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