



A line forms for a Sean Doolittle autograph after Saturday story hour at Arlington Central Library.

**2 Million Families
Served by AFAC**

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**Dooooo
Be Sure
To Read**

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County Tackles Food Security With New Round of Grants

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

The Arlington County Department of Human Services (DHS) announced June 3 a second round of grants aimed at improving food security in Arlington. The funding will be available to area 501(c)(3) organizations, faith-based groups and schools and universities that support aspects of Arlington's Food Security Strategic Plan, with the maximum grant award \$25,000.

The Food Security Strategic Plan was released in May 2022. It was prepared by the Food Security Task Force of 28 stakeholders in partnership with the Urban Institute. The Committee met for 12 months to gather information, produce a needs assessment and come up with a strategic plan. The report found 7.8 percent of Arlingtonians were experiencing food insecurity in 2019.

The first round of grants was announced in December 2023 when the County Board allocated \$150,000 in one-time food security mini-grants to such groups as Bridges to Independence in the amount of \$7,012 to purchase a freezer for their food pantry, \$9,000 to Randolph Elementary School to provide more fresh produce and proteins at monthly school food distributions, \$12,500 to Food for Neighbors to provide teen-friendly food, \$19,334 to Meals on Wheels to cover the cost of for homebound people under age 60 who are ineligible for Area Agency on Aging funding. The team reviewing the grants was composed of community members, food security experts and county staff.

Stephanie Hopkins, Arlington County Department of Human Services Food Security Coordinator, says the first round of grants have until June 2024 to spend the funds. "But I can tell you what I know so far about the impact from the mid-grant report.

"One really successful project is The D.C. Food Project. They set up Food Share baskets with 10 share tables in seven elementary and two middle schools in Arlington where kids could drop off something they didn't want—a bag of carrots, an apple—and other kids could pick it up. I went to visit Long Branch Elementary and counted how much was reused. The kids had shared sandwiches, cheese sticks, fruit and carrots.



Food Share tables at Long Branch Elementary School.

Kids knew they could go back and pick up something if they were hungry because the food was going to be there."

She says another successful project was Food for Neighbors targeted at middle and high schools where there isn't the same focus on providing assistance. "We collect food from the community and set up things like bins of granola bars. You can just email Food for Neighbors Red Bag program, and they will send someone to pick up your donation at your house." This program serves six middle and high schools in Arlington. Request a red bag here: <https://www.foodforneighbors.org/get-involved/form/>

Hopkins said when the Food Security report was issued the percent of Arlingtonians experiencing food insecurity was 7.8 percent. Now two years later despite all of the efforts that came out of the report, the number of Arlingtonians experiencing food insecurity has grown to an estimated 8.1 percent as of September 2023. New data will be available July 1.

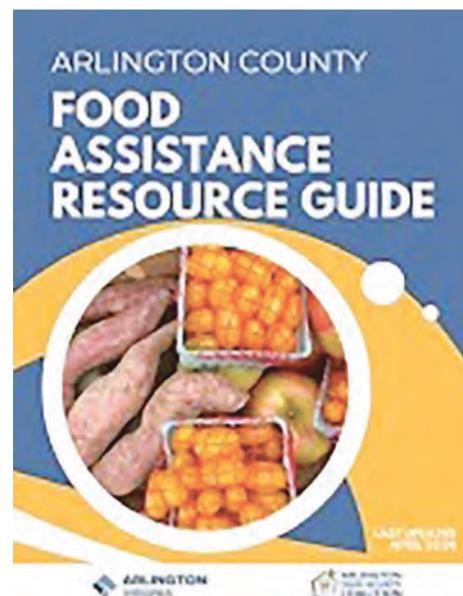
"Part of it is that people's wages haven't gone up but they have a harder time paying for groceries with food costing 20 percent more. At the end of the day their wages haven't gone up 20 percent."

In addition, she points out that a lot of the benefits that were higher during Covid have gone back to normal.

"We've been doing a lot of outreach and trying to reduce the stigma of going to food



Stephanie Hopkins (right), Arlington County Department of Human Services Food Security Coordinator and a co-worker Lucie Leblouis visit Long Branch Elementary Food Share program.



New Food Resources Guide issued by the Arlington County Department of Human Services.

pantries. Part of me wants to believe this has made a difference."

Hopkins says a Food Assistance Resource Guide was just released. "I'm really proud of it. For instance, a social worker identifies a family in need who doesn't have enough food. They can walk you through the specifics of the options, or explain a program

like WIC. There is a link online to access the Guide. <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Departments/DHS/Food-Assistance>

"We have \$150,000 to distribute again." Applications for the second round of grants will be accepted until Tuesday, July 9.

New Grant Program Tackles Food Security

This is the second round of project funding for food security projects. Last year, the County awarded \$150,000 in grant funding for projects that provided healthy food and snacks at schools, supported nutrition education, covered the cost of Meals on Wheels for some homebound seniors, and bolstered SNAP outreach.

"The work funded in the first round of grants has been impactful, and we anticipate more of the same with this second round of funding," said DHS Director Anita Friedman.

View the full notice of funding availability for eligible activities, reporting requirements, and additional grant guidelines.

Applications are now live and will be accepted until Tuesday, July 9, 2024, at 5 p.m. Funding awards will be announced in late September 2024, and recipients will be required to sign the FY 2025 Food Security Mini-Grants Program Grant Agreement with the County. Funds must be spent by organizations before June 30, 2025.

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AFAC Has Served 2 Million Families

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

This week Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) commemorated serving two million families since they began in 1988. Charles Meng, CEO of AFAC says, “When I came 16 years ago we had four staff members and three distribution sites.”

Now AFAC has 24 employees and 15 sites. Meng says they added sites gradually through the years as they could. “It always takes more people and takes more funds to add a site. For instance, right now we need a night driver and another warehouse guy.

“We didn’t have the variety of food to offer in the beginning, just chicken for protein and nothing leafy, turnips all winter long. It was like Russia or something.

“Now,” he says, “we have much higher quality produce and a selection of chicken, hamburger, hot dogs or fish for protein. And families can choose from a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables as well as eggs, bread, milk and canned goods. We have always had a lot of volunteers but currently we have grown to 2,400 volunteers who bag food, glean, distribute, grow and clean the warehouse as well as help at special events.”

Meng points to a corner of the warehouse stacked with containers and extra stuff. “That’s where my office was when I first got here.” He points to another spot a few feet away which was his next office. “The roof leaked right over my head,” he remembers. But now he has an upstairs office complete with a large window and a cat who considers this his second home.

Meng says it took 23 years for AFAC to serve its first 500,000 families. It then took just 5 years to serve the next 500,000 families and another five years to serve the next 500,000 families. But he says it has taken only three years to serve the remaining 500,000 families which results in the total of two million clients served today. Meng says, “We had 300 families at this location just last week. The total families served at all locations has now risen to over 3,800 per week.

Meng says when he arrived in 2008 they served 40,189 families in a year and in the current year will serve an estimated 180,000 families for an increase of 447 percent.

County Board member Matt de Ferranti arrives to walk through the warehouse with Meng and express his support for AFAC’s efforts. “I need to get back here and help out again,” de Ferranti says. De Ferranti adds, “Hunger may have a strength that appeals to people in a way other things don’t. I’d like to take a look at what we have done historically and understand what we have provided. The County has a Food Security Plan and has funded a number of grants to assist in this effort. They just published a food resources guide. I’m thinking about what should be next. I’m open to what things should be, whatever you guys think.”

Meng predicts the number of families will continue to increase but at some point he thinks it will level off. He says the County provides \$707,606 of the \$10 million annual AFAC budget. “This is 8 percent of what it costs; we raise the other 92 percent ourselves.” He says, “We did get an increase of \$144,784 from the County this year to bring next

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AFAC CEO Charles Meng and County Board Member Matt de Ferranti commemorate two million families served since AFAC began.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY ALANA RAFIEE

Village Sweets provides cookies for the June 4 event as part of the AFAC collaboration with local businesses in the community.

“It takes more people and takes more funds.”

— Charles Meng, CEO of AFAC

year’s County budget for AFAC to \$852,390.

De Ferranti adds that the County has a set of finite resources to satisfy all of the County’s needs. “I think the threat of eviction can have a huge impact on hunger. We did so much on eviction prevention during Covid but now the financial assistance has dried up and people are still being evicted. And we have some structural things we need to do in housing.”

The warehouse is a busy place. Randy stands at a table sorting through produce. A tall cart passes by stacked high with onions. A volunteer is swishing a big mop over the floor. Sam Kirzner walks through the warehouse door heading for his regular Wednesday volunteer work. His wife Debbie is just ending her shift. “AFAC is my favorite Arlington charity. They do an awesome job,” Kirzner says.



Jolie Smith, AFAC development director, shows County Board member Matt de Ferranti the list of AFAC’s current 15 distribution sites.



Charles Meng shows his early office at AFAC where water dripped on his head from a leak in the ceiling.



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Arlington’s 55+ Centers will be closed Wednesday, June 19th in observance of Juneteenth

Assistive devices for the deaf and hard of hearing, Monday, June 17, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center.

Learn about latest technology, smartphone apps and the Technology Assistance Program from Debbie Jones, tech manager for Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (NVRC). Registration # 914500-14.

Dementia Support Program, RAFT, a short-term program that assists people with dementia, their families and caregivers with tools and information to live with dignity, respect and meaning, Monday, June 17, 10 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Presented by Sydney Palinkas, dementia education and outreach coordinator. Registration # 914500-04.

Acoustic Afternoon with live, acoustic music performed by PhEd-Up with Phriends, Arlington residents Phil Rosen, Ed Girovasi, Judy McVerry and Cameron Fletcher, Monday, June 17, 1 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Music features classic pop, folk and blues. Registration # 914301-01.

55+ Travel group will travel to Mill Run, PA for a tour of Frank Lloyd Wright’s home, Fallingwater, Tuesday, June 18. Cost \$150, Arlington resident; \$173, non-resident. Includes box lunch. Following the tour, group will stop for dinner at Cracker Barrel (on your own). Registration # 902406-09.

Fundraising event at Rocklands Barbecue, 3471 Washington Blvd., Tuesday, June 18, 11 a.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Family and friends welcome to engage in games and drawings. 15% of proceeds for the day will benefit the Alliance for Arlington Senior Programs at 55+ Centers. For more information visit the website at www.friendsofthealliance.org.

Genealogy 101, learn to use primary sources, grave sites, family records, DNA services and more to explore family roots, Tuesday, June 18, 11:30 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. For more information email Center Director Ashley Gomez at agomez1@arlingtonva.us. Registration # 914402-01.

Acoustic Café, enjoy the vibe of a

1960’s coffee house with live music performed by local musicians Mark Sylvester and Shannon Leigh, Tuesday, June 18, 7 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Open to all ages. Registration # 914301-02.

Hearing Aids—Beware and Be Wise! Bonnie O’Leary, outreach manager, NVRC, will discuss hearing loss, how to interpret audiograms and the differences between over-the-counter aids and prescription aids, Thursday, June 20, 10 a.m., virtual. Registration # 914500-15.

A virtual trip to the farmer market, with tips on what to shop for and hear about the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, Thursday, June 20, 10:30 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Presented by the Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Food Volunteers. Registration # 914501-03.

That’s Not My Debt! Staff from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau will discuss rights regarding medical billing and debt collection, Thursday, June 20, 2:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center, registration #914400-11 or virtual, registration # 914400-12.

Introduction to basic Spanish, five-part series begins Thursday, June 20, 12:45 p.m., virtual. Taught by Lubber Run 55+ Center Director Ashley Gomez. Learn basic vocabulary, grammar and conversational phrases. Registration # 914650-01. Register separately for each class.

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STORY TIME

Kids Have a Ball at Doolittle Story Hour

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

The floor at the Central Library auditorium is dotted with small children clutching a glossy Nats poster or a baseball. “Are you excited to have a story hour with Sean Doolittle?” A loud whooooo mingles with the sound of enthusiastic clapping.

Doolittle retired as a left-handed relief pitcher for the Nats in 2023 after more than a decade pitching in the major leagues. He is now a pitching strategist with the team.

Doolittle agreed to answer questions from the children before he reads “Clifford Makes the Team.”

Q: What was your favorite book as a child?

A: My favorite book to read as a child was “Curious George,” the one where he goes to a baseball game. That was my favorite one.

Q: What job would you want to do if you weren’t a baseball player?

A: I studied psychology. It helps me in my job now as a coach connecting with people. I think I would want to be a psychologist.

Q: What was it like to pitch in the World Series?

A: Oh my gosh. I was so nervous. I pitched in the first game. After the first pitch it was really fun. And we won so it was really awesome.

Q: What is the best thing about coaching?

A: My favorite thing is when one of the pitchers is trying to learn something new and able to pitch really really well ... talking to him after.

Q: How do you make yourself feel better when you’re not having the best day?

A: Do something you feel better doing. I unwind by reading. I love to read. Take care of yourself by finding something you enjoy doing—balance in your life.

Q: How many games did you play?

A: Pause...There’s probably a way to look that up. I’d say 450. This results in a loud round of clapping.

Q: How old were you when you started playing?

A: Four-years old when I started playing T-ball.

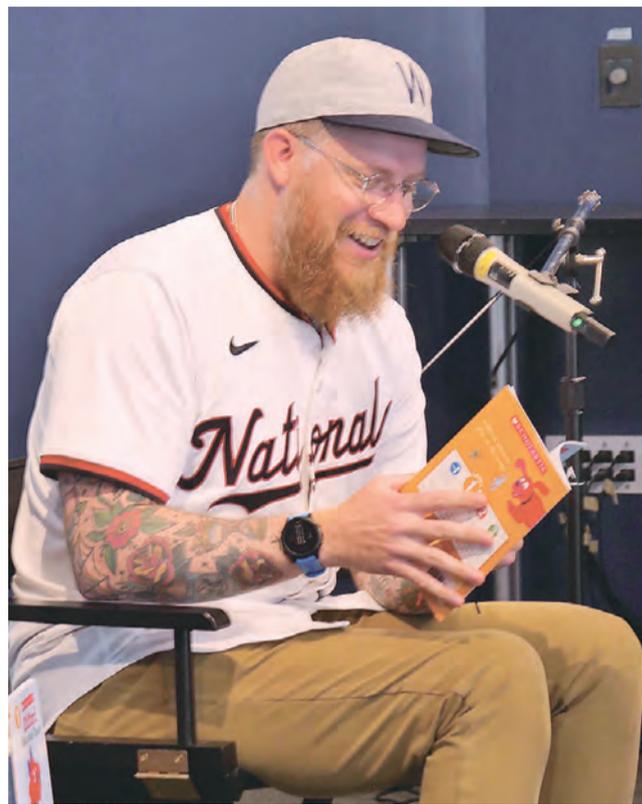
Q: How did you get your uniform number?

A: That’s a good question. It means a lot to me. My grandparents were married 63 years. They came to all of my high school games and they lived close to UVA so they came to a lot of those games, too. The number was in honor of them.

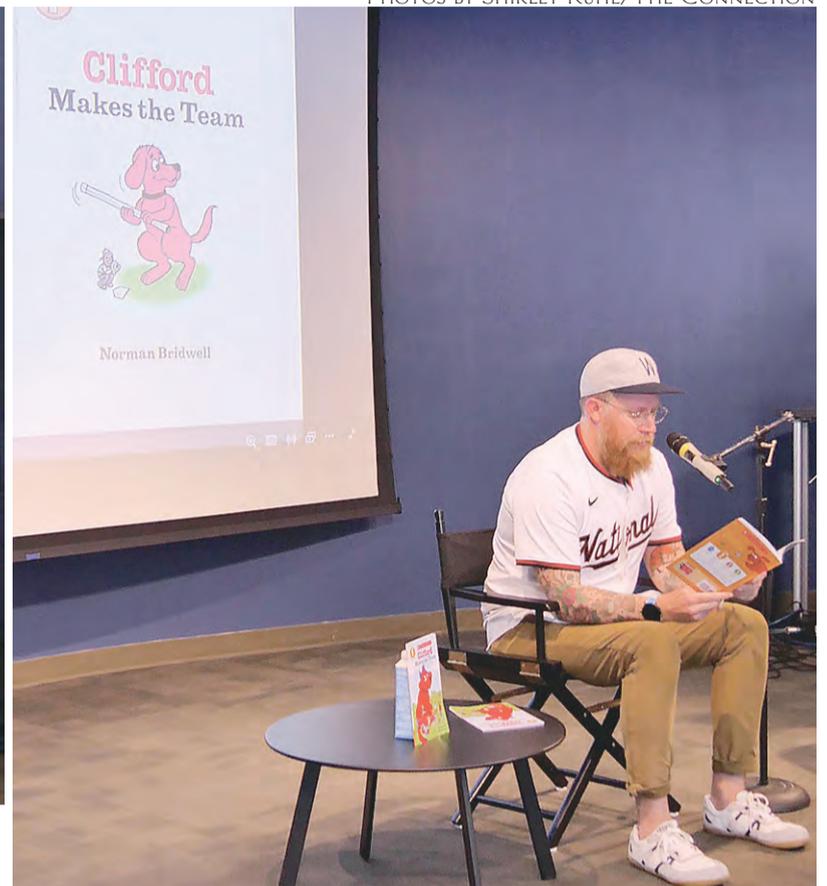
Q: What is your game prep?

A: It has changed over the years. Let’s use today as an example with a game at 4 p.m. I get to the stadium at 12 or 12:30, have

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Sean Doolittle, former Nationals player, reads “Clifford Makes the Team” at story hour held Saturday, June 8 at Arlington Central Library.



Dylan Aldrich-Sacharko presents his Doolittle bobblehead to Sean Doolittle at the Central Library June 8.



A young fan is delighted to get a Doolittle Nationals shirt signed by Doolittle.

lunch, do crossword puzzles. Then I talk to the trainer, hit the weight room, do my stretching, play catch and work on different pitches. Then finally have a snack and coffee and review the opposing team’s hitting.

Q: Who’s the toughest player you ever faced?

A: Hmmmm. There were a lot of them. Altuve—do you know who that is? And Wilson Ramos who used to play for the Nats. I could never get him out.

Q: Did you win the first game you pitched in?

A: No, we lost the first game of my career. But then we went on a winning streak after that.

“Thank you guys. That was awesome.”

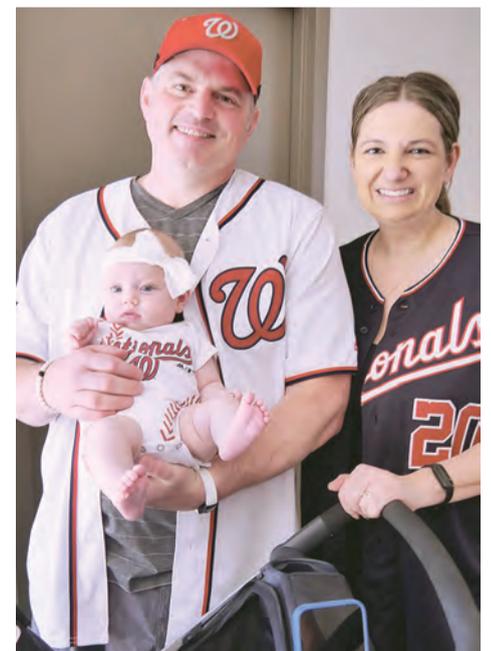
Doolittle crosses his legs and opens “Clifford Makes the Team.”

“Clifford sees a boy. He has a bat. Clifford sees a girl. She has a bat, too. Clifford wants to play baseball.”

The story is over and the kids scramble to line up for autographs. Doolittle talks to each one and poses for pictures with the family and friends. Dylan Aldrich-Sacharko brought his Doolittle bobblehead for a signature. Many of the children have grabbed the large Nats poster at the welcoming desk while others have brought their own baseball to be signed.

A four-year-old takes off his red Nats hat and presents it to be signed, and one child thrusts a Doolittle shirt on the table. Doolittle lights up when one family presents a “Curious George” book to get the prized signature. Three-month old Nicole Bates waits in line with her parents Kate and Ronnie Bates. “This is her first trip to the library but we read a lot at home,” Kate says. “We plan to take her to her first Nats game this summer.”

The announcer reminds everyone that the 21-day Summer Reading Adventure has started at the library. She explains if you just read a little for 21 days sometime before Sept. 1 and get a prize, or even better, two tickets to a Nats game.



Ronnie and Kate Bates have brought their three-month-old daughter, Nicole, to the library story hour. “We read a lot at home but this is her first trip to the library.”

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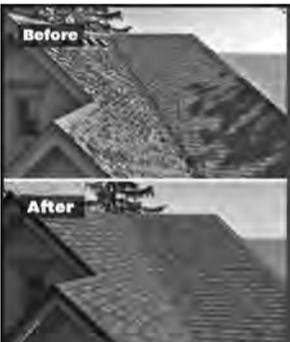
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Hyde Social LLC, trading as Hyde Social, 3100 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 200., Arlington VA 22201. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer On and Off Premises; Mixed Beverage license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 dates 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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HBNL LLC trading as BAR COLLINE, 269 19th Court South Suite 50155, Arlington, Arlington County, VA 22202. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a BEER / WINE AND MIXED BEVERAGE license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. IAN HILTON, MANAGING 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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Anita's New Mexico Mexican Style Food, INC. trading as Anita's New Mexico Mexican Style Food, INC., 3444 N Fairfax Dr, Ste 4, Arlington, Arlington County, Virginia 22201. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Restaurant, Wine, Beer, Mixed Beverages, Consumed On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Thomas Tellez, President. 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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BULLETIN

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

THURSDAY/JUNE 27

4th Annual Pride with Police Event. 5-7 p.m. At Freddie's Beach Bar and Restaurant, 555 23rd Street, South, Arlington. In recognition of Pride Month as well as the invaluable contributions of the LGBTQ+ communities in Arlington, the Arlington County Police Department (ACPD), including members of the LGBTQ+ Liaison Team and the Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI), are proud to announce the 4th annual Pride with the Police event at Freddie's Beach Bar and Restaurant. This informal opportunity gives community members the chance to discuss public safety concerns, ask questions and get to know the police and other County personnel who serve them while enjoying light refreshments and lawn games.

PREPARE FOR AN 'ABOVE NORMAL' 2024 HURRICANE SEASON

The 2024 Atlantic hurricane season officially began on June 1, and it is shaping up to be a busy one. This year, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) predicts an above normal hurricane season, with more frequent and stronger storms predicted. With this heightened risk, being prepared is more critical than ever. Preparing for emergencies before they strike can significantly reduce stress and ensure your family's safety. Stay Informed. Identify multiple ways to stay informed about emergencies. Sign up for free local emergency weather and traffic alerts at ArlingtonAlert.com. Visit the ReadyArlington webpage for free preparedness resources and follow ReadyArlington on Facebook and Twitter. Follow weather updates from The Weather Channel and NOAA Weather.

DONATIONS NEEDED

Pet Food Bank. AWLA has established a Pet Food Bank to serve qualifying residents of Arlington County and the City of Falls Church. In consideration of the effect financial obstacles have on a pet owner's ability to afford pet care, the AWLA Pet Food Bank program's goal is to keep family pets out of shelters. If you are an Arlington County or City of Falls Church resident and are in need of assistance in feeding your pet, follow this link and fill out a pre-registration form. Visit goo.gl/forms/s2FuFdaYwDz4tPw2. Donations Needed. Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, 2700 South 19th St., is seeking to replenish its food pantry. Particularly needed are rice (large bags appreciated), the pantry will rebag), dry beans, canned vegetables, soup, small jars of peanut butter, small jars of jelly, pasta and pasta sauce. Donations are collected during Mass each Sunday. Visit www.ourladyqueenofpeace.org for more.

ENTERTAINMENT

KIWANIS CLUB

BLUEBERRY SALES UNDERWAY

It's time to reserve your freshly-picked, high-quality blueberries from Kiwanis Club of Arlington. The cost for a 10-pound box is \$45, and orders may be placed online at <https://arlingtonvakiwanis.com>. Please consider adding a box or two for AFAC to your order and Kiwanis will deliver the berries directly to AFAC. Last year, more than a ton of blueberries were purchased for donation to AFAC. Berries will be available for pick up June 21 and 22 in the Cherrydale Methodist Church parking lot at 3701 Lorcum Lane. Questions? Email blueberries@arlingtonvakiwanis.com or 703-646-1850.

NOW THRU JULY 7

"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/>

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

MAY 17 TO AUG. 23

Mason Exhibitions Presents A Closer Look: Conflicted Art from Ukraine. At Mason Exhibitions Arlington, 3601 Fairfax Drive, Arlington. Curated by Sophie Bae with Conflicted Art's Yevgen Nemchenko, the new exhibition offers a nuanced exploration of the impact of war through the lens of contemporary Ukrainian artists. In an era saturated with media coverage of conflict, it is easy to feel overwhelmed and detached from the deeper questions surrounding the persistence of war in the 21st century. A Closer Look: Conflicted Art from Ukraine seeks to bridge that gap by showcasing the work of 13 Ukrainian artists who confront head-on the experiences of direct conflict. Through photography, video, painting, sculpture, literature, and installation, these artists offer a multifaceted perspective from the fringes of this conflict. Their works invite viewers to engage in dialogue beyond statistics and headlines and to examine core issues of existence distorted by violence and uncertainty.

MAY 21 TO JULY 7

"Where the Mountain Meets the Sea." At Signature Theatre, ARK Theatre, Arlington. A poignant, beautiful musical of parallel journeys from the writer of Apple TV+'s The Morning Show and directed by Timothy Douglas (Signature's The Color Purple). After he learns of his estranged father's death, a son recreates the cross-country trip his Haitian immigrant parents took before he was born. As he traces their journey across America, and bonds with the music his father adored, time blurs and erases the distance between them. Lyrical storytelling and an evocative folk score drive father and son to rediscover love, each other and their everlasting bond. <https://www.sigtheatre.org/events/202324/where-the-mountain-meets-the-sea/>

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 12

Sips, Savories and the Arts Soiree. 6 p.m. Arlington Committee of 100 June Program hosted by the Museum of Contemporary Art Arlington. Celebrate the 70th year with a sneak preview of MOCA's 50th anniversary art

www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



Bette Smith will be the headliner at the Columbia Pike Blues Festival on Saturday, June 15, 2024 in Arlington.

exhibition.
Contact c100arlington@gmail.com.

FRIDAY/JUNE 14

Salsa in the Park. 5:30-8:30 p.m. At Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington. Hosted by Arlington Parks and Recreation.

SATURDAY/JUNE 15

"160 Years of Evolution and Expansion at Arlington National Cemetery: A History and Horticulture Tram Tour." 9:30 a.m. This tour will explore how ANC has evolved and expanded over its 160 years of existence. ANC's historians and horticulturists will take visitors on a tram tour throughout the cemetery to trace the changes that have transformed this hillside property into a deeply symbolic landscape of memory. Along the way, visitors will learn about many of the memorials, graves, historic structures, plants, gardens, and landscape features in the cemetery. This tour is free and open to the public but seats are limited and pre-registration is required.

SATURDAY/JUNE 15

Columbia Pike Blues Festival. 1-8 p.m. At the intersection of South Walter Reed Drive and Columbia Pike in Arlington. This year the Festival celebrates women in blues with a lineup of all-women-fronted bands offering a full array of blues, R&B, and funk performers of national and regional note that includes: headliner Bette Smith, Eden Brent, Mama Moon & the Rump Shakers; The Stacy Brooks Band and the Honeylarks.

SUNDAY/JUNE 16

Juneteenth Black Heritage Walk. 1-3 p.m. At Towers Park, 801 S. Scott Street, Arlington. Juneteenth Black Heritage Walk, presented by WalkArlington in partnership with the Black Heritage Museum of Arlington and Columbia Pike Partnership.

NOW THRU JUNE 19

Black in The Day: Photographs of Historic Black Arlington. At FOHTA Gallery, 2206 S. Monroe Street, Arlington. Photographs by Lloyd Wolf from the collection of the National Endowment for the Arts Survey Grant-funded Arlington Photographic Documentary Project (APDP).

SATURDAY/JUNE 22

18th Annual Gang Prevention Soccer Tournament. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Washington-Liberty High School, 1301 N. Stafford Street, Arlington. 18th Annual Gang Prevention Soccer Tournament to help at-risk youth: "Empower our Youth, One Goal at a Time", hosted by the Arlington Gang Prevention Task Force.

SATURDAY/JUNE 22

Green Valley Antique and Classic Car Show. 12-5 p.m. At Charles R. Drew Elementary School, 3500 S. 23rd St., Arlington. Green Valley Civic Association is hosting their annual Antique and Classic Car Show. People's Choice awards for 1st and 2nd Place. Free Admission, Fish Fry, BBQ and live music. Vendors Welcome. The major sponsor for the event will highlight Stopping the Violence. Call 703-486-0058 or via email at greenvalleyciv@gmail.com.

SATURDAY/JUNE 22

Amazon's HQ2's One-Year Anniversary. 9-1 p.m. At Amazon HQ2's Metropolitan Park, 510 14th Street, S, Arlington. Join Amazon for HQ2 Community Day, a celebration of HQ2's first anniversary in National Landing with a day of outdoor fun. Neighbors of all ages can take part in the fun, including exciting activities for children, a DJ, interactive art installations, food tastings from local eateries, a brunch garden, lawn games, a farmers market and much more.

FRIDAY/JUNE 28

VHC Health Senior Housing Fair. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. At Lubber Run Community Center, 300 N. Park Drive, Arlington. VHC Health is hosting a Senior Housing Fair in partnership with Positive Aging. Explore housing options and find services to enhance your home. VHC Senior Health will be hosting a free Senior Housing Fair showcasing a variety of housing options, as well as resources to assist with a big move or to aid in making your home safer. The fair will feature organizations throughout the area that are experts in senior living. Participants can collect information, ask questions and prepare to create their "home sweet home."

SUNDAY/JUNE 30

The Firefly Festival. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. At Fort C.F. Smith Park, 2411 N. 24th Street, Arlington. Fireflies, lightning bugs, lantern beetles, or whatever you want to call them are a vital part of the health of the Arlington area. Come learn about this and so much more by coming to this annual event. Full of games, crafts, food, night walks and educational opportunities, your family will have loads of fun at this event while learning about how amazing the nighttime is.

FRIDAY/JULY 5

Lesson Zero Performs. 9 p.m. to 12 a.m. 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.

Still Diverting (In Real Time)



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Though I had my PET scan today, Wed., June 5. I probably won't know the results until the weekend. That's when I'm likely to have received, electronically, the same radiologist's report that my oncologist will receive. And given that timing, and the time when my column is due in production makes it unlikely, I'll have anything of substance to report on my papillary thyroid cancer before I submit this column for publication. As such, this column will be like last week's: a little bit about cancer and a lot about nothing. Both of which I'm capable of providing.

What this initial paragraph means is that I'll be stuck not knowing, or if I do know (from the report), I won't exactly know its meaning, as it's written by a doctor for a doctor, not necessarily for the doctor's patient. As a result, if I receive the report sooner rather than later, I'll have more time to stress potentially over whatever substance I can semi understand. If on the other hand, I don't receive the report until later, I'll have more time to stress over what it might say – since the not-knowing is often worse than the knowing. For the moment however, to quote Sergeant Schultz from "Hogan's Heroes": "I know nothing."

The radiologist's report that I will receive, though filled with medical jargon, does list some headings: "Findings" and "Impressions" that at the very least attempt to summarize the report. Having been through this scan/process many times before, the "impressions" and "findings" are helpful, but until I hear it from the oncologist's mouth, I try not to read too much into what little I do understand. After all, this is medicine, not arithmetic. The content generally doesn't provide a straight line to one's life expectancy. That comes from the oncologist. Thankfully, my appointment with my oncologist is first thing Mon. morning, five days after my scan, which is about as soon after a scan when an appointment would be scheduled. Therefore, I might be waiting early for the results, but not too late for the appointment. Us cancer patients tend to grasp at straws while we're looking for any port in a storm.

In the interim, while I still have unoccupied space in my brain, I will complete this column as I completed last week's column: cancer first, Kenny's minutiae second. Compared to last week's diversion about "backparking" – as opposed to headfirst parking, this week's topic is altogether different. Rather than written about the bane of my existence, as the parking issue is, this topic will be about my joie de vivre: resealable packaging on certain perishable items regularly purchased at a supermarket. This previous problem of opening a package (let's say Oreo cookies for example) and not having an easy way to close the packaging to keep the item fresh after opening has been resolved. Previously, I would have used a paper clip or something similar. After 65-plus years of ripping open bags of cookies – as an extremely likely recurring example, the solution is here: the resealable flap. I can still remember the moment when this lifelong problem ended. It happened in Cambridge, Maryland where Dina and I were "weekending."

We were visiting good friends Martha and H.L. at their home. Typically, we'll eat more at their home than we'll go out. This weekend was no different. When Sunday morning came around, Maratha had set out a breakfast buffet: eggs, bacon, bread, coffee, et cetera. Et cetera' included English muffins. As I grabbed my plate and walked over to the toaster to get an English muffin, I noticed they were not Thomas. They were a brand I did not know Bays: When I went to grab a muffin from the six-pack package, I had to open the package because it had been resealed. At the end of the bag was a resealable flap to efficiently and conveniently open and close and reseal the insides forever more – or certainly long enough for its contents to be devoured. "Wow!" I must have said aloud because at that moment, that exposure to the resealable flap, changed my life. Certainly, I'm exaggerating because cancer changed my life. However, for a cookie maven like me, discovering this packaging design affected my cookie consumption. No longer would I have to eat all the cookies because otherwise they'd get stale. And 'stale' because once open, the cookies edibility went down as the cookies lost their freshness – because the package wasn't resealable. (Although, I love a stale Oreo. They're soft and delicious.) Now, I could eat like a normal person, well, at least a 'normal person' like me who has more than a sweet tooth. I have sweet teeth.

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

Tantalizing Turtles

Turtles have inhabited the earth for 220 million years, largely unchanged during that time; Virginia has 25 species and subspecies of turtles.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE CONNECTION

Although turtles are slow, unseen much of the year and often trivialized in cartoons, “Turtles provoke a sense of wonder and amazement,” Dr. Matthew Close told 67 enthusiasts on May 15 in an online presentation sponsored by the Friends of Dyke Marsh, the Friends of Little Hunting Creek and the Friends of Mason Neck State Park. Dr. Close is Associate Professor in Radford University’s Biology Department and treasurer of the Virginia Herpetological Society.

Turtles are reptiles that have inhabited the earth for 220 million years, largely unchanged during that time. Virginia has 25 species and subspecies of turtles. In May, turtles start to move around, searching for food, mates and nesting sites.

Most have an upper shell called a carapace with keratin scutes and a lower shell called a plastron, a characteristic that makes them unique. Turtles never shed their shells. Individual turtles’ shells have unique patterns that stick with them, he said.

They are ectothermic or cold blooded and bask and seek sunny spots to raise their body temperature. Turtles eat invertebrates and some vertebrates. Many terrestrial turtles hibernate or overwinter in burrows.

They have low survivorship during their first few years because birds and mammals feed on the eggs and on small turtles. “Most hatchlings do not live past the first year, so it takes them a long time to

replace themselves,” according to A Guide to the Turtles of Virginia.

Turtles have what Close called “high site fidelity,” a homing behavior. An individual turtle will spend much time in the same place with their home range usually near their nesting site. “Box turtles need to be in touch with each other,” he offered.

Turtles are ecologically important because they help keep the ecosystem in balance by eating slugs, insects and algae. Birds, fish and raccoons eat turtle eggs.

Virginia maintains a list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need, with Tier I indicating the highest need for protection of the animal and its habitat, down to tier IV, a classification indicating a need for some habitat protection or more information. On the tier I list are these: the bog turtle, eastern chicken turtle, green sea turtle, Kemp’s ridley sea turtle, leatherback sea turtle, loggerhead sea turtle and the wood turtle.

“We know little about what they do day to day,” Close said, and for some species, “We don’t know what they eat, when they forage or when they mate.”

Virginia Examples

Close described several common Virginia species. The aquatic snapping turtle spends most of its time underwater. The largest turtle in the state, it can be almost 20 inches long and weigh over 50 pounds.

The almost eight-inch woodland box turtle is “very terrestrial” and can close itself totally, said Close. Its brown and orange carapace blends in with dead leaves.

Eastern painted turtles have dark carapaces, yellow plastrons,

red and yellow stripes on their neck, legs and tail and a yellow spot behind each eye.

Spotted turtles have a black carapace with at least one yellow spot on each scute. They are threatened by the illegal pet trade.

The most abundant non-native turtle is the red-eared slider.

Multiple Threats

Close outlined several threats:

Number one is habitat loss and fragmentation, for example, by development, roads and filling marshes.

Turtles are killed by vehicles and harmed by pesticides and litter.

Some people poach and collect turtles, some for their cultural traditions, for example, as trinkets or talismans.

Diseases like the ranavirus can spread between species.

How to Help Turtles

Leave turtles alone in the wild.

Plant native plants, remove invasive plants and create wild areas.

Don’t keep turtles as pets.

Don’t relocate turtles. If you have to move one for its safety, move it in the direction it was headed.

Avoid littering and avoid using herbicides and pesticides.

“I enjoyed the program and learned a lot,” said Dixie Sommers.

Carolyn J. Gamble concurred: “The talk was a very enjoyable learning experience.”

More Information

Turtle Species, <http://www.virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com/WildlifeRehabilitators>, <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/injured/rehabilitators/>

PHOTOS ©JOHN WHITE - VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Eastern Musk Turtle (*Sternotherus odoratus*)



Eastern Painted Turtle (*Chrysemys picta picta*)



Juvenile Woodland Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*)



Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*)



Woodland Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*)



Red-eared Slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*)